



# The Wee Friday Note

## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021



**“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” - Henry Ford**

### 1. COVID NEWS

#### **Changes to Track & Trace in schools**

The Public Health Agency (PHA) will take over responsibility from schools for contact tracing from Friday morning 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (today). This change means that where there is a confirmed positive case, any other families affected will be contacted and told what to do by PHA (not school). Schools will now only be contacted for assistance in limited circumstances. Parents must still inform school if their child tests **positive** so that their absence can be recorded correctly. The PHA has already issued new guidance for schools to support this revised approach. A "warn and inform" letter has also been made available for schools to use to inform parents of any cases in the school.

**Reporting a case to school** – if your child develops symptoms please keep them at home and follow the flowchart mentioned above. If your child tests positive after taking a proper PCR test, parents should inform Cregagh PS on 90401246 (during school hours) or email [info@cregaghps.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@cregaghps.belfast.ni.sch.uk) (out of school hours).

**Confidentiality** – school cannot and will not identify children who are sick with anything; including Covid. I would ask all parents to respect this and not try to work out 'who it is'. Last year and again this year, there's been a bit of this taking place. No-one catches Covid on purpose and in one sense, it doesn't really matter 'who it is'. It also puts families already dealing with a stressful situation under more pressure. Thank you ☺

- 2. 'Normal' childhood sickness** – now that we are approaching the autumn/winter, we can all expect to see the usual coughs, colds, runny noses, etc. These conditions, along with bouts of vomiting or diarrhoea, cannot be ignored just because they are not Covid. If a child vomits or experiences a bout of diarrhoea, they must stay out of school for 48 hours (2 full days) according to HSC/PSA for schools. None of us would choose for our children to miss any days at school but remember to follow the better safe than sorry rule: *"If in doubt, keep them out and observe for 48 hours"*.
- 3. It's Good to Be Green Reward Scheme** – our school's reward scheme has been copied by several other schools, as it's seen as one very useful way to encourage and reward children for trying hard at school. It's very important that parents sign these books every week and if they want, make a positive or encouraging comment alongside their signature. If parents don't sign their children's books the children feel their efforts don't matter that much to family at home. We know that's not true, so be careful to show your support by signing every week. The GTBG books are not the right place to write notes to your child's teacher: these books should be filled with positive things and kept neat and tidy. Remember also, that pupils do not automatically get full marks every week and when they don't, it's important they understand their part in why they didn't and are encouraged to try even harder at school the following week. If points and rewards are given for the 'bare minimum' (little effort, poor work, poor attitude) where's the incentive to work harder, do better and behave better? 'Big' lessons are often learned through 'little' things!
- 4. "Say Cheese!"** – the school photographer will be in school on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September (next Tuesday morning) to take individual school photos. Children must wear full school uniform. This will be done class by class to protect the integrity of our class bubbles, and seats etc. will be wiped down after each class. Parents will order and pay for any photos they want directly to Tempest Photography.

5. **Meet the Teacher meetings** – even though we had to change the way we had to do these meetings because of Covid, they went really well and it was very encouraging for school staff to see so many mums and dads attend. A little over 50% of parents attended. Thank you.
6. **Healthy breaks, no nuts & water only** – please remember to send only healthy breaks Monday-Thursday with your children. On Fridays, children can bring a sweet treat, piece of cake or regular crisps as an end of week treat. Only water is allowed to be brought for break and packed lunches (and that is for every day). Lastly, please remember we are a 'nut free' school due to some children having allergies.
7. **School Fund** – if anyone is having difficulty paying their School Fund online, please give Miss Murphy a ring and she'll help by talking you through the different steps. It's one of those things: once you've done it once, it's easy. School Fund is now **£20** per family per year and helps pay for many of the 'nice' things our pupils receive and enjoy throughout the year. (If anyone has paid the old amount of £15, we'd be grateful if (whenever suits) you can send the remaining £5. There was an administrative error on Parent Money which automatically carried the old amount over into the new school year. Thank you.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> September	school photographer in school. No family/group photos (hopefully do these late in school year)
Week beginning Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Parent-Teacher Consultations</b> (via phone or Zoom). Early 1pm finish for P1-7 Monday to Friday. Dinners & lunches as normal.
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October	last day of first half-term. Regular 2pm finish time.
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> -Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> October	Halloween holiday (5 school days inclusive).
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> November	back to school for start of second half-term.

