



The Wee Friday Note

Friday 3rd September 2021



"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."

Ryunosuke Satoro (Japanese poet & author)

The new school year has started well and it's been lovely to see many children wearing their navy, red, yellow and green school sweaters so proudly! The Department of Education and Education Authority have been taken back somewhat by the large numbers of children testing positive in schools across N.I. Schools however, are not surprised. There may be times some parents feel we are being overly-cautious here at Cregagh but we all know that a single positive case in our school will lead to children and staff being made close contacts which in turn will lead to multiple tests, classrooms being closed for 48 hours deep cleaning by EA (and we have no 'spare' classrooms!), and whole Year Groups being closed down for a day or two while people get tested. School and parents agree 100% - this is all a real pain, a nuisance, inconvenient – but keeping Covid out is easier than sorting out the problems it creates when it makes its way in to school. Any days that pupils are absent from school due to Covid: going for tests or waiting for test results, self-isolating, etc. will be recorded as such. The important thing is to inform school if your child is going to be off and keep us updated as to what is happening; this is the same for any form of sickness. School office's number: 90 401246

1. **Covid & school** – I appreciate I have shared a lot of Covid information with parents already this term. Of course, it makes sense to get this information out early in the new school year. The flow chart shared earlier this week, showing what happens if your child becomes a Close Contact, is as clear and straightforward as I have been able to make for families.

If your child tests positive parents should inform school immediately and complete a simple online form that will help me with the Track and Trace process that a positive case triggers. It can be found on the school's website under the orange-coloured PARENTS tab at the top of the website's page. Lastly and to avoid any confusion, Cregagh Primary School is continuing to ask parents and its staff for proof of Covid test results. Doing so makes our job easier and helps us work out a case's timeline and agree a return to school date with parents and staff.

2. **Meet the Teacher Afternoons** – to help reduce the numbers in school at any one time, teachers will be holding their meetings for parents on different days

Monday 6th September	P6 & P7	2:00pm-3:00pm
Tuesday 7th September*	P4 & P5	2:00pm-3:00pm
Wednesday 8th September	P2 & P3	2:00pm-3:00pm
Thursday 9th September	HIU 1 & HIU 2	2:00pm-3:00pm

*A meeting for parents of P1 pupils will be held at 9:15am on Tuesday 7th September in the school's assembly hall (access from new rear gate and across playground).

We ask that all parents attending wear face masks while in the school building for everyone's safety and peace of mind. While in the classrooms, parents should sit apart as much as possible. Classroom windows will be left open on purpose (ventilation), so maybe bring a sweater if you're prone to feeling the cold! Very importantly, if any parent feels unwell they should not come to the meetings.

3. **Free School Meals 2021-22** – Miss Murphy, our school secretary, sent a letter home to parents earlier this week regarding Free School Meals **eligibility**. Can I encourage all parents who are eligible to receive FSM for their children register – regardless of whether or not they plan for their child to take them. It benefits our school to have all those children who are eligible, registered.
4. **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 **£20** per family per year and helps pay for many of the 'nice' things our pupils receive and enjoy throughout the year. Thank you for your support.
5. **Birthday cake anyone?** Sadly, we still aren't where we hoped we'd be in terms of Covid in schools. Last year we asked parents who were wanting to send in birthday cake for their child's class to send in wrapped and sealed treat bars or cake bars instead. Also, because we are a Healthy Break Time school, such treats should only be sent in on Fridays (on Fridays pupils can enjoy a sweet treat break if they want); otherwise the children could be eating cake every day. Popular with them but not with Healthy Break Time school ☺
6. **New school gates** – the new entrance at the rear of the school site has worked well this week. Thanks to all families who have helped us by standing back from the gate when its being opened, stayed spread out from other families while walking in and out of school, staying back from classroom doorways and not gathering in groups and for leaving the school grounds promptly after drop off.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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Friday 22nd October last day of first half-term. Regular 2pm finish time.

Monday 25th-Friday 29th October Halloween holiday (5 school days inclusive).

Monday 1st November back to school for start of second half-term.

