



# PORTSTEWART PRIMARY SCHOOL and NURSERY UNIT



Principal: Mrs K. Taylor, B.Ed, PQH (NI)  
Telephone: (028) 7083 2194 (School direct line)  
07716782580 (outside of hours emergency mobile number)  
Email: ktaylor357@c2kni.net

22-24 Central Avenue  
Portstewart  
Co. Londonderry  
BT55 7BT

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent

Firstly, before I start explaining a few things that you need to know for the period of our school closure, can I send a massive thank you to the entire school community for being so incredibly supportive at this time. Your kind words of support to me and the entire team at school have been wonderful. Thank you! It means so much.

## 1. Printed packs of work

You will have received with this letter 2 weeks' worth of work on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Please start this work with your children on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. This work will last up until Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. This would have been the start of our Easter holidays. Please be advised that work will not be provided for over the Easter holidays, our pupils and staff I feel should take their Easter holidays as planned. Further packs of work will be collated for after the Easter holidays and dates for collection will be posted online at a later stage. If you and your family are in self-isolation and cannot collect the packs of work, we will endeavour to get it delivered to your home address (if we can manage this).

## 2. Children of key workers

I have attached to this letter an additional letter from the local Coleraine Principals' group in relation to key worker's children. It is vitally important that schools are aware how many children of key workers will be attending school on Monday morning. With this in mind, if you feel you are an identified key worker, please make contact with school (by telephoning the school directly or by emailing Mrs Taylor on [ktaylor357@c2kni.net](mailto:ktaylor357@c2kni.net)) by 3pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March to inform school if you are requesting a place for your child/children and how you meet the key worker's definition.

## 3. Reading

Although we will not be sending home school reading books, as we do not have enough in school to go around and cover a long period of closure, please allow time at home for reading. Reading ANYTHING is better than reading nothing. We strongly encourage children to keep on top of reading at home. Your child will be able to complete AR quizzes at home by using the following link: <https://ukhosted14.renlearn.co.uk/2235527>

Pupils can use myON, our online platform of digital books for reading. Your child can read online at home and take an AR quiz on myON by using the following link [www.myon.co.uk](http://www.myon.co.uk). Login details have been given to your child to access these at home and they are contained within this initial first pack of work.

## 4. Communication with school during school closure

It is important that, during this time, parents can stay in contact with school. Initially we are suggesting that if you wish to make contact with school you can do so by telephoning the main school telephone line (02870832194) or the school mobile (07716782580). You can also contact Mrs Taylor directly using her work email address ([ktaylor357@c2kni.net](mailto:ktaylor357@c2kni.net)).

**5. Follow advice from Public Health Agency**

I would urge you to follow the advice of the Public Health Agency. Information can be found on [www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net).

**6. School photographs**

You will have received your school photograph order form either in this pack of work or you may have received it already over the last number of days. School photo money can be left into school between the hours of 9am to 3pm from Monday 23rd March to Thursday 26th March.

**7. Interviews over the telephone**

Our teachers at present are focusing on preparing packs of work. It may take them a little bit of time to complete the requests for telephone interviews. Please be patient with us we will get back to you as soon as we can.

**8. Mathletics**

All pupils in Primary 1 to Primary 7 now have access to Mathletics an online learning platform for Numeracy development. Your child's login details are contained within their work pack.

I have attached a suggested timetable for you to use at the back of this pack for home learning. You may have high hopes of hours of learning, including online activities, and reading, or you might be worried as to how you will be able to continue to work AND be their "teacher" at home. We understand your concerns and if you need advice please contact us.

Yet again, can I remind parents / carers that we are trying to support your child on their educational journey in a brand new way. We may not get it right straight away. Please give us time. Also, there may become a time when some of our staff may become unwell. We will endeavour to do our best for all of our families.

Continue to remember that our children are watching us and learning about how to respond to uncertainty. Let's not show panic to our children but support and the building of resilience. I thank you for your continued understanding, patience and many messages of support.

Take care and stay safe.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs K Taylor  
Principal

**POSSIBLE HOME LEARNING TIMETABLE**  
**I KNOW THIS WILL NOT SUIT EVERYONE – JUST AN IDEA.**

Before 9.00	Wake up / get dressed / and eat a good breakfast.
9.00 – 9.30	Morning activity – maybe a walk outside / activity in the garden etc.
9.30 – 10.30	School Work Time
10.30 - 11.00	Snack time and help around the house
11.00 – 12.00	School Work Time
12.00 – 1.00	Lunch Time and relax time
1.00 – 2.00	School Work Time
2.00 – 3.00	Quiet time / reading etc.

# Coleraine Primary Principals' Group

*Statement regarding supporting the children of key workers.*

*20<sup>th</sup> March 2020*

At approximately 5pm last evening, the minister for Education in Northern Ireland, Peter Weir, MLA, made a statement outlining how schools will close from the end of the school day, today, Friday 20th March, however, he has asked schools to open with skeleton staff on Monday 23rd March to support identified key workers.

You are receiving this letter as your child's primary school is represented, by your principal, on the Coleraine Primary Principal's Group. Many principals on this group have agreed to follow a coordinated response to ensure that we support the children of key workers in a similar way across our schools. Some schools may be in a position to provide more support, depending on the numbers of staff still available to work.

Firstly, it is vitally important that schools are aware how many children of key workers will be attending school on Monday morning. With this in mind, if you feel you are an identified key worker, please make contact with your child's primary school (by telephoning the school directly or using the email address listed below) by 3pm on Friday 20th March to inform school if you are requesting a place for your child/children and how you meet the key worker's definition. If schools feel they can offer your child a place safely, they will be in touch. Our position on this may well be ever evolving. ***This is a procedure to be followed on a daily basis to ensure staffing is adequate.***

Before contacting school please pay particular attention to the following points. Schools will not be able to operate a 'normal' school day. Many of our schools are already operating with a significant reduction in staffing and this will probably continue to get worse over time.

## **POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

A list of key workers, issued by the Department of Education is listed overleaf.

- Only children with **BOTH** parents working as key workers, and **BOTH PARENTS OUT AT WORK AT THE SAME TIME** should consider attending school. In single parent families, the individual parent with full time responsibility **MUST** be a key worker.
- If possible, alternative childcare arrangements should be sought before deciding to send your child to school. For example, with other family members, friends etc. Please try and use schools as a last resort. This is to try and limit the number of children and adults together in a small space in line with recent social distancing guidance.
- Initially, schools will not have wraparound services available. Each school's normal opening and closing time will apply-Eg: 9am -2pm, 9am-3pm
- Children attending school will **NOT** be required to wear uniform. Please be advised that schools will be performing childcare duties, not teaching. Not all teachers are currently available to teach specific year groups. Teachers involved in this childcare will **NOT** be available to provide online/remote learning to other children/classes.

We would ask that you pay attention to the points outlined above before deciding to send your child to school. Please also remember PHA advice must be followed at all times and children/families must follow all self-isolation advice.

Schools will also follow PHA advice should anyone display symptoms or take unwell during attendance.

Obviously it goes without saying, if your **ONLY** option is to send your child to school, we will look after them to support you in your important role.

*Coleraine Primary Principals' Group*

**School telephone number: (028)7083 2194**

**School email contact: [ktaylor357@c2kni.net](mailto:ktaylor357@c2kni.net)**

## List of key workers as outlined in information to schools on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Please work with us to ensure schools operate with a limited number of children and staff.

- **Health and Social Care.** This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector
- **Education and childcare.** This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response
- **Public safety and national security.** This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles
- **Transport.** This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response
- **Utilities and Communication.** This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies, to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, services and waste disposal
- **Food and other necessary goods.** This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g hygiene, medical etc.)
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response