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together  
for our future.

## ***Braidside Integrated Primary and Nursery School***

***89 Fry's Road, Ballymena Co. Antrim BT43 7EN  
1989- 2019: 30 Years of Integration***

**028 25647899**



***Principal: J McAuley***

**[www.braidside.co.uk](http://www.braidside.co.uk)**

10/09/20

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well. Although it has been an unusual return to school after the summer break, I want to provide some reassurance that things in school have been progressing well and we are gradually adapting to the new routines and measures. Your help with settling the children has been invaluable. The children have shown much resilience and adaptability.

We have been so pleased with how they are coming into school, smiling and content and looking forward to the day ahead. Classrooms are calm and settled and children have been busy with various activities and tasks. We are content too with how well the class protective bubbles have been maintained in this initial period. The children remain in their room throughout the day, with each class having separate play times in playgrounds around the school. We are slowly adjusting to so many new routines and settling into the new school; which has been such a positive development for us all.

As I noted in the Restart Plan, we continue to reflect and review our measures regularly to ensure the smooth running of the school and the best outcomes for the children. It is with this in mind, I bring to your attention the following review and update to the measures.

### **Arrivals**

Our morning staggered starts have been running very well now that everyone is familiar with the traffic arrangements. Mornings are settled and children quickly come in, wash hands and begin their learning. However, we believe we can achieve a quicker entrance into school and therefore we are reducing the entrance times to 5- minute intervals. Afternoons remain unchanged and are working very well. **These new times will begin from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September.** Please see the times below:

#### **Start Times:**

**A-F: 8:50am**

**G-J: 8:55am**

**K- McL: 9:00am**

**McN- R: 9:05am**

**S-W: 9:10am**

#### **Finish Times:**

**2:40pm**

**2:45pm**

**2:50pm**

**2:55pm**

**3:00pm**

I would remind all **parents to please adhere to social distancing when collecting children from school and to avoid congregating in the school grounds.** As always, we encourage active travel when coming to school and going home. School buses are also running smoothly, with children using their face coverings as outlined. It is important that children arrive at their allocated time to avoid waiting outside unsupervised in large numbers or in the event of poor weather.

### **School Meals**

The menu for school lunches in September has been placed on the school website and the packed lunches have been working well, as have the routines for eating in the classroom. Having reviewed the lunchtime arrangements and in consultation with Dunclug kitchen, we will be providing a hot meal at lunchtime from **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September.** As before, children will eat their meal in the classroom and it will be in a disposable container. The menu for the next 4 weeks, will be on the school website closer to the time. We would also remind parents of children with a packed lunch that a washable, plastic lunchbox should be used. We would ask that fabric lunchboxes are avoided as they can be more difficult to thoroughly wash on a daily basis. For children who bring yoghurts, or little fruit pots, please remember to bring the necessary cutlery.

### **Mobile Phones**

Our school policy requests that mobile phones are not brought into school. If there are special circumstances that require a child to bring a phone on a particular day, then we ask that parents send in a note to the teacher outlining the reason for the phone. The phone should be switched off during the school day and the teacher will store this in a locked place until home time, when the phone will be returned to the child. We are grateful for your cooperation in this matter.

### **Plimsolls**

All children are asked to have a pair of indoor plimsolls (gutties) for PE in the hall. While the weather remains dry and pleasant, teachers may well go outside but for inclement weather the PE hall will be used. As we have a beautiful new floor in the hall we wish to ensure we use only appropriate footwear.

### **Face Coverings**

Although the wearing of face coverings is not essential for children in school, children may wear these if parents wish. Please ensure that children are aware of how to use and look after their face coverings. A small plastic bag may be most useful for storing it while eating or doing PE.

### **Making contact**

At this time, when we are unable to have parents in the school premises, if you have a query you may contact the school office or send an email ([info@braidsideintegratedps.ballymena.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@braidsideintegratedps.ballymena.ni.sch.uk)). To help reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19, we would ask all parents to make an appointment with the class teacher in advance of accessing the school. **All visitors to the school are required to wear a face covering on the premises.**

I would continue to encourage parents to visit the website and Facebook page regularly to ensure you are up to date with all relevant information. Please visit your child's class page where teacher will place information, pictures and updates on the work happening in school. A large number of families have now downloaded the SchoolsNI app and this allows us to send alerts to parents when information is placed on the website.

We have really enjoyed returning to school and getting back to some degree of normality. Our priority remains the ensuring safety of everyone in the school community. We hope to have some fun whole-school activities in the weeks ahead, particularly in relation to our active travel programme. So there is much to look forward too.

I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable weekend!

Yours faithfully,

  
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Principal.