



**St. Joseph's
Primary School**

Slate Street
BELFAST
BT12 4LD

Principal: **Miss. M. Weir** B.ed., M.ed., D.A.S.E, P.Q.H. (N.I.)

Telephone: **90323683**

26/06/20

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well. It is hard to believe that it has been 15 weeks since the children were in school. It has been a challenging time for us all as we have had to adapt to the 'new normal'. May I take this opportunity to thank you all sincerely for your continued support and hard work with 'Home Learning' You have been amazing and we cannot thank you enough. I also need to thank all of our teachers and staff who have continued to support and provide work for the children in these unprecedented times. We are blessed with a dedicated and committed staff.

You will be aware via media outlets that the Department of Education has developed an **Education Restart Programme** which has put in place detailed measures and guidance which will enable a safe phased reopening of schools.

Our pupils' safety is paramount and when we return to school we will adhere to the following Public Health guidance

- Pupils who present with symptoms **must remain at home** and adhere to the governments stay at home guidance
- Pupils will wash/sanitise their hands more often than usual using sanitising stations in every class
- Pupils will be encouraged to avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose
- Surfaces that are touched frequently will be regularly cleaned
- Measures will be in place to minimise contact and mixing
- Social distancing guidance will remain in effect – *if still in place*
- There will be restrictions on what items pupils can bring into school *i.e. no school bags or reusable lunch boxes may be brought into school – further guidance will be issued later in August*
- Full uniform will be worn
- Parents will **not** be able to access the school building (*further guidance will be issued in August*)
- PPE will be available for staff use as and when required
- Non-contact forehead thermometer will be used to monitor temperatures – (*possibly upon entry to school and definitely when a child becomes ill in school*) – *further guidance in August*
- New child friendly signage will be displayed, if required, throughout the school

We await further guidance with regard to the provision of school meals but it looks likely that those who are entitled to a Free School Meal will have their meals in their classrooms, as our school hall is needed as a classroom.

Breakfast club and after clubs will not be available initially and certainly not in August and September.

Operational Guidelines will not be released to school until later this summer. This makes planning for the new term extremely difficult.

School in the new academic term will most definitely be different. Our preferred option is that all our pupils return to fulltime education as soon as it is safe to do so.

Mrs Alexander (Principal of St Peter's P.S.) and myself have been working to ensure the

children in our parish follow as similar a timetable as possible for the beginning of the next academic year. We are working towards having **all classes** return to school on the following dates and every day after the dates given below.

Year Group	Return to school date	Time in school
Year 7	Monday 24 th August 2020	9.00 to 2.00
Year 6	Wednesday 26 th August 2020	9.00 to 2.00
Year 5	Thursday 27 th August 2020	9.00 to 2.00
Year 4	Wednesday 26 th August 2020	9.00 to 2.00
Year 3	Thursday 27 th August 2020	9.00 to 2.00
Year 2	Thursday 27 th August 2020	9.00 to 1.45
Year 1	Each child will be given a separate time and date to begin school beginning Sept 2 nd 2020	9.00 to 12 noon (until end of September)

It is our intention to operate the above timetable until **Friday 18th September 2020**

From Monday 21st September we wish to operate normal school hours

Year 1 and 2 8.45 am to 1.45 pm

Year 3 to 7 8.45 am to 3.00 pm

(We may need to have a staggered arrival/collection time to keep parental numbers on site low e.g. 8.40am, 8.50am 9am. Details in August when we receive more up to date information)

Teachers are continually working on updating the school curriculum and we will update you about curriculum changes and procedures for homework at the end of the summer break.

I sincerely hope the above information is of benefit to you and can help you plan childcare as we move into the next academic year. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy, happy and fun packed summer break and I look forward to welcoming you all back to St Joseph's in the new academic year. Wishing you all a safe, restful and enjoyable summer.

Best Wishes

Miss M Weir (Principal)