



Dear Parent,

19th April, 2021

Welcome back

Welcome back to a new term. I hope all families had a lovely break over Easter and that everyone associated with our school continues to keep well.

Mrs Jean Cranston

Over the Easter break I was saddened to learn of the passing of Mrs Jean Cranston. Jean worked in our school for many years as dinner lady, cleaner and senior lunchtime supervisor. She was well known and liked by past pupils and staff over the years and will be affectionately remembered for many years to come. She knitted our original school mascot, Pat the Cow, which resides in my office and to this day is still taken to sporting matches and on residential trips. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mrs Cranston's family at this sad time.

Breakfast Club

Minister Weir made the announcement this week that wrap around care could resume with immediate effect. Unfortunately, the information lacked detail and clarity – especially with consideration to the compromising of class bubbles if these facilities resume. Where breakfast club is concerned, we feel a 'booking-in' system will be needed to begin with so that numbers are manageable and a list of names is available for contact tracing if necessary. My initial thoughts are:

1. It has to be in the hall. 0800 -0850 starting 26.04.21
2. Only to be used at this stage if absolutely necessary.
3. 12 children max. per class to avoid mass crowding in the hall.
4. £1.00 per child per morning-paid through 'school money'.
5. Children sit in their bubbles. Windows will be open.
6. Children will be seated at class bubble tables, but I cannot guarantee there will be 2m between one class bubble and the next – similar to children who take dinners. We can do the best we can with the space we have.
7. There will be a reduced menu of cereal, toast and tea to get us started.
8. Children will sanitise as they come into the hall and as they leave.
9. An extra member of staff will be employed for the morning.
10. Consent forms / booking-in forms for the week will be signed before the first day of breakfast club. Please e-mail your child's class teacher and they will send a booking in form/ consent form home with your child. Siblings can be recorded on the same form. Please state both children's classes.
11. Please have booking forms to your child's class teacher by the Thursday of any given week. If you do not hear from us, a place has been reserved for your child at the breakfast club.

Hopefully, we can open this wider as restrictions ease in coming months.

Paddington Lodge After School Care

On speaking to Paddington Lodge they are happy to facilitate after school care for those families who need it. Paddington Lodge has assured me that all safety measures will be followed accordingly while on site. If you need to avail of after school care, please book in by contacting Paddington Lodge on 02897519295.

Car parking/ Dogs on site

Please continue to use the chapel car park for parking in the mornings and afternoons. The caretaker of the chapel grounds has asked that no dogs are brought onto the chapel's premises. I would also kindly ask that dogs are not brought on to our school premises for various reasons. I am happy to discuss the reasons via telephone if you need clarification. Many thanks for your understanding.

Adventure playground

I have become aware that some parents are using our adventure playground at 2pm while they wait for siblings in the older classes. Unfortunately, I cannot sanction this I am asked that class bubbles are maintained as much as possible. I so wish the children could play freely like this, but the risk of infection hasn't disappeared from our community and until it has, the adventure playground can only be used in a controlled manner by class bubbles during the school day. Thank you for your co-operation.

P6 Parental Interviews and P6 Transfer Presentation

The P6 teachers will contact parents of our P6 children soon regarding a formal parent/ teacher telephone consultation at the end of May to discuss important information arising in regard to your child's progress and the transfer process. I will also place my 'P6 Transition power point presentation' on our school website in the next couple of weeks. I will talk parents through the content of the presentation and there will be a section allowing you to ask any unanswered questions you may have about the process. Despite the fact that DE and AQE have not yet released information regarding the transfer process for 2021 /22, I feel it's important to inform P6 parents of our way forward at Academy PS regardless.

For all other parents: If you have a child in another class and feel there is something pertinent to discuss with your child's teacher at this stage, please e-mail them and they will endeavour to call you at their earliest convenience. Likewise, through the course of this term if a teacher feels strongly about your child's progress or well-being, they will be in contact. Your child will also receive an end of year report in June.

Lateral Flow Testing

All school staff have been given opportunity to engage with the Lateral Flow Testing initiative. Staff who sign up will test themselves for Covid-19 twice weekly at home. This is an extra safety measure put in place by the Departments of Education and Health to help detect community transmission of the virus.

Sports Day

Due to covid-19 we cannot run sports day in our usual format, but Mrs Ewart and I have had a meeting and we intend to run a sports day in class bubbles mid June. We can't have the children miss out on all the fun. More details to follow.

Thank you for your support,
R. W. Fegan
Principal