

On behalf of the Board of Governors and the staff I want to thank you all for assisting us throughout September with the various routines and PHA procedures we have had to follow regarding Covid 19. We really appreciate your support and through continued partnership we can endeavour to keep our school community safe.

Arrival and Departure Times

From Monday 4th October we reverted back to our normal finishing times, this seems to be working well. P1-P7 pupils may come into school between 8.40-8.50am and our Nursery pupils 8.50-9.00am. All pupils should now be left at the back gate or the gate in front of the nursery, to walk to their entrance door. Nursery pupils can still be brought to and collected from the nursery door.

Afternoon pickups are working well. Nursery finishes at 11.30am, after school Nursery club 12.30pm, P1-3 1.50pm and P4-7 2.50pm. P1/2 and P2/3 parents should continue to stand socially distanced outside their child's classroom window at the allocated time. Parents picking up P4-7 pupils should remain in their cars or stand socially distanced at the top of the back path and avoid coming into the playground.

School Photos – Monday 15th November 2021



Opus Photography will be coming into school on **Monday 15th November** to take school photos. Permission slips will be sent home soon. Only those with a signed permission form will have their photograph taken. All pupils should come in full school uniform on Monday 15th Nov.

Parent/Teacher Consultations



Due to Covid 19 restrictions, the Autumn parent/teacher meetings will take place **via a telephone call** during the week **Monday 18th and Friday 22nd October (1.15 – 4pm)**. To ensure the staff can get through the necessary interviews throughout that week all **P1-P7 children will be finishing at 1pm**.

Nursery interviews will take place from 11.45-1.45pm. To facilitate this, there will be no after school nursery club that week.

You have been advised of the time allocated to you this week. Please take careful note of the time as teachers have a very busy timetable on each of their interview days and re-scheduling is very difficult. Pupils with more than one child have been timetabled for the calls on the same afternoon where possible.

Please note that for classes where the teaching is split between two staff members, the interviews will usually be done by the class teacher working on the day selected. For those parents who do not live together, could I ask that this note is shared and a suitable day agreed for your telephone interview, as each teacher allocates one slot per child. The school bus will be available at 1pm every day that week for those children who normally travel home by bus.

Curriculum Booklets

Each teacher has posted their class curriculum booklet on their Google Classroom page. This sets out the curriculum (Numeracy, Literacy, WAU, ICT and homework guidance) for your child, for the year ahead. This is very useful and can be referred to throughout the year. If you have any questions about this, please speak to the class teacher during your parent/teacher interview.

Shared Education

Thank you to those parents who have already returned the Shared Education permission form. Classes will be starting their programme very soon. The details of each project is on your child's Google Classroom page. The link was sent via a message yesterday.

Maths Week



We have planned a **Maths week for 18th-22nd October**. The teachers have planned very exciting maths tasks for this week and Mrs Allen, our Numeracy Co-ordinator has devised Maths Trails for the children to complete around the school. Talk to your child about what they are doing in class and encourage lots of Mathletics that week too. We are delighted with the enthusiasm for Mathletics.

Assessments & The Engage Programme

The staff have been assessing the pupils over the last few weeks to identify the areas that they need more support with. The Department of Education have devised a programme called 'Engage' to support children as they restart their educational journey, following lockdown, through one to one, small group or team teaching. The aim of the programme is to limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards. Each school has received some funding to provide the extra teaching resources. The funding was based on the free School Meals percentage and is targeted at those schools with concentrations of disadvantage. Mrs McCormack (our P1 & P2/3 teacher) will be providing this support to pupils on a Monday. The staff have identified the pupils who may need support with areas of emotional wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. This will hopefully commence this Monday. Your child may be included in these short small group sessions. Your child's teacher will discuss this with you during their parent/teacher consultation call.

PE Uniform

Please ensure that your child is wearing the correct PE uniform on PE days. Please remember as the weather gets cold, if wearing tracksuit bottoms, they should be **plain navy** and the school jumper or navy hoodie may be worn on colder days. We are reviewing our policy with regard to changing for PE at the end of October and we will notify you of any changes.

Health

As we move into the colder weather we are expecting children to get the usual colds and viral infections. Please assess your children carefully, you know them best and know if they are fit for school. In many cases, children with colds will be well enough to attend school and continue their learning with little or no interruption to their education. We would just ask that you remind them of good respiratory hygiene. In other cases, for instance, where they have quite a heavy cold or a flu, they may need to take a day or two off to recover.

Please refer to the '**Guidance on Infection Control in Schools**' for advice on whether your child needs to be kept at home following an illness or period of vomiting etc. this is a very useful poster to refer to. You will find it on the website- Parents' Area- letters.

Sanitiser is available in all classrooms but it is a good idea if each child has one in their bag that they can use when needed

If you have any concerns about your child's health please contact your own GP or the PHA for medical advice and keep school informed of what advice you have been given.

Children should not attend school if:

- they appear unwell
- They display any symptoms of COVID-19.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- A high temperature/fever- this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- A new continuous cough: this means coughing a lot for more than 1 hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough it may be worse than usual)
- Anosmia: the loss or change in your normal sense of smell or taste.

Absence Notification Slips

Please remember to complete an absence notification slip and return it to school on their first day back following a period of absence. These are available to download from the school website.

School Meals

School meals and packed lunches are now being eaten in the dining hall. This is working very well. Remember to place all dinner money in an envelope clearly labelled with the days your child wishes to take dinner. We are hoping to move to a cashless system for school meals soon and will be in touch with further information about this.

Please ensure that your child knows whether they are taking a packed lunch or a dinner each day. Please check the menu (on the school website) carefully with your child to ensure that they actually like what is being served that day. On occasions we have a few children who were supposed to be taking dinner but did not like what was being served that day. Due to delayed deliveries, the catering supervisor may have to slightly change the planned menu but changes are avoided if at all possible.



Free School Meals- Please remember if you are entitled to a free school meal apply through the Education Authority.

www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants

Assemblies We have been able to participate in outdoor whole school assemblies and indoor via Zoom. These have been great for the children to feel part of the whole school community and celebrate their successes. We are also now trying to plan to bring the various clergy back into school assemblies. This will hopefully happen after half term.

School Fund

Thank you to those who sent in their family contribution. We are very grateful for this donation and are already putting it to good use to purchase new equipment/resources for our classrooms. We have purchased Athletics licences for all our pupils (P1-P7), Nessy (reading and spelling programme for P2-P4) and Accelerated Reader P5-P7. Nursery pupils will be benefiting from new playground equipment. We really appreciate your support. If anyone has not sent in school fund this year please forward it to the school office, thank you.

Nessy

Nessy is a reading and spelling software programme.

Each child in P2-4 should spend 80 minutes a week using this programme to improve their reading and spelling ability. Reading and spelling targets will be set for your child according to an independent assessment that they will complete in school before embarking on the programme.

PTA

We have been extremely fortunate to have had a fantastic PTA who raise much needed funds for school. Due to Covid, we were unable to meet and run PTA events last year. Some members still continued to apply for grants and we were extremely grateful for this. This year, we will require parents with creative ideas to raise funds. I have already had parents coming forward with fundraising ideas. If you have some good ideas but maybe can't attend the meeting, please forward these via the forms link.

We have already had some interest from new parents and I would encourage as many parents as possible to join the PTA. It is a great way to connect with other parents and a real chance for you to make a difference to your child's education. We hope to hold our **PTA Annual General Meeting via Zoom on Wednesday 20th October at 7pm**. Please click on the link <https://forms.gle/H3brugWWCF7tAyro6> and complete the form to indicate your attendance at the AGM and/or your willingness to join the PTA. I will then send you a link via email for the Zoom meeting. We need to elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson,

secretary and treasurer to lead the PTA for the year ahead. If you would like to find out more information about these roles, please email school or speak to a current member of the PTA.

We would still like to fundraise to continue to replace our whiteboards with interactive panels and also fundraise for a new outdoor playground.

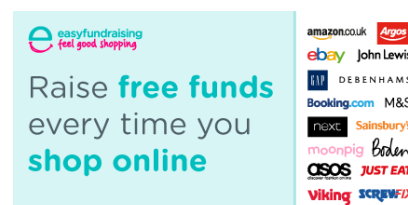
Cash for Clobber

We have a clothing bank to the left of the main school. Please continue to use this to put in bags of clothing/textiles that you no longer need. The PTA then receives a cheque following collections.



Easy Fundraising

Please consider raising funds for the school via the PTA's Easy Fundraising online service. Shopping doesn't cost you a penny more, but as you make purchases online, shops make a donation to the PTA. All you do is register (it's good to select the "Donation Reminder" option) and start shopping. Please give it a go and encourage your friends and family to do so too - it is free money to benefit the children of Orchard County Primary School and Nursery! Please register by clicking the link below:



<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/orchardcountyprimaryschoolpta/>

Once you have joined, the next time you shop online, start at [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and log in. If you shop with your phone or tablet you can download the [easyfundraising app](#).

Macmillan Coffee Morning & Fitness Day



We plan to have a Macmillan Coffee Morning in school on **Friday 22nd October**. Our community coffee morning is usually an event P7 really look forward to. Due to Covid-19 it is not possible to hold our normal event and invite the community into school but P7 still continue to plan and organise a fun day for each class. We will have our own coffee morning (juice, buns & cake) in class and P7 will lead each class in a fitness session on the MUGA. Pupils may bring in a donation for Macmillan Cancer Support on the day. Pupils may come in their PE kit or fitness clothing that day.

After School Activities

We hope to start after school activities after half term. We are currently discussing and planning these and will notify you of this as soon as dates and activities are confirmed.



Swimming

Swimming will be starting for the P6/7 class in November and for P5/6 in February. A letter will be going home to P6/7 on Monday with further details.

Musical Pathways

P5/6 have started their sessions each Friday with the music tutors. The pupils are learning musical notation and rhythm and will soon be getting assigned a musical instrument.



Communications

As we try to limit the amount of paper travelling between home and school, if you need to inform the teacher of anything you may write it in your child's diary and they can show it to the teacher. You may also telephone the school office and inform Mrs McCluskey, our school secretary, who will get the message to your child's teacher or email Mrs McCluskey (jmcccluskey773@c2kni.net), who will in turn, forward the required information to the relevant class teacher/s. You may also email your child's teacher. Staff will not respond to emails in the evenings or at weekends.

Parking

Just a reminder that parents' parking is to the left as you come through the gates and along the front of the MUGA. Staff parking is at the front of the school and around the roundabout. Please share this information with anyone that collects your child.

Half Term Holiday

School will be closed **Monday 25th to Friday 29th October.**



Positions of Responsibility

Congratulations to our pupils as they take on their new roles of responsibility.

	Annaghmore	Ardress	Argory	Tullyroan
House Captains	Annabelle Boyce Jamie Campbell	Ruby Currie Saul Grayson	Maisie Moore Rea Williamson	Lucy Mullen Jesse Coleman
Digital Leader	P2/3	P4	P5/6	P6/7
	Catherine Finn Isaac Ellis	Emily Sproule Jake Muldoon	Christopher Manton Sam Muldoon	Charlotte McCombe Harvey Williamson
School Council		Rosie Carson Eli Boyce	Riley Greenaway Tyler Shannon	Abbie McCleery Nathan MacLeod
Eco Warriors		Leyla Fowler Tom Gilmore	Hannah Kane Jacob Coleman	Emily Hamilton Annabel Thompson
Helpers				Ruby Potts Max Brown James Greenaway Sawyer Smith Jesse Stewart
Librarians				Amy Duprey Erin Montgomery Leah Platt Alice Roleston James McCleary James Farquhar

Thank you once again for your support at the start of this difficult year.

Our aim to make school as normal and as safe as possible for the whole school community, this only happens with good teamwork.

If you have any queries, suggestions or require any further information please contact school.

J McMillan

Principal

jmcmillan521@c2kni.net