Notification of Possible Car Park Closure

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

We hope that your child has settled back into the school routine and is enjoying being back at school with their friends. Since returning in September, we have seen a significant increase in the volume of traffic using the school car park, particularly in the afternoon and this has raised safety concerns for pupils and staff as we try to find a traffic management plan that works for the whole community.

On my request, EA Health and Safety representatives attended school on Friday 1st October to assess the problem for themselves. They sympathised, as our lack of school grounds and our access from the main road means that we have very few options available to alleviate the problem.

As carpooling is not a possibility due to Covid19, possible options to alleviate the congestion in the car park centred around staggering the pick-up time again and limiting access to the school car park. They have suggested a range of strategies to try initially, before potentially having to close off parental access to the main car park. Please read the following traffic management arrangements carefully and for the safety of our children and staff, we encourage you to only use the school car park if you have no other option available.

**Mornings.**

Whilst we recognise that the traffic management problem is not as bad in the morning, if possible we would encourage parents to walk their child to school. This will help our environment and have health benefits. If walking to school, pupils should use the pedestrian entrance at the office to enter the school grounds and **not** the main car park gate.

If parents/guardians have no other option, e.g. due to mobility issues etc. they can drive in through the car park gate, drive around to the drop off/collection area at the wall and then leave the school grounds through the main gate again. There is a one-way system in operation here so if you need to go to the school office, do not leave cars parked in the drop off zone.

Any child arriving after 9.00 a.m. should enter the building through the front door, where they will be assisted by Mrs McParland at reception. The car park gates will be locked shortly after 9am and will not be opened until home time.

**Afternoon**

For the safety of our children and staff, we would ask parents to **avoid** entering the school grounds at home time and to make other pick-up arrangements.

**Please note the following changes:**

1. Staggered pick-ups will be extended to ease congestion.

P3 and 321 Club will now finish at 2.40pm, P4/5 will finish at 2.45pm and P6/7 will finish at 2.50pm. If you have children in multiple classes, we would kindly ask you to pick up at the later time as getting children out early is causing an unnecessary disruption to classes.

1. Parents should park in the town or locally and walk to school for collection. Please do not obstruct footpaths outside the school or park in front of residents’ entrances. When accessing the school, please **use the pedestrian entrance** at the office to enter the school grounds and **not the main car park gate**. This is for everyone’s safety! All pedestrian pupils exit the main entrance at the front of the school and will be supervised until collection.
2. If parents/guardians have no other option but to access the school car park, e.g. due to mobility issues, we would ask you to be mindful of the following:

-Avoid coming early to get a parking space, particularly if your child is the last pick-up time.

-Drive in slowly and round as far as you can.

-Stop/park your car so that it is facing the gate and easy to exit. We want to avoid cars having to manoeuver around other vehicles as this increase the chance of an accident happening.

-Avoid parking in a position that is going to hinder other cars getting in and out.

-Avoid reversing as this increases the risk of an accident.

-Avoid entering the car park if it looks congested. Park elsewhere and walk or let waiting cars out first. This will free up more space.

-Remember pedestrians will be walking across the car park so take care!

1. Children waiting for collection will wait with their teacher behind the wall for safety. **All children should be physically collected from this pick-up point by their parents so they can be safely escorted back to their car.** This will help alleviate staff’s current safety concerns and allow them to devote their time to supervising.

Please share this information with anyone dropping off or collecting your children on your behalf. Please also discuss your pick-up arrangements with your child so that your child knows if you are collecting them from the front entrance or from the car park. Over the next few weeks, we will continue to monitor the situation but in the meantime if you have any suggestions on how we can improve the traffic management situation at home time please get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Sharon McGrath

(PRINCIPAL)