



PORTSTEWART PRIMARY SCHOOL and NURSERY UNIT

Principal: Mrs K. Taylor, B.Ed, PQH (NI)
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22-24 Central Avenue
Portstewart
Co. Londonderry
BT55 7BT

21st August 2020

PARENT UPDATE

(Please retain for information)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian,

Return to School

As you are aware, the Minister of Education, Mr Peter Weir, has recently revised the guidance for pupils returning to school. All pupils will return to school in full class bubbles, with special measures put in place to help manage risk and prevent individual class bubbles from mixing.

Since receiving the guidance, our Board of Governors and staff have reviewed and discussed the new guidance and its implications for our school.

Safety and Hygiene

The wellbeing and safety of everyone is of the upmost importance. As far as possible, pupils will be kept within classes therefore establishing 'protective bubbles'. Children will be taught and supervised in clear routines such as:

- good handwashing routines
- upon entry to school ALL children will sanitise their hands followed by a hand washing regime with young children being supervised. This process will be repeated at various points of the day.
- pupils will be encouraged to keep their hands away from their face, we would appreciate it if this could be reinforced at home.
- pupils will be encouraged to greet one another and adults without touching
- how to move around the school safely, using a one-way system, will be demonstrated to all children.
- children will be reminded of the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' procedure on a regular basis.

To keep school a safe environment for everyone NO child or adult should attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- **A new cough**
- **A temperature**
- **A loss of taste or smell**

Should a child display **ANY** of these symptoms during the school day, they will be taken to the library immediately where they will be supervised by an adult. PPE will be available for any adult who is supervising a child displaying symptoms. Parents will be contacted and expected to collect the child, and any siblings, as outlined in the guidance. Parents will be advised to follow PHA guidelines including the use of the Test, Trace and Protect government strategy.

Important information for parents about drop off and collection times:

- **All classes have been assigned a designated door which they MUST use when entering and leaving school to help avoid 'protective bubbles' from mixing.**
- To help avoid overcrowding **new drop off and pick up times have also been allocated.** It is crucial that all parents/carers adhere to these times each day (see details outlined on following pages).
- Unfortunately we cannot accommodate pupils being supervised from 8.30am in the hall as this would mix the class protective bubbles. It is important that pupils do not arrive before their allocated time as there will be no adult supervision outdoors in the morning.
- **Only 1 parent/carer should accompany their child(ren)** to the designated drop off point whilst maintaining the recommended 2 metres social distancing at all times.
- If your child arrives late to school, and the designated door is closed, pupils should proceed to enter school via the main front door. Mrs Taylor will accompany the pupil to their class and take note of their reason for arriving at school late.
- **Parents may wish to wear a face mask or face covering whilst in the school grounds. As large numbers of adults will be in the school grounds at the one time it may be beneficial for adults to wear face coverings to protect themselves.** If parents are attending a prearranged appointment inside the school building they **must** wear a face covering.
- We recommend that those parent/carers arriving by car aim to park further away from school and walk with your child(ren) so they are maintaining social distancing from others. Extra car parking is available at Old Coach Rd, Convention Avenue, Amici etc.
- Parents/carers are advised to seek to bring their child to school by the safest means possible. Where a taxi is required, pupils are encouraged to wear face coverings if possible.

Starting arrangements

Primary 7 pupils: ENTER VIA DOOR BESIDE OFFICE IN THE JUNIOR PLAYGROUND



Monday 24th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.45am and leaving at 12 noon, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.45am and leaving at 1.50pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.45am and leaving at 2.50pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Primary 6 pupils (Mrs Smyth/Miss Anderson's class): ENTER VIA MAIN FRONT DOOR



Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 12 noon, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 2.00pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 3.00pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Primary 6 pupils (Mrs Baillie's class): ENTER VIA KEY STAGE 2 PLAYGROUND DOOR



Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 12 noon, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 2.00pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 3.00pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Primary 5 pupils: ENTER VIA DOOR NEAR POLYTUNNEL OUTSIDE P5 CLASSROOM



Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 11.55am, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 1.55pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 2.55pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Primary 4 pupils: ENTER VIA CANTEEN DOOR AT THE TOP OF THE JUNIOR PLAYGROUND



Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 12 noon, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 2.00pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.55am and leaving at 3.00pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Primary 3 pupils: ENTER VIA THE FIRE DOORS OUTSIDE THE P3 CLASSROOM



Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 11.55am, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 1.55pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 1.55pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

****Primary 3 pupils will not go home at the later time of 2.55pm on Thursdays yet. We will give pupils some time to settle in first and then we will introduce this.***

Primary 2 pupils: ENTER VIA THE QUEENORA ENTRANCE



Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.45am and leaving at 11.50am, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.45am and leaving at 1.50pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.45am and leaving at 1.50pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Primary 1 pupils: ENTER VIA THE JUNIOR PLAYGROUND DOOR BESIDE THE P1 CLASSROOM



Induction day on Wednesday 26th August from 9.30am to 11.30am (bring a snack and wear school uniform).

Thursday 27th August – Friday 28th August (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 11.55am, please bring a snack, no lunch is required)

School closed on Monday 31st August for the Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1st September – Friday 4th September (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 1.15pm, please bring snack and a packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Monday 7th September onwards (arriving at 8.50am and leaving at 1.55pm, snack and packed lunch required) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Nursery pupils: ENTER VIA THE NURSERY GARDEN



The guidance has stated that social distancing has been relaxed between pupils so we are now able to put plans in place to bring our Nursery pupils back as one group from the week beginning 7th September. See details on the next page:

Nursery starting arrangements:

Week 1 (induction days) - as previously planned for morning and afternoon sessions.

** School closed on Monday 31st August*

Week 2 (week beginning 1st Sept) - same as Week 1: timings as previously planned for morning and afternoon sessions. Group 1 (8.45am-10.45am) and Group 2 (11.15am-1.15pm)

Week 3 (week beginning 7th Sept) - all pupils in one group 8.45am - 11.30am (not staying for packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Week 4 (week beginning 14th Sept) - all pupils in one group 8.45am - 12.30pm (staying for packed lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

Week 5 (week beginning 21st Sept) - all pupils in one group 8.45am - 12.30pm (staying for packed lunch)

Week 6 (week beginning 28th Sept) - all pupils in one group 8.45am - 1.15pm (full time hours and staying for lunch) **Packed lunches provided for pupils entitled to Free School Meals*

What social distancing will there be in school?

- The new guidance states that there is relaxed social distancing between children but that they should remain in their 'class protective bubble' and not mix with other classes.
- Social distancing of 2 metres remains between an adult and a child.
- Adults in school also need to practise social distancing of 2 metres between each other.

Can parents come into the school building?

- The guidance states that **parents will not be permitted into the school building**. We will make an exception to this for the first week for our new Nursery pupils or any new pupil who is starting our school for the first time.
- **Any parent who wishes to enter the school building to speak to a member of staff should book an appointment by contacting the office in advance.** Parents who come into the school building must fill in a COVID track and trace form and wear a face covering when attending a prearranged appointment.
- **Parents should not congregate outside the school building but should maintain the advised social distancing** measurement away from other parents or adults. We will have marshals outside the school building on the first few days to help direct parents to the designated door for your child(ren).
- If it is necessary to contact a member of staff during the school day this should be done by contacting the school office, providing a reason for your call and the appropriate member of staff will get back to you as soon as practically possible. Please use this method as opposed to a Seesaw message or Facebook message as teachers are busy teaching and are unable to read or respond to messages.

Are pupils to bring school bags into school?

- The guidance states that schools should discourage children from bringing anything from home to school. As homework will not be sent home in the normal way **there is no need for a school bag**. We therefore discourage the use of school bags at this time as they will simply not be needed.

What are break and lunch time arrangements?

- The morning snack which is normally provided by the canteen will not be provided in the first instance returning to school. **All pupils should bring their own morning snack.**
- Initially we plan to have **all children having packed lunches**; packed lunches will be provided for pupils entitled to free school meals.
- **Packed lunches will be eaten in the classroom. Pupils can use lunch boxes which are easily wiped clean or pupils can use disposable lunch items to limit the amount of items travelling backwards and forwards from home to school.**
- Packed lunches will be supplied for children for whom we have been informed by the Education Authority that they have an entitlement to Free School Meals. The packed lunches provided by School Meals will consist of a sandwich, accompanied with a drink, fruit, yogurt or bun or cookie each day. We anticipate that within a few weeks that Schools Meals will be able to move to provide a warm finger food lunch.
- Remember we are a **NUT FREE school**, please do not send in items which contain nuts for break or lunch.

What will school look like?

- Each class will enter and leave school through a designated door.
- **When pupils arrive in school they will go straight to their classroom** (we will not be able to accommodate supervision in the hall from 8.30am).
- There will be a one-way system in operation around school marked with arrows and visual signs.
- As far as possible pupils will be kept within their classes in 'protective bubbles' throughout the school day and therefore school assemblies will not take place in the school hall.
- Children will play outside at break time and lunch time (weather permitting) using the Junior and Senior playgrounds. Break and lunch times will be staggered and each playground will have a designated area for each class protective bubble to play in. Playgrounds will have cones across them to help the pupils understand which area they are allowed to play in.

What will my child's classroom look like?

- In each classroom in the primary school the children will have a designated seat.
- In Nursery, P1 and P2 the tables will be positioned in groups as indicated in the guidance received by the Department of Education.
- In P3 to P7 the desks are positioned in rows across the room facing the front to encourage social distancing as indicated in the guidance received by the Department of Education.
- We will be sending videos and pictures of your child's classroom to parents via email to allow your child to become familiar with their new classroom before they start.

Do children need to wear face masks?

- No, pupils do not need to wear face masks, however if any pupils wish to wear a face mask that is allowed.

What will children wear for Physical Education?

- It is important that our pupils continue to have Physical Education lessons. **On days that your child has PE lessons pupils should come to school wearing their school jumper and polo shirt and also wear plain navy, black or grey tracksuit bottoms and trainers.** This is so pupils will not need to get changed for PE in school. On the days that pupils are not participating in PE it is expected that pupils will wear full school uniform with black school shoes. We will inform parents of what day your child is having PE in due course. Initially all pupils should wear full school uniform to school each day and then we will introduce the PE uniform for PE days.

Do children need to bring in hand sanitiser?

- We have hand sanitiser in school which pupils can use. However, if your child wishes to bring in a small bottle of their own hand sanitiser into school they can and this can be left in school.

What should my child(ren) bring to school?

- Each day your child should bring a coat, a lunch box (or money for packed lunch - £2.60) and a water bottle. It would be beneficial for pupils to bring their own tissues to school each day as well.
- The guidance recommends that pupils should not be sharing stationery resources and that we should try to limit the amount of items travelling backwards and forwards from home to school. **Your child has already been given a list of stationery items that parents should provide and these will remain in school. Pencil cases will remain in school.**
- Unfortunately, at this time we cannot permit items like birthday cakes to be brought into school for class celebrations.

How will homework work?

- Home learning tasks will not be sent home on sheets due to the risk of virus transmission but will be set through Seesaw and literacy/numeracy websites. All pupils from Nursery to Primary 7 will be using Seesaw to access home learning tasks. We do not plan to start homework straight away. We plan to give our pupils time to adjust to returning to school first.
- Some essential paper based material may need to be sent home, e.g. transfer papers for Primary 7 pupils.

My child is anxious about returning to school, what should I do?

- Contact school and let us know any concerns or worries your child has.
- Staff are planning to focus on PDMU and wellbeing activities as pupils return to school. This will help deal with any anxieties pupils may have.

Will there be after school clubs in operation?

- At present afterschool clubs will not resume as the guidance states that class bubble groups should not mix. We will keep this under review.

Will Stepping Stones afterschool provision run?

- Yes, in line with the Department of Education's guidance Stepping Stones afterschool provision will resume to help working parents be able to return to work. Each daily group will act as a bubble and Stepping Stones will be implementing their own risk assessment measures. Please contact Stepping Stones directly if you have any queries about afterschool provision.

My child normally brings medication to school each day, what should I do?

- Medication such as inhalers must be clearly labelled by parents/carers and will be kept in school. If you have any additional questions about medication, please contact Mrs Taylor directly.

If my child has a toileting accident can a member of staff change my child?

- Unfortunately, at this time a member of staff cannot change a child if they have a toileting accident. The parent/carer will be telephoned to come and collect the child or change the child on the school premises.

My contact details have changed, what should I do?

- It is vitally important that we have up to date contact records of all parent and carers at this time, including telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Each child will receive new data collection forms on their return to school which should be filled in and returned to school as soon as possible.
- It is vital that you contact school immediately notifying us of any change of contact details.

Quick guide to Coronavirus related absences

What to do if.....	Action needed	Return to school when....
My child has coronavirus symptoms	DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school daily Self-isolate Get a test Inform school immediately about test result	The test comes back negative
My child tests positive for coronavirus	Inform the school immediately about the test result DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school daily Self-isolate for at least 10 days	They can return to school after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of taste of smell/taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once infection is gone.
Somebody in my household has coronavirus symptoms	DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school daily Household member to get a test Inform the school immediately about the test result	The household member tests negative
Somebody in my household has tested positive with Coronavirus	Inform the school immediately about the test result DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school daily	The child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
The Track and Trace scheme has identified my child as a close contact of somebody with symptoms of confirmed coronavirus	DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school daily Self-isolate for 14 days	The child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
My child has travelled abroad and has to self-isolate as part of the quarantine process	<u>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed</u> DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school daily Self-isolate for 14 days Provide information to the school as per attendance policy	When the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed
We have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding	Inform the school DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL Contact school as agreed Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted, and shielding is paused.	Your GP gives you guidance that is safe to return to school.

Procedure of Suspected Infected Pupil

Step	Action
1	The child's temperature will be checked with a handheld thermometer which is contactless.
2	If the child's temperature is raised or they are showing other symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A new continuous cough- Reporting a loss of taste or smell- Any other concerning symptoms A staff member will contact the Principal or Vice Principal immediately.
3	The pupil will be taken to and supervised in the school library with the windows open by an adult (wearing PPE).
4	The parent/carer will be immediately informed by the school secretary and asked to come and take the child (and any siblings) home. If the pupil needs to use the toilet, while waiting, they will be taken to use the single staff toilet.
5	When the parent/carer arrives, they will be advised to get a Coronavirus Test for their child and ask them to sign the 'People who become symptomatic onsite' proforma.
6	The pupil and their siblings must leave school via the main front door.
7	The school cleaning team will be informed that a suspected infected pupil used the library area and toilet (if used) and it will be thoroughly cleaned.

What happens if a child in our school tests positive for Coronavirus?

- The pupil and all members of their household will be instructed by the Test, Track, Protect service to self isolate.
- The school will be advised by the Test, Track, Protect service regarding appropriate self-isolation measures to be taken by other members of the school community who were in contact with the pupil.
- School management will arrange enhanced cleaning of all relevant classrooms / areas in consultation with the Education Authority.
- School will maintain contact with parent/guardian to monitor progress of recovery and agree return at an appropriate time in line with PHA advice.

What happens if my child's teacher becomes unwell?

- If your child's teacher becomes unwell senior management will organise for a substitute teacher to assume the teaching role or Mrs Taylor will teach the class until a suitable substitute teacher is identified.

What further precautions will be in place?

- Any child or adult exhibiting symptoms of coronavirus must not come to school.
- Our school library will be used to isolate anyone developing possible coronavirus symptoms until they are taken off the premises (PPE will be available in the isolation area).
- Pupils will have allocated seating in the primary school which will be regularly cleaned.
- There will be increased cleaning of the school building regularly built into the school day with particular attention being paid to high contact areas e.g. door handles, desk tops, light switches etc.
- Additional cleaning equipment has been purchased and will be regularly used, e.g. use of steam cleaners to clean toys and practical resources.
- Cleaning materials are readily available and stored safely in each classroom.
- There will be enhanced cleaning in toilet areas.
- There is hand sanitiser in all classrooms and at all entrance points.
- Increased washing of hands within the school day for all pupils and staff.
- All visitors to school must wear a face covering and fill in a COVID track and trace form.
- No school bells due to staggered break and lunches as well as staggered start and finish times.

Much time and thought has gone into the logistics of returning to school. The measures that we are putting in place will only work with the cooperation of all parents to enable a full return as outlined in this letter.

We look forward to the reopening of our school and the return of all of our boys and girls. Thank you once again for your support and understanding throughout this period. If you have any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch via email or by telephoning the school directly.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Mrs K Taylor
(Principal)