



# St Joseph's Primary School

## Carnacaville

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Principal: Mr Christopher McCann Bsc(Hons), PGCE, PQH(NI)

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Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians

As we now look forward to the new academic year, we all hope the PHA guidance will be updated over the summer months to enable us to go back to a normal school day. We are pleased that social distancing has been reduced to one metre and moving forward we have been working hard to formulate a plan for a return to school. Each classroom will be designated as a protective bubble for children and staff members. *Whilst this guidance is subject to change, it does not allow for the full return of children, teachers and classroom assistants into the classroom setting at this time. Therefore, your child will be attending school 2 days per week until guidance changes.*

As a group of Primary Principals in the immediate locality, we have had a series of meetings to discuss the way forward and laterally the implications of the Department of Education publication, 'Northern Ireland Re-Opening School Guidance: New School Day', issued Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020. With due regard given to the pastoral care of our pupils, staff and indeed the parent body we have reached a consensus which we would like to communicate with you.

- I realise that the past few months have been very challenging for everyone, particularly the children and therefore school will reopen for pupils on **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August** for an **induction week from 9:10am to 2:00pm each day. The 2:00 pm finish will allow families to collect all siblings in one visit to school for this week only.**
- ***All pupils are asked to bring a packed lunch during the Induction Week.***
- The induction week will focus on the pastoral needs of our pupils, their health and wellbeing and the enhancement of a 'reconnect' between pupil and school, helping our pupils settle back into the new school day and the changes to their school environment. Reception and Primary One classes will have their own separate dates to return in small groups for their induction. Letters to these parents will follow.
- School will open in a 'blended fashion' with half of each class in on Monday and Tuesday; and the other half of the classes in on Thursday and Friday. Wednesdays will be used to allow staff time to prepare for class and to allow for cleaning.
- We will split the classes alphabetically by families to make it as manageable as possible for parents/guardians to leave children to school and collect at home time. The days allocated to your children will be forwarded to you in early August.
- Pupils are asked to wear full school uniform as normal each day they are in school. We would ask you to try to ensure uniforms are washed regularly through the week.

- Morning playground time will be suspended. All children will proceed directly to their classes from 8.45am using the side pedestrian gate.
- **Only Reception and Primary One parents are asked to escort their children into the school grounds.**
- **All other parents are requested to not enter the playground area** to help minimise the number of persons on site. Staff will be on hand at the entrances to guide and assist children.
- The gate will close promptly at 9:10 and late arrivals will present to the front office using the main Reception doors.
- Parents/guardians are asked to respect social distancing guidelines and not congregate at the entrance to the playground, front of school or the main Reception doors.
- Pupils will be expected to sanitise their hands on entry to school and wash their hands once in class. Pupils will wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the day
- Children will be in year group 'protective bubbles' and will only interact with children and staff from their 'bubble'. This includes in the playground for break time and lunchtimes.
- Classrooms will be sanitised daily, including a deeper clean every Wednesday and Friday afternoon.
- Children must bring their own labelled water bottle to school. Water bottles should be taken home and cleaned each night.
- School bags and lunch boxes/bags should not be brought into school. Parents will be asked to provide pencils, colouring pencils etc. in a labelled clear wallet/folder on day one of their induction and will remain in school for the pupil's sole use. Pupils must not bring in any additional items from home.
- The school meals service will be available from ***Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 to provide packed lunches only. Provision of hot meals will be reviewed throughout September as guidance develops.***
- Pupils eligible for free School meals (FSM) will have a packed lunch provided by the catering staff.
- All other pupils, parents may book and pay for a packed lunch provided by the school catering staff through our online booking system or provide their own.
- ***Packed lunches must contain items that the pupil can open and eat independently and be in a disposable bag.***
- At this moment breakfast club will not open. We will keep this under review as routines and guidelines are established.
- All after school activities are suspended for Term 1. This will be kept under review.

Please be aware that this plan may completely change in light of evolving DE Guidance. As a group of local Principals, we will continue to meet over the Summer to explore how the needs of our pupils will be met and yet remain compliant with Department of Education and Public Health Authority Guidance.

It is your responsibility to access and follow school communications e.g. Website, school app. Please ensure that you regularly check the website for updates.

We appreciate your ongoing support over the past few months which have been very difficult for us all. We look forward to seeing you in the new school year and we look forward to working in partnership to ensure our school remains a welcoming place of safety, comfort and nurture for all.

Kind regards,

Christopher McCann  
Principal