



Dromore Road Primary School

Upper Dromore Road
Warrenpoint
County Down
BT34 3JH

31st December 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

I trust you all had a relaxing, safe and enjoyable Christmas and got the chance to enjoy time with your loved ones. As you are probably aware from the news this morning, a return to face to face teaching has been delayed until **11th January** for all primary school pupils and instead the Education Minister has asked schools to teach remotely next week. Given the unprecedented levels of positive Covid-19 tests since Christmas, and the pressure this applies to our health service, this decision probably didn't come as a surprise, however, the normality of returning to school would have been greatly welcomed by us all.

Having just received clarification from the Education Minister, I wanted to update you on the arrangements for next week:

- As was originally planned, Monday 4th January will be a staff only day, during which teachers will plan and prepare activities for the rest of the week.
- We intend to use Seesaw to continue to facilitate teaching and learning **from Tuesday 5th** – Friday 8th January. It is vitally important that all pupils log on everyday to complete the set activities and class teachers will be available during the period 9am-4pm to offer teaching support and feedback. If you require alternative arrangements to be made or do not have access to a device, please contact the school on Monday morning.
- Although the reopening of school buildings has been postponed for a week, the Executive has asked schools to remain open for a limited number of children. These include:

- children who are vulnerable and;

- children whom both parents (or a parent in a single parent family) are key workers, with no other safe alternative.

This provision in school will be in a supervisory capacity and iPads will be provided to allow pupils to access the work set by the class teacher via Seesaw.



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The first step for all of us will be to ascertain the need in our own school community for supervised provision next week. I have included the list that DENI has classified as vulnerable and a list of key workers as reference. If you are a parent who will be unable to carry out their key worker role without your child being supervised by the school or have a child that is vulnerable and needs the routine of attending school please email me over the weekend smcgrath554@c2kni.net. Alternatively, please phone Mrs McParland (02841775656) before 12 noon on Monday 4th January to arrange supervision, if required. I will then directly communicate with key worker parents or parents of vulnerable pupils about future arrangements for next week.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year. In an extraordinary year, I've been extremely grateful for your extraordinary support and encouragement as we've worked together to ensure our children are happy in school and continue to thrive. I'm so proud of all our pupils' accomplishments, particularly in this extraordinary year and would like to thank the whole school team for their outstanding commitment to our pupils and to the school.

Wishing you and your family a safe, healthy and happy new year to come!

Kind regards,

Sharon McGrath
(Principal)

VULNERABLE CATEGORY

- Receiving support from Health & Social Services including family support, child protection and looked after children services;
- On the Child Protection Register;
- With statements of special education needs;
- Accessing Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS);
- With emerging and diagnosed mental health needs;
- Who are young carers;
- Whose parents have mental health problems;
- Whose parents have alcohol and drug addictions;
- Affected by domestic violence.



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LIST OF KEY WORKERS AS OUTLINED BY DENI ON 31st DECEMBER 2020

- 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.