

ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Friday 5th February 2021

Dear Parents,

Thank you all for your continued hard work and partnership in working alongside us as a school community. It is a pleasure to see the work uploaded to teachers daily and how much effort the children are putting into their endeavours. I hope they are so proud of themselves as indeed we are of them.

The outcome for school closures is an extended one, as we all know by now. This calls for us all to dig deep and keep moving ahead as best we can to support the children we all care for.

Staff continue to work hard behind the scenes preparing work, videos, voice mails and then responding across the day to tasks uploaded for their attention for every child and it is heart-warming to receive these.

Every parent has been more than positive and complimentary to each teacher during their personal phone calls and this tells us that we are doing so much right in the support of both yourselves and especially the children across the school.

Extremely positive feedback from you to teachers during the last telephone call regarding Collins on-line reading scheme purchased for 1-year by PTA, was great to hear.

We have listened to and discussed suggestions that a few parents have put forward and have given them careful consideration. An increasing number of parents are seeking packs to support home learning. Accordingly,

- P1 - P5 will remain on the website provision currently hosting their work; teachers will continue to post lessons, videos and voice messages as well as respond to work. Children are able to visit and revisit videos multiple times to enable them to grasp a concept. As you know, children of this age require sustained support on IT devices and especially a careful eye to keep them safe. Some parents are finding this challenging due to work and home life commitments as well as problems with internet.
- P6 & P7 will remain on Google Classroom as before. The difference in our professional judgement that P6/7 pupils have the IT skills and the ability to operate appropriately

on Google Classroom especially on Google Meets where they are required to remain on 'mute' until asked to speak and utilise raise hand signal and wait, just a couple of examples of their expected behaviour. P6/7 parents and pupils have signed up to an agreed Code of Conduct that is shared and understood by all participants. The degree of self-discipline is high.

There are a minimum of worksheets that must be printed off for any pupil and these can be avoided. Please, download and work from screen to paper and upload their responses.

In response to requests from an increasing number of parents and as part of our review, we will distribute fortnightly support materials for all P1 - P5 pupils beginning with:

- On Thursday 11th February P1 - P3 will be able to collect support materials to accompany the online learning 10:00am - 11:00am with collection points at the windows on these 4 classrooms from front yard;
- On Friday 12th February P4 - P5 will be able to collect text packs to accompany the online learning 10:00am - 11:00am with collection points from rear door of Assembly Hall located at back yard.
(DO NOT drive around to the back yard; park your car outside school gates and walk along the pedestrian path to the back of the school.)

It is essential that all children in these classes continue to log into the Home Learning on website for weekly overviews, voice mails and videos that are to accompany these support materials. Please note, quantity of material on Home Learning pages will reduce to reflect the support materials being produced.

- **All Reading will remain online through Collins eBooks and Libraries NI.**

Uploading of work for teachers to view on website.

- **Only 1 piece of Literacy and 1 piece of Mathematics work need to be uploaded for a teacher to see for each child; a 30 second video would also be ideal to show a child engaging with a task as an alternative.**

- When answers are provided by teachers for work, parents are asked to mark that work with their child using the answers provided.
- Work must not be uploaded after 6:00pm to the website as staff will not be available after this time any day and **weekends are free time for everyone.**
- Children need to have assigned 'screen time' and should take regular breaks every 15 - 20 minutes from any on-screen engagement and do some physical activity to re-energise.
- Every Friday afternoon from 1:00pm will be **Golden Time** for all children - they decide what to do for pure enjoyment and will not have any assigned tasks to complete.

Every other Friday, all P1 - P5 staff will be in school to facilitate distribution of Support Materials for pupils, and therefore, will not be on the Home Learning on-line those Fridays.

A reminder will be sent to you all a week in advance of the Friday material preparation and distribution days, when teachers will be in school sorting this work and its collection for your children and not online.

Class Weekly Check-ins.

We hope to set up through Google Classroom/Meet Class Assemblies and catch-up with each class P1 - P5. More about this in the next couple of weeks as it is filtered through different classes.

Take care of yourselves and keep safe and well until we can get back to school again, hopefully, in the not too distant future.

With very best wishes,

A McQuinness