



8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents

We are now into our first full week of school and once again I would like to thank you all for your support in establishing the new school routine. We appreciate how difficult it must be to juggle work or child care with the various drop off and pick up times.

It is essential that we maintain these times at the moment as we have just enough staff on site to cover the various exits around the building and to supervise the children. Please do not drop children off before their designated time, unless they have an elder sibling. This has started to happen and we are extremely stretched in the mornings supervising hand washing before children enter their class bubble. P1s may be dropped off with siblings from Mon 28<sup>th</sup>. We also ask that no vehicles enter school grounds more than five minutes prior to pick up time. (E.g. 2pm pick up cars should not be in school grounds before 1:55pm.) Some classes may be on their lunch break outside or enjoying PE and it poses a risk to their safety.

As usual at the start of a school year children are beginning to feel the effects of coughs and sneezes. Children who are feeling unwell with temperatures, colds, flu, vomiting, diarrhoea earaches, sore throats etc should not be in school. This should always be the case.

1. They are miserable in school.
2. They pass their illness on to their classmates.
3. Minor illness can temporarily reduce the ability of the sick child's immune system to fight more serious infections.

Consequently, they should stay at home and only come to school when the symptoms are cleared. School should be contacted via telephone to explain a child's absence, no written notes are to be sent in to school. It is more important than ever, now that we have Covid-19 to contend with. In the event of any positive cases, we will follow PHA advice completely.

**Children MUST NOT ATTEND SCHOOL if they have COVID-19 symptoms:**

1. A new and continuous cough
2. High temperature/fever
3. Loss or change in sense of smell or taste

Research by Queen's University has also found that gastrointestinal problems may also be symptoms ie vomiting and diarrhoea. Medical evidence coming from hospital clinicians clearly indicates that Covid-19 symptoms are not exclusive to the three core symptoms and indeed symptoms are VARIABLE. An explanation of what to do is attached below.

We are not trying to keep children out of school, rather we are endeavouring to keep our children, families and staff safe and healthy. Children have been brilliant at observing the new handwashing and sanitising routines under the supervision of staff. They are staying in



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their class bubbles while in school. They are working together and playing together during the day meaning social distancing is difficult within the bubble. Consequently, if one child or member of staff contracts Covid-19 all of their bubble classmates and staff will be off school for 14 days. That's how important this fight against infections is, in terms of health and learning. Please err on the side of caution and keep your child at home if they are feeling in any way unwell. Any child who tells staff in school that they are feeling ill will be sent home.

We have impressed on the children the need to be completely truthful with us about how they are feeling. It would be helpful for us all if you would reinforce this need to be honest with your child, that way we can eliminate unnecessary absences. If you have to come to school to collect your child, we'll keep an eye out for you at the turning circle. Parents should not come into the school grounds or building.

We need everyone to continue to support us in achieving our aim to keep our children, families and staff safe and healthy and to keep our classrooms open. We want to continue hearing those happy voices, seeing those smiling faces and having the opportunity to teach within the school environment for the rest of the school year. Let's keep up the great effort and stay ahead of this. With the situation changing so quickly and without much information being provided we will do our best to keep you up to date.

Thank you

M McGrath



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## Quick Guide to Coronavirus related absences

What to do if.....	Action needed ....	Return to school when ....
<i><b>My child has coronavirus symptoms</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></li> <li>Contact school daily</li> <li>Self-Isolate</li> <li>Get a test</li> <li>Inform school immediately about the results of a test result</li> </ul>	The test comes back negative and they are fever free for 48 hours. (48 hrs before returning even if test is negative.)
<i><b>My child tests positive for coronavirus</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform the school immediately about the test result</li> <li><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></li> <li>Contact school daily</li> <li>Self –isolate for at least 10 days</li> </ul>	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. If they continue to have a high temperature they should stay at home.
<i><b>Somebody in my household has coronavirus symptoms</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b> for 14 days</li> <li>Contact School Daily</li> <li>Household member to get a test</li> <li>Inform the school immediately about the test result.</li> </ul>	Stay at home for 14 days after the first person in your home started having symptoms.
<i><b>Somebody in my household has tested positive with Coronavirus</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform the school immediately about the test result</li> <li><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></li> <li>Contact school daily</li> </ul>	The child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
<i><b>The Track and Trace scheme has identified my child as a close contact of somebody with symptoms of confirmed coronavirus</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></li> <li>Contact school daily</li> <li>Self-isolate for 14 days</li> </ul>	The child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.
<i><b>My child has travelled abroad and has to self-isolate as part of the quarantine process</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed <b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></li> <li>Contact school daily</li> <li>Self-isolate for 14 days</li> <li>Provide information to the school as needed</li> </ul>	When the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed
<i><b>Staff or pupils in my child's bubble have tested positive</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform the school</li> <li><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></li> <li>Everyone in the bubble must self-isolate and take a test.</li> </ul>	When a negative test is confirmed or the necessary isolation period has been completed.



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