



Dear Parent

23 September 2020

I am writing to keep you up to date with how the Re-Start to school is going.

I must first of all thank you as parents, guardians and carers for the support you have shown to your children, the other children in your children’s classes, the staff in school and to each other.

I must also pay tribute and set out my enormous gratitude to the staff we have here at Downpatrick Primary School. Since, what seems an age ago, back on 17 August I have had a staff, both teaching and non-teaching, who have worked tirelessly to put systems in place to ensure that school can restart safely and we have been able to get all our classes back into school very successfully.

Things are different, however, and it has been by working together we have made such a good start to what is looking like a very different school environment for the foreseeable future.

Parents – Thank you so much, especially for:

- Your co-operation in keeping your child off if unwell and getting them tested when requested by the school;
- Your organisation in sending in the correct money in separate envelopes on Mondays;
- Replying promptly to our requests for Contact Details/Medical Info etc. using the links or QR Codes;
- Remembering to send in your children on PE days with the correct items;
- Communicating to the teachers or me by email if you need to;
- Keeping outside the school grounds and socially distanced while you drop off / pick up;
- Your patience, politeness and good humour in these trying times – ***We are all doing our best!***

Medical Appointments During the School Day – We do ask that these are arranged outside of school hours but we appreciate that this is not always possible. We would ask that children who do go out for a medical/dental appointment do not return to school that day.

Staggered Entry / Home Times:

Please do not come before your allotted Class Start Time – You may get wet if it is raining!

Some 9am pupils are being sent in from around 8.40am – THIS IS TOO EARLY – Please aim for 8.55am.

8.45am No earlier than 8.40am	Hedgehogs	Rabbits	Owls	P4	Foxes	P7
9am No earlier than 8.55am	P3	P2	P1	P6	P5	

PTA – We Need Your Support to Allow Us to Support Your Children

This is going to be a year of challenges for our PTA as we will have to adapt our fund-raising activities to the new restrictions. These coincide with increased demand for resources in school for new ways of working and more resources for the children to use and allow for cleaning etc.

SPLASH & DASH 9th October – Please give this event as much support as you and your extended families and friends can. The sponsor forms are going home today.

School Dinners – the new system is working well and I would urge any family, who might be eligible, to apply for Free School Meals – even if your child does not regularly use the School Meals Service. The school gets a significant amount of additional funding into our budget directly related to our FSM numbers.

Break/Packed Lunches – I would encourage parents to make sure that these are as healthy as possible. Sandwiches/Wraps make a healthy main part of a packed lunch along with some fruit and small snack. These can be sent in disposable bags each day or in containers which are washed daily.

Hand-Soap/Sanitiser

It would be a great help to the school and to each bubble if parents are able to send in bottles of hand-soap or the sanitiser bottles periodically or when the teacher requests – As you can imagine these are used up quickly with the children washing and cleaning their hands very regularly each school day.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or queries about school.

Yours sincerely

Niall Stevenson