



**Return to Primary School Guide  
8<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

*Updated 3/3/21*

## Returning to school

Primary 1,2,3 pupils will return to school on week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March for a period of 2 weeks. They will return to remote learning on week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> March for a period until the Easter holidays.

Primary 4,5,6,7 will continue with remote learning with a start date for them returning to school yet to be determined.

School will remain open for children of defined key workers and those defined as “vulnerable” pupils. (A definition for each is attached at the end of this document. – Annex 1) If you need for your child/ ren to be looked after and you meet the definition criteria please contact [pgilchrist570@c2kni.net](mailto:pgilchrist570@c2kni.net) to book your children into the school.

### **Morning drop-off procedures for P1/2/3 pupils:**

Drop off and pick up procedures are there to avoid crowding and ensure social distancing when possible.

There will be 3 points of entry into school at the beginning of the school day;

- The entrance at the back of the school for P1
- The entrance in the P2/3/4 playground for P2
- The main school entrance on Windmill Hill side for P3.

These doors will open at 8.45am to welcome our pupils and close at 9.00am sharp. Any pupils arriving after this time must enter via the main school entrance.

All pupils should proceed to their allocated entrance independently and all parents should maintain 2m separation between themselves and everyone else, apart from their own children, whilst on the school site. We would encourage this advice to be adhered to outside of the school gates, **please do NOT crowd school entrances and exits.**

If arriving to school by car, we strongly encourage all parents to consider using all available car parking; ie at back of school for Primary 1, in main chapel car park for Primary 2 and Windmill Hill for Primary 3 pupils; and use the pedestrian entrances at the back of the school, the Nursery entrance and on the Windmill Hill to enter the school grounds.

Once you drop your child to school at the main gates, they will go directly to their classroom via the named entrance point.

Staff will welcome your child into the school building to supervise hand sanitizing and entry into the building.

**There will be NO supervision available before 8.45am and NO child should be in the playground areas before school starts.**

**Be prompt to leave the area after drop off and pick up** to avoid unnecessary crowding, allowing all pupils to enter and exit the school safely.

**It is essential that you check your child's temperature is within the normal range (36.1C-37.2C) before setting off for school.**

#### **Afternoon pick up:**

We ask that you arrive at the allocated time to collect your child and leave the school premises promptly.

- Primary 1 parents can wait for their child in the school yard outside of the back main entrance at 1.45pm.
- Primary 2 parents can wait for their child in yard of the P2/3/4 Playground area at 2.00pm.
- Primary 3 parents can wait for their child in the school yard outside of the back main entrance at 2.00pm.

**It is important that parents remain socially distanced when waiting to pick up their child.**

#### **Parental/Carer access to school:**

Parents/carers should not enter the school building for any reason (other than by pre-arranged appointment). If you need to pass on information to any member of school staff or to your child, please do so via telephone or email to [info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk)

#### **Classroom Layout:**

Pupils will be taught in the same classroom as before the Christmas break and they will stay within the confines of their class bubble at all times with their class teacher and their classroom assistants.

- Children will need a filled pencil case- Suggested stationery list attached in Annex B
- Preferably ALL items should be labelled or personalised to reduce loss and there will be no sharing of items.

**Break Times and Outdoor Play:**

Children will remain in their class bubbles during all break and play times.

Each bubble will be assigned a separate playground and will be staggered to avoid mixing of bubbles and overcrowding.

Toys and items from home must not be brought in for play times.

**Lunchtimes:**

School dinner service will be available from week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March and a full weekly menu will be published in the weekly Parent Newsletter published on the school website each Sunday night. Dinner will cost £2.60 per day and must be paid at the beginning of each week in a clearly marked envelope with your child's name and days on which they wish to have school dinners.

**For those having a packed lunch, please send your child to school with their own packed lunch in a clearly labelled lunch box, which must be taken home each day and washed thoroughly. It is preferable to use a plastic lunch box.**

All contents of the lunch box will be placed back in the box and returned home for cleaning.

Children may bring a water bottle. This should be clearly labelled. There will be no opportunities to refill their water bottle during the school day.

**Uniform:**

Children will be required to wear full school uniform. We are still planning for PE on two days per week and your child can wear their school tracksuit on these days. Confirmation of PE days will be published in the calendar section of the school website.

A clean set of uniform should be worn as often as practically possible.

It is recommended that long hair needs to be tied back to reduce the number of times children touch their face during the day.

**Medication:**

Return any required medication which you usually have in school (such as inhalers) in a named bag/envelope. Please make sure the right medication is in school and in date for your child.

**Belongings:**

Please restrict what your child brings to school: packed lunch, snack, water bottle and a coat/jacket if required. **No School Bags should be brought to school.**

No toys, or other items from home should be brought into school. Once your child has brought in their stationery on the first day it will be kept at school.

**Homework:**

There will be no formalised homework during the week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March and this will be kept under weekly review.

**Attendance:**

Once back at school, contact the school office to let us know if your child is absent due to sickness.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE ARE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS YOUR CHILD MAY HAVE.**

**Hygiene/Safety precautions in school**

**Social distancing:**

Desks will be spaced as far apart as possible.

Children will stay within their class or 'bubble' at all times and will remain in the same classroom.

Appropriate PPE will be worn by staff members.

**Indoor spaces:**

Each bubble will only use their designated classroom and designated play area, to minimise movement around school.

Windows and doors will be kept open, where possible, when the building is occupied, to aid ventilation.

The main school hall will not be used for large groups of children and will only be available for allocated class PE time should it not be suitable to avail of outside. No assemblies/shows/clubs etc. can take place under these new regulations.

**Outdoor spaces:**

If possible, opportunities for outdoor learning, in designated areas, will be scheduled.

**Hand-washing:**

Children and staff will wash their hands for the recommended time before leaving home, on entry into school, and at regular intervals throughout the day (including, but not limited to, eating/drinking, using the toilet).

Paper towels and bins will be provided, to ensure adequate drying of hands to prevent infection.

Handwashing routines will be reinforced by all staff.

Hand sanitiser will be available in all school entrances, every person entering the school **MUST** sanitise their hands.

**Tissues and Facial Hygiene:**

Disposable tissues are available in each room for both staff and children to use.

Children and staff must sneeze/cough into tissues (never into hands), adhering to the 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' guidance.

Used tissues will be put in a bin immediately after use.

Children will be reminded not to touch their face - eyes, mouth, nose.

**Toilets:**

Each bubble will have designated toilets near their classroom, they will only be permitted to use toilets within their own zone.

Staff will ensure that toilets do not become over-crowded, by limiting the number of children who can use the toilet facilities at any one time.

**PPE:**

PPE is available in school for staff to use when they cannot adhere to 2 metre social distancing, administering first aid or dealing with an unwell child.

Children are not required to wear PPE to school or when at school.

**Cleaning:**

In addition to the daily cleaning which takes place on site, a cleaning schedule will be implemented for more frequent cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day for high-touch areas, including door handles, light switches, toilet flushes, and taps, as well as toys, books, desks and chairs. A sanitizing kit will be available in each classroom to facilitate continuous sanitizing.

Bins for tissues and other rubbish are emptied throughout the day.

School will remain fully stocked with liquid anti-bacterial soap, sanitising wipes, anti-bacterial spray, paper towels, toilet roll, tissues, and PPE equipment.

**Fire safety procedures:**

Normal procedures will be in place for fire drills.

**Visitors to the School:**

Visitors to the premises will be discouraged and all non-essential visits will be cancelled or postponed.

Contractors are to attend by agreement only after school have satisfied themselves that it is necessary for the visit to take place at that time and that all required controls are in place to allow the work to continue safely.

Contractors will be asked to provide risk assessments prior to their visit which includes their own controls around infection spread prevention.

Hand sanitiser will be available in the school entrance for any visitors who must enter school.

**Mental Health and Well-Being Support**

Staff are aware that the coronavirus outbreak may be causing mental health or well-being difficulties for some children, and that there will be an increased need for mental health support in school and opportunities to talk and share experiences within the school day.

There will be support available at both individual and group levels where required.

Our trained Child Protection Team will help the children with any worries or anxieties they may have as will your child's class teacher.

Remember you can always talk to your child's class teacher via email or telephone if you have any concerns or questions.

Parents who have children with special educational needs may contact Mrs Mullan via email or telephone to discuss any worries or concerns.

**Illness in School**

Staff and children or young people should not attend if they have symptoms of Covid-19 or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.

**Illness in school–children:**

As with all illnesses, should a child become unwell during the period of time in school, their parent will be notified and asked to collect their child from school.

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature/fever or anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste) they will be immediately separated from the rest of their class bubble and brought to the isolation room.

Parents will be immediately notified and the pupil and any members of their household within that school setting will be sent home and advised to follow the PHA guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

St Mary's will keep a full record of such actions and request a parent / carer / guardian record their acknowledgement of this action.

All children over the age of 5 who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of Covid-19, are encouraged to get tested immediately.

### **Procedure if a child displays symptoms of Covid-19 in school:**

School will contact parent/carer.

Any staff member staying with the child will continue to look after them until their parent comes to collect them. PPE equipment is available for staff members.

If you are asked to collect your child due to symptoms of Covid-19 developing you will collect them from the Main entrance.

The staff member who has looked after the child will also be given time to disinfect the PPE (dispose of single use items in a double bag) wash hands and change clothing, if necessary.

The child (if aged over 5) will go for a test ASAP. Tests can be booked online at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

The children within that class will remain in school until the outcome of the individual's test result.

Anyone who has been in contact with the child or shared a classroom environment must wash his/her hands for the recommended time.

Parents of the remaining children will be notified that a member of the class has been sent home with symptoms and that we will confirm the outcome of a test ASAP.



Where the child tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

School will need to see confirmation of a negative test result before allowing the child to return to school.

The child will return to school.

Where the child tests positive, the rest of their class, including the class teacher and classroom assistant will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 10 days.

EA will be informed and relevant paperwork completed.

**Illness in school–staff:**

If a staff member becomes unwell with a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste and smell, they must be sent home.

All staff who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of Covid-19 and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

**Procedure if a staff member displays symptoms of Covid-19 in school:**

Staff member will return home and a replacement teacher will be brought in to teach the class.

The staff member will have a test ASAP.

The children in that class will remain in school until the outcome of the staff member's test result.

If there are no available teachers or assistants to cover, then children in that class will be collected from school.

Where the staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members relating to the staff member can end their self-isolation.

Where the staff member tests positive, the class should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 10 days.

EA will be informed.

**Resources for parents/carers**

Government guidance for education and child care settings:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/>

<https://www.eani.org.uk/>

*All of the above procedures will be kept under constant review and any changes will be notified accordingly through messaging and our school web site;*

[www.stmaryspsportaferry.com](http://www.stmaryspsportaferry.com)

# **Annex 1**

## **Department of Education Definition of a Vulnerable Child (Jan 21)**

The definition of Vulnerable Children as set out in the cross-departmental Vulnerable Children and Young People's Plan 2020 is: (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-cross-departmental-covid-19-vulnerable-children-and-young-peoples-plan>)

- A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.

## **Department of Education Definition of a Key Worker (Jan 21)**

- 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 pre-school 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, banking and waste disposal;
- Financial Services - This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);
- 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.);
- Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency; and
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response

**P 1/2/3**  
**Recommended Stationery List**

Item	Checked
Writing Pencils	
Pencil Sharpener	
Pencil Rubber	
Pritt Stick	
Colouring Pencils <i>(Preferably Twistables)</i>	
Scissors	
Ruler (P3)	