



The Wee Friday Note

Friday 19th November 2021



Who's phoning me on 028 95 36 88 88 ?

This number belongs to the PHA (N.I.)

Save this number to your phone so you know to answer the call!

It would appear Northern Ireland is heading for a difficult few weeks in terms of Covid and other winter illnesses. Consequently, schools will have to respond to this changing health situation. Already this week we have seen a spike in cases and children needing tested. Today we've all been reminded that Covid is not the only illness doing the rounds at the minute. This week, our school has been obliterated by a vomiting and diarrhoea bug that has affected both children and adults. Over the next few weeks we will need to swallow our frustrations at times and remember that many of the precautions we'll be taking are for the good of our entire school community and to do our bit in helping protect our hospitals from becoming overwhelmed.

1. Health & Safety News

COVID

Since mid-September, PHA have been responsible for contacting parents if their child is considered a Close Contact. However, in our experience as a school, very few families are ever contacted.

There are now 2 categories of Close Contact really:

- (1) Close Contacts made at home [see below]; and
- (2) Close contacts made at school [told so by PHA].

A Close Contact at Home because a parent or sibling tests positive

If someone at home tests positive for Covid or begins to show Covid-like symptoms, there is obviously increased chance others in the home will catch it too.

A close contact can be (according to PHA)

- anyone who lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19

OR

Anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 with a PCR test:

- face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within one metre
- skin-to-skin physical contact for any length of time
- been within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- been within two metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)
- travelled in the same vehicle or a plane

- 🌐 Parents should **not** send a child who is considered a Close Contact (regardless of category) into school
- 🌐 Parents should arrange for a PCR test on day 2 of being off (and another on day 8 if the day 2 test was negative & the child had returned to school following their day 2 negative result).
- 🌐 LFTs are not as reliable than PCRs
- 🌐 Where a parent **doesn't** get their Close Contact child tested, they are increasing the risk of spreading Covid in school to other children and adults

- 🌐 The testing process isn't that bad. We've had P1s do it with no problems.
- 🌐 If a child has already had Covid within the past 3 months, they can attend school okay. However, if they develop Covid symptoms they must stay home and get a PCR

*****SICK CHILDREN (INCLUDING POTENTIALLY SICK CHILDREN)
SHOULD NEVER BE SENT TO SCHOOL*****

- 2. Ventilation in classrooms** – one of the best mitigations we have to use against the spread of Covid is fresh air! DE and PHA guidance to schools makes it clear that classrooms should be airy and well ventilated with fresh air. Parents and children should know that windows in classrooms will be kept open even during the winter months and classroom temperature could be on the cool side. As we enter the winter season, parents should make sure that children are wearing enough layers to keep them warm – including a vest or tee-shirt under their school polo shirts. School will not be 'cold' but it will be cooler.
- 3. PJs for Pudsey (Children in Need) and Afternoon at the Movies** – this has been rescheduled for next Friday, 26th November as we know many children were really looking forward to this today.
- 4. Friday 26th November** - School closes at 1pm for all pupils (dinners and lunches as normal)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 26 th November	PJs for Pudsey & <i>Afternoon at the Movies</i> mini fundraiser. £1.50 per pupil. School closes at 1pm for all pupils (dinners and lunches as normal)
Wednesday 15 th December	Carols Around the Tree Christmas Celebration, 7-8pm. Hot drinks & Christmas treats on sale – proceeds to school fund.
Thursday 16 th December	P4-7 Pantomime at the Waterfront Hall
Monday 20 th December	P1-3 visit to Strand Cinema for Christmas movie
Tuesday 21 December	Christmas Magic Show for each class with <i>The Amazing Aldo</i>
Wednesday 22 nd December	Last day of first <u>full</u> term. 12noon finish (no dinners or lunches)
Thursday 23rd December- Wednesday 5th January 2022	Christmas holidays (10 school days inclusive)
Thursday 6 th January 2022	New spring term begins