



## ST. JOHN'S P.S GILFORD

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Principal: Mrs S Lyness BSSc PGCE PQH(NI)

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29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As our school year draws to a close, I would like to thank you for your support and patience over the past few months. I realise that parents are anxious for details about how pupils will return to school in the next academic year as indeed are we, however, having assessed our school's current arrangements in line with **current guidance**, we will **not** be able to accommodate full classes coming back to school whilst ensuring 1m social distancing between children and 2m between children and adults.

If this current guidance remains in place, we will be left with no other option but to divide each class into two groups and each group will attend for two days each week initially but this will be kept under constant review. We will of course ensure that siblings will attend on the same day and indeed having collaborated with Gilford Nursery, we will ensure that younger siblings will attend nursery on this day also. Further details on which group your family belongs to and the days on which your child/ren will attend will follow in August should there be **no change** to the guidance by then.

Given the fast changing nature of guidance being issued and the fact that there is still 8 weeks left until the end of the Summer, I do not feel that it would be beneficial to release any further details at this time as these guidelines are constantly under review. I am however remaining hopeful that guidance will change closer to the time and all children will be able to return fully to school at the start of the next academic year.

Having met with several groups of principals over the past couple of weeks, I realise that each school setting is unique and therefore cannot be compared. We are though as far as possible trying to keep as much continuity as we can between schools and their opening arrangements.

Some of these include:

- Schools in our area will reopen on Monday 24th August for an **Induction Week**. During this week, your child/ren will be brought into school for **one morning session** which will focus on their pastoral needs, their health and wellbeing and the enhancement of a 'reconnect' between pupil and school. It is hoped this will help our pupils settle back into the new school day and the changes to their school environment. Specific details regarding dates and times will be provided in due course.
- Arrangements regarding staggered arrivals/collections **may** be necessary and details will be communicated to you on an individual school basis.

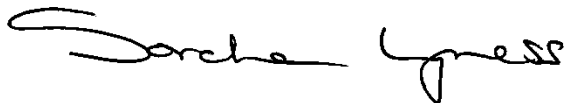
- All parents will be asked to remain outside school buildings, unless specifically requested to enter.
- Pupils are asked to wear a fresh school uniform every day (we will alternate between our full school uniform and PE uniform and we will tell you which day to wear these).
- School bags or other items from home should not be brought into school. Packed lunches should be in disposable packaging.

Please continue to reinforce the practice of thorough and regular handwashing, good bathroom hygiene, appropriate social distancing alongside the 'Catch it, Kill it, Bin it' method for coughs and sneezes. We will further reinforce these practices by having clear procedures in place when your child/ren return.

\*Please be aware that this information is subject to change in line with evolving DE guidance\*

It is our sincere hope that we will all be able to return to school safely in September, if the guidance allows this to happen. We will strive to keep you fully informed of any relevant developments. We sincerely thank you for your continued support during these difficult and rapidly changing times and events. We look forward to welcoming you all back to the safe and caring environment of St. John's P.S and wish everyone a relaxing summer break!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sorch Lyness'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Sorch' and the surname 'Lyness' clearly distinguishable.

Mrs Sorch Lyness  
Principal