

4th March 2021

Dear Parents

We are really looking forward to welcoming our **Nursery to P3** pupils back to school on **Monday 8th March** for **two weeks**. At the moment, the plan is for **Nur-P3** to revert to **online learning again from 22nd - 26th March**. I will notify you if there is any change to this arrangement. **P4-7 will continue with online learning until 26th March**.

We continue to follow the Department of Education's guidance on the reopening of schools and will continue to follow the procedures that we had in place during term 1. We will endeavour to make Orchard County a safe and happy place to be for everyone. Hopefully the children will integrate back into school and will easily adapt to the established routines.

Please read the details below carefully to help prepare yourself and your child for the restart next week.

Staggered Arrival and Departure Times (in families, alphabetically, according to surname)

We will continue with our staggered arrival times to minimise contact between pupils and parents and to allow staggered times for hand washing.

Morning Arrival Times P1-P3	8.40am A-E	8.50am F-K	9.00am L-P	9.10am R-Z
Afternoon Departures	P1/2 1.45pm	P2/3 1.55pm		
Doors to enter and leave from	P1/2 Mrs D cloakroom door	P2/3 Mrs E Resource Area 1 red door		
Nursery Times	8.45-11.45am A-G	8.50-11.50am H-M	8.55-11.55am P-W	

P1-3 parents should leave their child at the gate to walk to their entrance door, staff will be in the playground to meet them. Parents should not enter the school building, except in exceptional or pre-arranged circumstances.

All pupils should be collected **by one parent/person**, at the relevant pick up point. Please remember to wear a mask at drop off and pick up times.

We will be continuing with the **'PROTECTIVE BUBBLE'** strategy. Children will only mix with and play at break and lunchtimes with the other pupils in their class.

UNIFORM

Pupils will wear full school uniform as usual and may come to school on their PE days, in their PE uniform, (**PLAIN** navy jogging bottoms/leggings, red polo shirt, school hoodie or navy school jumper and trainers, plimsoles should be left in school for indoor use). Coronavirus can land on fabrics and remain for some time, therefore children should be encouraged to wear a clean uniform each day.

P1/2 PE days- Monday & Friday

P2/3 PE days- Monday & Wednesday

Children should have a coat, hat and gloves with them each day as they will be outside for PE or outdoor play everyday.

SCHOOL BAGS Pupils may bring a washable schoolbag, lunch bag and water bottle to and from school. Remember to clean these regularly. We leave these bags in the cloakroom (where possible) with the children's coats. We are still trying to minimise items carried between school and home. Pencil cases will still remain in school. Pupils will not be permitted to use the drinking fountains.

GOOGLE CLASSROOM

P1/2 and P2/3 will continue to use GC for homework guidance and information. P4-7 will continue with their daily activities and Google Meets through GC.

NURSERY

After school club will run as usual on Monday and Wednesday.

SCHOOL MEALS

School meals will be available for P1-3 pupils for the two weeks that they are in school. Dinner money should continue to be sent on a Monday morning. The new March menu is available on the website.

P1-3 Free School Meals Pupils- Direct payments in lieu of free school meals will not be made in respect of pupils in year groups that are required to attend school, as these pupils will receive free school meals at school for that period.

P4-7 Free School Meal Pupils- Direct payments in lieu of free school meals will be made in respect of pupils in year groups that are not required to attend school and continue to learn remotely from home.

Free school meals will not be provided to key workers' children and vulnerable children entitled to free school meals when at school for supervised learning as parents will be receiving a direct payment.

Any P4-7 pupil attending for supervision may purchase a meal (£2.60) when in school, otherwise they should bring a packed lunch.

Pupils will continue to eat their dinner/lunch in their classroom. Due to this arrangement it is only possible for our cook to serve a set meal and a set pudding, rather than a choice menu. This is again following advice from the EA meals service.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There will be no after school activities planned until we receive further guidelines from DE.

HOLIDAYS **St Patrick's Day - Wednesday 17th March**

Easter Holidays - 29th March - 9th April (school will end on Friday 26th March at 12.00)

READING BOOKS AND COLLECTION OF PACKS

We still have a number of packs in the front porch that have not been collected by parents, these can be collected at any time.

If you have any reading books that still need to be returned, could you please leave these also in the front porch.

Please ensure that you are looking after the reading books and text books. Following the recent return of books, we discovered some books had been written or drawn on and some had food over and inside them. Many of these books can only be purchased in a pack of 6 and that can be quite expensive. We really need every book back in good condition to ensure our children's groups have sufficient reading books.

On Monday please ensure that all P1-3 children return **ALL** their books in their folders or a labelled plastic bag. All reading books should be returned in a sealed bag with your child's name and class on it so it can be returned to the appropriate teacher.

STAFF

Mrs McCormack has returned to online teaching but will not return to face to face teaching until after Easter. Miss Bothwell will be teaching P1/2 on a Thursday and P2/3 on a Friday for two weeks. Mrs McCormack will be teaching P4/5 remotely on a Thursday and will be leading P4-7 Engage groups remotely on a Friday.

Mrs Campbell, one of our assistants in the Nursery is moving to a post in another school. We would like to thank her for her dedication to her role in Nursery, working as part of our team, in a very difficult year. We wish her well in her new position. Miss Agnew, a classroom assistant who was working in the main school from September, will be moving to the nursery from Monday.

POST PRIMARY TRANSFER

The EA online post primary application process is open from **12 noon on 1st March and close at 4pm on 16th March 2021**.

An application will have to be submitted by parents for all P7 pupils, except for those with a statement of special educational needs, EA SEN will deal with these pupils' transfer to post primary schools.

Please check out post primary schools' websites to view their criteria, prospectus, virtual school tours and to get a general overview of the school. Speak with your child about transfer. Parents will be notified of their child's placement on 19th June. Any questions, please email the P7 staff or myself and we will do our best to help you.

Please click on this link for more information and videos that explain the process <https://www.eani.org.uk/digitaladmissions>.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME

This work is almost complete. The contractors have done a fantastic job and we will really benefit from the additional parking spaces. Please remember that parents' parking is in front of the MUGA or you may now use the drop off and pick up spaces on the left, when you come in through the gate. This will hopefully alleviate the previous problems we had. Please do not park near the bus parking area at the front door or near the nursery. There should now be adequate spaces to park in. Please be careful as there may still be some contractors around the grounds next week. There is also a new path, that comes around to the front of the school, from the back path. This will be used mainly by parents bringing pupils to and collecting them from the nursery. This will avoid any parent from having to come into the KS1 outdoor play area.

SUPERVISION OF P4-7 KEY WORKER/VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Our school remains open for '**Supervised Learning**' for **P4-7 vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers ONLY**.

The definitions for these groupings can be found below.

If you wish to avail of this service, please complete the form on our school website by **Thursday at 2pm** each week (password- key).

The Department of Education have been very clear that **this is not face to face teaching** and these pupils will be doing the same activities that all pupils in their class will be doing at home. The P4-7 teachers will still be teaching remotely, so these pupils will be supervised by classroom assistants mainly. Pupils will have access to an iPad, to obtain their daily tasks and parents have access to these tasks on GC before their child comes into school for supervision.

Given the government's current message, P4-7 should still be at home where possible, parents are reminded that this provision **should only be considered when all other childcare options have been exhausted**, to facilitate parents getting to their workplace. This should be used for the minimum amount of time and days necessary.

These pupils should enter and exit school from Monday 8th via the P4/5 cloakroom door and will be a bubble in a classroom.

This group of pupils will be a 'bubble', so please be aware that if we get a positive case within the bubble, all of the children and staff will have to self-isolate.

Please do not send your child to school for supervision if they or someone in your house is unwell or have Covid-19 symptoms.

The definition of Vulnerable Children

A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.

- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.

Definition of key workers:

- **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.

The staff, as always, are willing to help those parents with a genuine need for childcare but we also have to continue to protect the safety of the school staff and our whole school community and follow DE's advice.

REMOTE LEARNING DEVICES AND WIFI

We have some EA Loan devices in school for pupils to use during remote learning. These have just arrived today. They will primarily be allocated to FSMs pupils in P4 and P7 but may be rolled out to children in other year groups also. These are loan devices therefore a loan agreement has to be signed and the device is expected to be returned to school after online learning is finished. If you feel your child/family would benefit from one of these devices, please email me (jmcmillan521@c2kni.net) and I will provide further details. We hope to distribute these tomorrow.

PTA

The PTA applied for an ABC Council Community Grant to purchase IT resources. We are very grateful to the secretary of our PTA, Mrs Manton, who applied and secured a grant for £1000 for IT equipment. We hope to purchase iPads with this grant.

Mrs Tedford, another member of our PTA applied and managed to secure a grant for £500, through the HSBC for resources for the school. We are very grateful to these parents and are looking forward to a time when the PTA can restart their planning and fund raising activities.

WORLD BOOK DAY COMPETITION

Today is World Book Day so I would encourage you to allow your child time to enjoy a book and maybe dress up as their favourite character. You could maybe do some baking around the theme of a book.

I have asked all the children to design a character from a book using a potato, something we all usually have in the house. The photos can be uploaded on GC or Nursery pupils can email them to Mrs Kaestner. The creations I have seen so far are brilliant! We will have a class prize for the most creative design.

PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

The parent teacher meetings planned for the end of March will not take place that week. We will inform you of a further date following the return of all pupils to school.

ENGAGE PROGRAMME

The Engage programme continues throughout this month, online for P4-7 and face to face for P1-3 when they are in school. Miss Bothwell and Mrs McCormack will be leading this. The focus will be offering the children support within the areas of emotional well-being, literacy and numeracy.

REMINDER Children should not attend school if:

- they appear unwell
- they, or a member of their household, displays any symptoms of COVID-19

Contact the PHA for advice.

Again, thank you for your support at this difficult time. We really do appreciate your level of commitment to your child's education and we fully appreciate that, like ourselves, many of you are still working and trying to home school as well. We monitor the children's engagement in daily tasks and are able to see who is having difficulties or are not engaging at all. We have to complete weekly attendance sheets for DE, based on this engagement at home. If you or your child are ill, please let us know and we will do all we can to help you and will understand why work is not completed.

Please remember if you need help, contact any of the staff by email or phone the school and we will do all we can to help you. We look forward to the day when we can welcome all our pupils back into school. Until then P4-7 have to continue with the same enthusiasm each day, completing their learning at home. Thank you all so much for your assistance with remote learning, we really do have great support from our Orchard County parents.

Regards

J McMillan

Principal