**St Brigid’s PS**

**Castle Street**

**Ballymoney**

**BT53 6JXso**

**Principal: Mr Kieran O’Neill**

[**koneill580@c2kni.net**](mailto:koneill580@c2kni.net)

**Tel: 028 2766 2664**

**Friday, 18 September 2020**

**Dear Parents/Guardians**

As the school year has started we are delighted to have all the children back. The sound of happy, chatty, giggling and noisy children in and around the school after months of almost silence, is just wonderful. A school should always be a place full of energy and noise.

I would like to thank you all for your amazing co-operation so far in helping to make the return to school successful. We thank you for the way in which you all have respected the new procedures and routines in place.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Don, Claire, Glenda and Donna for their great work over the summer in preparing the school for the children coming back in September. The school is looking fantastic!

Thanks also must go to all the staff for their hard work in getting everything ready for the new school year. There is a lot of hard work in making sure that everything was in place for the beginning of the school year. I wish the school and its community every success and God’s blessing for the year ahead.

The children have adapted so quickly to life back at school. We have been really encouraged by their ability to re-engage with their learning. Every effort has been made to ensure that we make up for the time spent out of school. The level of engagement by children and parents with the resources (hard copies and online) available throughout the school closure was high and that will help all the children to be able to, ‘catch up’, ‘pick up’ and ‘move on’ with their learning. The teachers have and will continue to work hard to make sure that any learning missed will be covered. They will monitor closely all the children in every aspect of the development and learning – academically, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

**Class B**

We are considering introducing an additional 2.00 pm finish on a Monday for all the children in Class B. However, this will not begin until the week commencing Monday 28th September at the earliest to allow time to amend transport arrangements. This will operate until restrictions due to COVID-19 come to an end. A letter to Class B parents with further information will be sent at the beginning of next week.

**After School Clubs**

There have been some requests for the use of after school clubs on a weekly basis. We are currently reviewing the spaces available in after schools and will make an announcement shortly with regards to any spaces available for pre-booking to the rest of the school community. Numbers will remain strictly limited to those initially communicated to you.

t**Annual Flu Vaccination**

This will take place in the school on Wednesday 7 October. A letter from the school nursing service has already gone home and should be returned with your response, if you haven’t already done so.

**School Photographer**

The school photographer will be in school on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 September to take individual and sibling photos. This will be for individual child and siblings in the school only. Unfortunately, due to restrictions there will be no opportunity this year for other family members to come in to the school for the photographs.

**Homework**

As the children settle back into the routine of school we are preparing to reintroduce homework as an important part of consolidating their learning and making the learning link with home. Homework will recommence on the week beginning 28 September 2020.

**Year 1 & 2**

The Foundation Stage classes will receive homework every Monday in their red folder and it should be returned to school on Friday each week. The homework will be presented in an A3 booklet detailing the activities to be completed each night.

**Class A**

Homework for the children will communicated directly to parents by Mrs McIlroy.

**Year 3, 4 & CB**

Homework packs will be sent home on a Monday to be returned on Thursday each week. Spellings (included in the pack each week) for Friday test can remain at home each week.

Monday – Thursday homework will include: Written homework (3 activities), Guided Reading Book and Spellings

Thursday Night will be preparation for the Friday Spelling test and either a SEESAW/RE or WAU task activity.

**Year 5-7**

The children will receive daily homework, Mon-Thurs, which should be returned to the school the following day. These homework activities will consist of a mixture of Literacy and Numeracy and one weekly online activity.

**Year 7 Transfer Test**

Children who have elected to sit a transfer test will receive two homework practice tests during the week, two class assessment tests and two practice papers to work on over the weekend. Answers will continue to be issued with the homework practice papers and should be marked at home with the corrections worked on together. These papers should stay at home unless your child requires further revision of any particular question(s) with the teacher.

**Sacrament Dates 2020**

New dates for the Sacraments that were missed during lockdown have been set. Fr McCaughan will be the celebrant for all the sacraments and due to COVID-19, restrictions are in place in the chapel with regards to numbers attending and movement in the chapel. Letters with regards to the arrangements for the Sacraments have been published on the school website.

**First Holy Communion**

Sat 3 October 2020 11 am in Our Lady and St Patrick’s Chapel

**Confirmation**

Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14 October at 5.00 pm in Our Lady and St Patrick’s Chapel

**Sacrament of Penance**

Wednesday 11 November at 10.30 am in Our Lady and St Patrick’s Chapel

**School Holidays 2020-21**

The list for the year ahead is available on the school website.

**Reminder**

The following **online forms** are available by clicking on the links below. Please complete and submit the forms if you haven’t already done so. The electronic forms do not take long to complete and they mitigate against paper copies going back and forward between school and home.

**ICT CODE OF PRACTICE AGREEMENT FOR PUPILS AND PARENTS**

To access the ICT Code of Practice Agreement for Pupils and Parents please click on the link below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRUM04wMzBZOEVDT0ZMOEc5TkRYU1hEUFUwMi4u>

**CONSENT FORM FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND FOOTAGE**

Please click on the following link to access the consent form to be submitted:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRUMlJISVI1UUJJMVhZV01IWjFMQkFLOU9TSC4u>

**Return to School Agreement – Parents**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRURTdIWkozVDk1MDlFSTZCVlNVWEo1V1NBOC4u>

**Return to School Agreement – Pupils**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRUM1dNNjBDQkhZTEw5NjVFMjk4U1owOUpTRC4u>

**AFTER SCHOOL CLUB AND BREAKFAST CLUB CONTRACT**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqMjAn6Rw9FZFoJKRknI5evRUQkpITEw1NFQ2M0k2TElZNUpFTTRGQ0pBNi4u>

We do not know what the future may hold amidst this COVID-19 pandemic. We can assure you that every measure possible is in place to create a safe environment here in school, with all COVID-19 protocols in place. We have been so encouraged by your support in this regard so far.

Going forward, any changes to the way in which the school operates in terms of the school day, routines, timings etc. will be communicated to you as soon as possible.

It is important to remember that the key messages remain the same for now:

1. Please continue to follow all the procedures in place for the school day.
2. Please maintain 2m social distancing as adults when on the school premises and encourage good distancing with the children as well.
3. Please wear a face covering if 2m social distancing cannot be maintained.
4. Please be prompt at drop off and pick up times. This includes after school club.
5. Please maintain and encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.
6. Do not come to school (adult/child) if you have a high temperature (+37.8), a new and continuous cough or experience a loss in your sense of smell or taste.
7. As is normally the case, if a child is unwell with any other illness they should not be in school until they are feeling better.

If you are unsure about what to do, please contact the school between 8.00 am and 4.00 pm daily via telephone call or by email at any time.

Thank you for your co-operation in everything so far. Take care and keep safe.

Mr O’Neill

Principal