**St Brigid’s PS**

**Castle Street**

**Ballymoney**

**BT53 6JX**

**Principal: Mr Kieran O’Neill**

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**Wednesday, 06 January 2021**

Dear Parents

The health, safety and well-being of pupils, staff and our wider school community is of the highest importance at St Brigid’s PS. There is currently a great deal of uncertainty and concern with regards to the recent upsurge in the spread of the Coronavirus, Covid-19.

The Department of Education and Stormont Executive has informed us that, **effective from Friday 8th January,** we are required to provide remote learning at home to the pupils rather than face-to-face teaching in school, until the half term break in the middle of February. Remote learning and the removal of face-to-face teaching hopefully will be temporary and last no longer than necessary, and therefore will remain under review by the Executive.

**This closure will involve the use of our remote learning approaches at this stage and learning will be supported via SEESAW or TEAMS.**

Seesaw (Year 1 -4, CA and CB) and TEAMS (Year 5-7) are already being used for homework activities and will be used from Friday 8th January for remote learning.

As we move to remote learning staff will be in school planning ahead for this enforced period of school closure. In order to supplement the remote learning, hard copy packs will be available for a parent/guardian to collect from Monday 11th January between 9.30 am and 3.00 pm. The packs will be useful to those who have more than 1 child and shared access to devices. Any issues with regards to ICT access please contact the school.

The process for collecting packs on from Monday 11 January will be as follows.

1. Please park in the chapel carpark
2. Entry to the school will be via the main playground door following the red route.
3. Please wait at the door and someone will get you the pack for your child (and others if requested)
4. Press the buzzer for someone to come to the door.
5. To avoid crowds do not come as a large group and do not bring the children. We would prefer one person. Please wear a face covering when on the school premises.
6. If you can collect for others when you are in, please do so to limit the numbers coming to the school. (please agree in advance with parents)
7. We anticipate minimal contact and would request that you take the packs and not to dwell for conversation.

Thank you for your co-operation in advance of collecting the packs.

**The question from many parents may be: What can I do with my child/children to keep their learning going during this closure?**

* Engage with and complete the work daily in the packs provided
* Log on daily to the Seesaw or Teams app and engage with the instructions provided by the class teacher.
* Encourage reading daily.
* Access the wealth of resources available on the school website in the ‘Remote Learning Section’, in the general section and in the individual class sections.
* A Home Learning Hub Section is on the website. Within this section the children just have to click on the icons for MySchool, Accelerated Reader and Microsoft Teams and this will take them straight to the login pages for each of these.

During this period of temporary closure any additional information from the school will be posted on the website. A text message will be sent to you if there are any updates. Please check the website regularly for updates.

During this period of closure each class teacher be available between 9.00 am and 3.00 pm on Seesaw or Teams. Activities, instructions and support will be available during this time. Any work completed can be sent through to the class teacher for marking. In some cases, the class teacher will post the answers to activities into your group. Similarly, you can contact me and my email address is also included with this letter.

**Key Workers and Vulnerable Children**

(See January Letter 1 from Mr O’Neill for details of key workers/vulnerable children criteria).

**The school will be open for the children of Key Workers and Vulnerable children (Monday – Friday 9.00 am – 3.00 pm).** At the outset I must stress that the Department of Education have stated that the school is only to be used for supervised learning during this period where no alternative provision exists. It is key to keep the numbers at a minimum in school during this period to prevent the transmission of the virus. I must also stress that this will be supervised support and provision not face-to-face teaching.

The children in school will form a small bubble and as with the last prolonged closure they will be based in the hall for social distancing purposes. The staff will supervise the children on a rota basis. Free School Meals payments will be paid directly to parents. Packed lunches may be brought into school. Information with regards to school canteen facilities will be communicated when I know more. **Any children attending on Friday 8 January must bring a packed lunch.**

All bookings for children of key workers and vulnerable children should be made weekly. The deadline for booking in for each week will be 12 noon on a Friday. All children must be booked in advance and there will be no drop-in facility. This is to allow for planning ahead for staffing, meals, resources etc.

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| **Week Beginning** | **Deadline for booking** |
| 11 – 15 January | Friday 8 January 12 noon |
| 18 – 22 January | Friday 15 January 12 noon |
| 25 – 29 January | Friday 22 January 12 noon |
| 1 -5 February | Friday 29 January 12 noon |
| 8 – 12 February | Friday 5 February 12 noon |
| 15-19 February | School Closed Mid Term Break |
| 22 February  | Current date for reopening |

Key workers may book via the Microsoft Forms link below clearly stating the days required each week (please book only one week at a time):

[**https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRUOEtDWDdJSFNGSlJCOTNMTjZDT05BU0lNMS4u**](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRUOEtDWDdJSFNGSlJCOTNMTjZDT05BU0lNMS4u)

The weekly 12 noon Friday deadline will be in operation throughout this period of disruption and no bookings will be accepted after this each week.

Vulnerable children must be booked in via email, to Mr O’Neill koneill580@c2kni.net , before the weekly Friday 12 noon deadline and clearly stating the days and times required.

**It is important to note that the vulnerable children will be supported in this hall bubble. The staff will be on a rota basis and this will mean that on a daily basis it will not always be the teacher or assistant that your child/children will normally have. If you require transport, please contact the firm that usually brings your child to and from school to organise this.**

**All children attending under key worker or vulnerable children category must bring their learning packs to school in a folder. The children should wear their school uniform as usual. The children should bring a coat as some time will be spent outdoors (weather permitting).**

Thank you all for your support and understanding in this. The children, staff and school community are our priority and we will not compromise the health and safety of anyone associated with St Brigid’s PS.

Kind Regards

Kieran O’Neill Principal

Mr G Doran Chair of BoG