

Week beginning Monday 6th September 2021 Newsletter

www.stmaryspsportaferry.com

It has been a very enjoyable first week back in school and it was lovely to hear the stories from our boys and girls about their enjoyable summer break. I also think it is fair to say that everyone we spoke to was delighted to be back at school again and we were truly delighted to see them again.

I would like to place on record our deep thanks and appreciation to Jamie O'Neill and Portaferry GAC for helping to improve our outdoor environment during the summer break. Jamie spent many weeks over the summer designing a new mural for the main entrance of our school. It is a very impressive piece of art-work and we have had so many positive comments about it during this week. Also, Portaferry GAC donated a set of nets and marked out a pitch for all of our pupils to enjoy. We look forward to many matches and coaching sessions on it in the future.



COVID-19 Update

As you are all fully aware Covid 19 is still all around us and we in school have very clear processes and procedures in place to help combat transmission within school. However in order for this to be truly successful and effective we need your help as parents.

Therefore we are asking all parents and guardians to be extra vigilant with symptoms of Covid and take the appropriate action and to inform the school if Covid is affecting your family.

A lot of confusion exists around the whole issue of "close contacts" and what to do around the attendance at school if you have been identified as a close contact. To help your decision making I have attached, at the end of this newsletter, the flow

chart issued to schools to aid decision making in this regard. If unsure I ask you to contact the school directly, either by telephone, email at info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk or private message on messenger through the school Facebook page. These accounts are monitored outside of normal school hours.

In addition to this we would ask for and appreciate your patience and understanding with staff. Staff that have been identified as close contacts may need to isolate in line with PHA guidance, in order to continue to keep our schooling community safe. This is out of our hands and although we will endeavour to reduce staff absences, this may not be avoided.

SCHOOL LETTERS

If you have not already done so, can you please ensure all up-to-date letters are completed and returned to the school asap.



ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If your child is absent from school, for whatever reason, please contact the school before 9.00am, either by telephone on 028427 28278 or by e-mail at info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk. If there is no-one in the office to take your call, please leave a message on the answering machine stating that your child will not be in school that particular day. When your child returns to school please give a written confirmation for their reason of absence. This is also needed, even if you have contacted the school already.

COMMUNICATION





Throughout this year we will continue to be sending all messages via our school app and private messaging service. We have most parents gaining access to this but we will continue to monitor this to ensure all are receiving the appropriate messages. If you are having any issues with this service, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Contacting the School

If contacting the school about any queries or issues, please remember that the first point of contact is by phone to the school office: 028 427 28278. School e-mail is info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk We will pass on messages to your child's teacher when received and get back to you as soon as possible.

PE Timetable

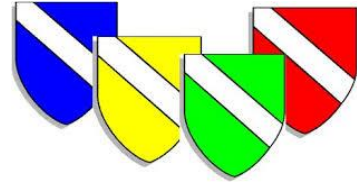
The PE Timetable for this incoming week is stated below. These days will also be added to the calendar on our school web site. On these days your child can come to school in their PE uniform or in black plain tracksuit bottoms and school jumper and polo shirt.

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Monday | P5 and P7 |
| Tuesday | P1, P3 and P6 (Swimming) |
| Wednesday | P2 P4 and P7 |
| Thursday | P3 P5 and P6 |
| Friday | P1 P2 and P4 |



House Teams

During this week we will once again be initiating our House Teams for P3-7. Your child will be told which house colour team they are a member of and be issued with a House Team coloured badge during this week.



Dinners

The dinner menu for this week is as follows:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Monday | Spaghetti Bolognaise, Grated Cheese, Sliced Crusty Bread, Broccoli Florets & Fresh Baton Carrots <i>Homemade Rice Pudding & Peaches</i> |
| Tuesday | Breaded cod fish fingers Lemon Slice and Tartar Sauce, Baked Beans, Tossed Salad, Mashed Potato <i>Apple Crumble & Custard</i> |
| Wednesday | Roast Beef, Gravy, Herb Stuffing, Cauliflower Cheese, Fresh Diced Carrot & Parsnip Dry Oven Roasted Potato Mashed Potatoes <i>Melon Slice & Yoghurt</i> |
| Thursday | Breast of Chicken Curry with boiled rice, naan bread, Crunchy Fresh Coleslaw, Garden Peas & Selection of Salads <i>Homemade shortbread & Fruit Pot</i> |
| Friday | Bread Chicken Goujons or Chicken Baguette, Selection of Salads, Salsa Dip, Sweetcorn, Chips or baked Potato <i>Jelly & Ice Cream with Fruit Salad</i> |



Dinners 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, class, the amount included and the days on which they wish to have school dinners.

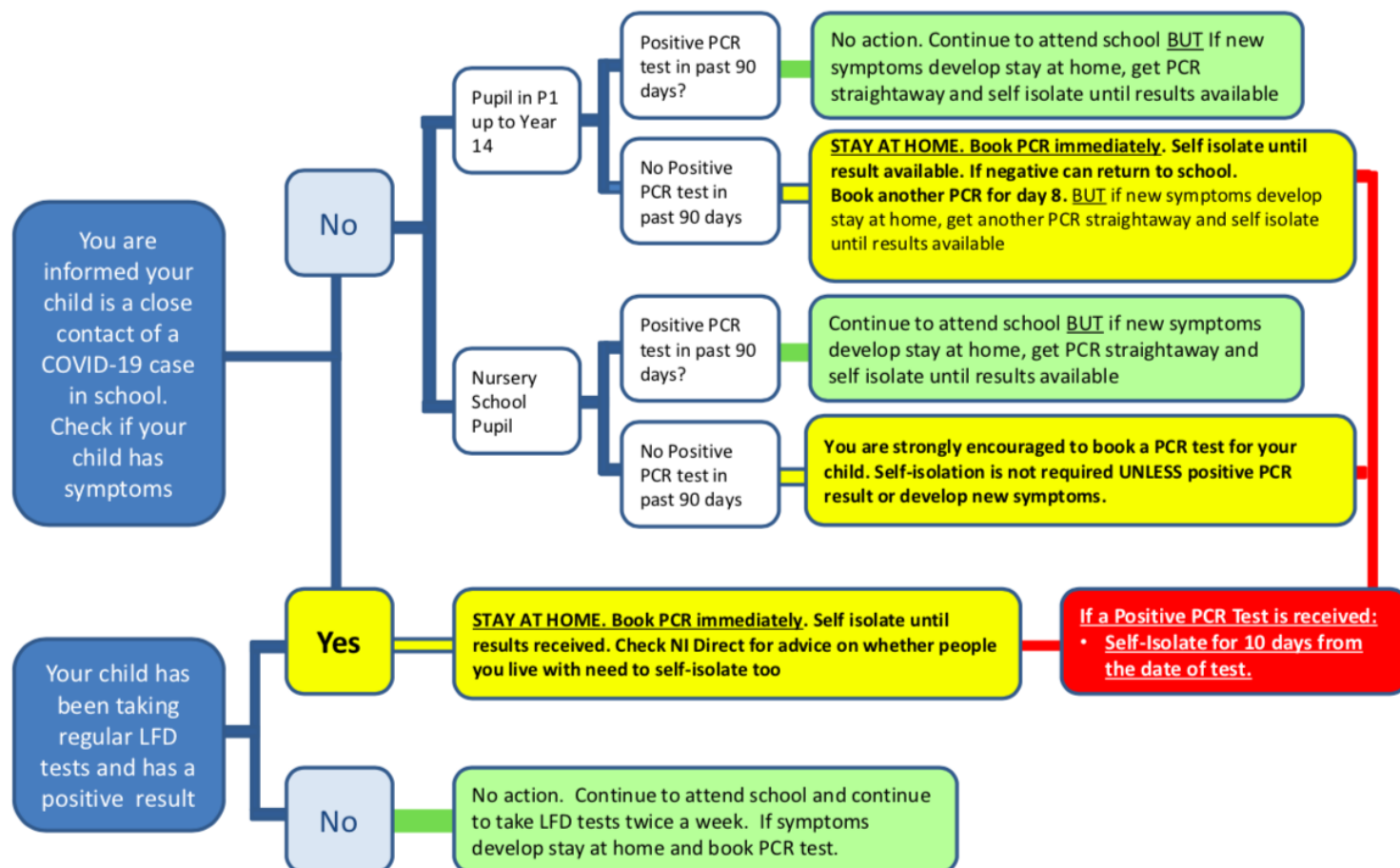
NUT ALLERGIES

There are a number of pupils in our school with nut allergies. I therefore remind all to be mindful when packing your child's lunch or break that you ensure there are no traces of nuts contained in any of the products or spreads used.



Flowchart for PARENTS based on NI Direct website guidance

Only use for **pupils** in a school setting 03/09/2021



EDUCATION RESTART



EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN KEEPING OUR SCHOOLS SAFE AND HELPING TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.

EVERYONE SHOULD CONTINUE TO:

- ✓ **Wash** hands regularly
- ✓ **Cover** coughs and sneezes
- ✓ **Wear** a face covering where necessary
- ✓ **Practise** social distancing
- ✓ **Follow** the latest public health advice

WHAT SHOULD I NOT DO?

- ✓ **Don't** send your child to school if they have COVID-19 symptoms or if they have been identified as a close contact
- ✓ **Don't** allow your child to use public transport unless you have no alternative
- ✓ **Don't** gather at the school entrance/gate
- ✓ **Don't** allow your child to share food/drinks with friends

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- ✓ **Do** let the school know if your child will be absent due to COVID-19 symptoms
- ✓ **Do** follow the advice given if you have been contacted by the PHA Contact Tracing Service
- ✓ **Do** encourage your child to socially distance if it is possible
- ✓ **Do** encourage good hand hygiene
- ✓ **Do** use alternative transport if you can
- ✓ **Do** walk or cycle if it's safe and appropriate to do so
- ✓ **Do** use park and ride or other car-parking facilities (if available), and walk the remainder of the journey to school
- ✓ **Do** avoid parking close to or at the school gates
- ✓ **Do** encourage the use of face coverings on school transport and in post-primary schools/ settings
- ✓ **Do** encourage and supervise your child to carry out a COVID-19 test if they have been invited to participate

FURTHER INFORMATION, INCLUDING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS, CAN BE FOUND ON THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S WEBSITE AT: WWW.EDUCATION-NI.GOV.UK

