



The Wee Friday Note

Friday 29th April 2022



“The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.” - Abraham Lincoln

1. SCHOOL CLOSURES

- Monday 2nd May - Early May Bank holiday
- Thursday 5th May - NI Assembly Elections (Cregagh PS is used as polling station)

2. AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

- After-school clubs will start back week beginning Tuesday 3rd May (school is closed Monday 2nd May: Bank Holiday).
- Last term, a few pupils who had signed-up for certain Clubs only attended now & again. This made it difficult for teachers to know who was meant to attend on any given day.
- To help improve things, parents will have to 'book' their child into each of the clubs they have already registered for & plan to attend on each separate day. This will be done through our school's parents app *School Money* (although no money is payable) which you are all familiar with. This will provide teachers with an up-to-date register of who to expect at their clubs on a daily basis.
- If you experience any technical difficulties doing this, contact Miss Murphy in the school office on 90 401246 for help.
- Parents booking a weekly place in a club (that they have already registered for) must register before midnight the day before the Club runs. If you forget or need to change your plan, please contact Miss Murphy in the school office.

3. P6 PARENTS TRANSFER PROCEDURE INFORMATION EVENING

On Thursday 12th May, 7:00-8:00pm, parents of current P6 children are invited to attend a meeting about the transfer procedure (*not just the "Transfer Test") that all children go through at the end of their final year of primary school. This is an important meeting. Please plan to attend.

4. THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

A day of celebrations is currently being planned for all pupils to enjoy on Tuesday 31st May. On this day, children will be encouraged to come to school dressed up as kings, queens, princes, and princesses. We will be enjoying tea parties, games, and Jubilee-themed fun activities. School will also be unveiling a special commemorative plaque in our school's reception area, as well as planting a tree in school grounds.

5. BOOK FAIR

Thank you very much parents for supporting this so well! Our school gets a reasonable share of the company's profits, which worked out at £261. This will be used to buy new books for our school library ☺

6. FRIENDS OF CREGAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

A family BBQ & Games evening is being organised for school families in the summer term. Once a date has been agreed, more details will be shared. All pupils will be able to attend along with their parents ☺

7. ARE YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACTS STILL THE SAME?

If you wish to change any of your emergency contacts or update mobile phone numbers, please let our school secretary, Miss Murphy, know. In an emergency, we can only rely on the details parents have shared with us.

8. COVID

The purpose of this update is to highlight the recent changes to test and trace processes in Northern Ireland on 22nd April 2022 which are of most relevance to schools. On 24 March 2022 the Health Minister issued a COVID-19 Test, Trace and Protect Transition Plan COVID-19 Test, Trace and Protect Transition Plan | Department of Health (health-ni.gov.uk). This recognised that we are now in a very different stage of the pandemic. In the context of an effective vaccination programme, high levels of population immunity and new treatments for those at highest risk, it is time to move to a more targeted approach, focusing test and trace activity on those who are most vulnerable and at highest risk of serious illness should they contract COVID-19.

The changes to testing, contact tracing and self-isolation of most interest to schools are as follows:

- Close contacts of a case, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, will not be advised to isolate or take a test. Instead they will be asked to be alert for **any symptoms of COVID-19 and, if they arise, to take a lateral flow test** in line with NI Direct guidance on testing and isolation.
- There is **no change to the guidance on isolation for people who test positive.**
- PCR testing is no longer recommended for people with or without symptoms. The main public testing sites have closed.
- **People with symptoms are instead being advised to self-isolate and take a rapid lateral flow device (LFD) test. If this is negative they can return to work or school.** People who test positive and return to school anyway knowingly spread infection onto others which will result in more children and staff being off sick.
- **People who live in the same household as a positive case will not be advised to take a test unless they show symptoms of COVID-19** and if symptoms arise, they are to take a lateral flow test in line with NI Direct guidance on testing and isolation.

- If a staff member or pupil is **identified as a household close contact, the advice to them on testing and self-isolation will be the same whether they are vaccinated or unvaccinated. They can attend school and do not need to take a test unless symptomatic.**
- While the routine identification and notification of close contacts in the community outside the household setting will cease, **if someone is aware that they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, they should be alert for symptoms** and follow the general guidance to test if they develop them.
- Regular asymptomatic lateral flow testing is no longer recommended for people in the wider population, including staff or pupils in mainstream schools.

What to do if a pupil or staff member develops new symptoms?

If a child aged 5 and over, or a staff member, develops new symptoms of COVID-19 they should isolate and take a lateral flow test. This applies even if they have had COVID-19 within the previous 90 days.

Nursery Schools and Pre-School Settings, Primary Schools, Post-Primary Schools and EOTAS settings are no longer expected to provide LFD test kits to pupils or staff. Parents and staff members can order Lateral Flow Tests for symptomatic testing via:

- <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> ,
- by telephoning 119,
- or asking someone who is not symptomatic to collect them from the pharmacy collect service.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of:

- A new continuous cough and/or
- A high temperature and/or
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

People may not have all of the symptoms or their symptoms may be similar to the cold or ‘flu. They may vary for different age groups or different variants of the virus. If the LFD test is negative, they feel well enough and do not have a temperature, they can return to work or school.

Parents of children under five are encouraged to follow the guidance above. If the child develops symptoms and it is not possible to carry out a lateral flow test because the child will not tolerate the swab, parents and carers should take a cautious approach and avoid contact with vulnerable and older adults. They should also stay at home until they do not have a temperature and are well enough to return to school or childcare.

Multiple Cases in a school setting

Given the ongoing high levels of community transmission (in the week ending 16th April approximately 1 in 30 people in NI had COVID-19), multiple COVID-19 cases may continue to be seen in school settings. While high community transmission continues, multiple cases may not necessarily reflect transmission within the class or school. Nevertheless, mitigations remain important to minimise transmission, as set out in NI Direct, including:

- vaccination;
- room ventilation;
- carbon dioxide monitoring;
- reducing unnecessary contact;
- cleaning, regular sanitising and handwashing. All of these mitigations will continue to be implemented by Cregagh Primary School.

Almost all schools have managed COVID-19 clusters and outbreaks in the last term. In many of these scenarios voluntary extended testing was offered to the remainder of the group. This approach should no longer be used routinely given the context of the wider changes to testing policy, including the fact that lateral flow device packs are no longer able to be ordered for asymptomatic testing from gov.uk or by ringing 119.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 2 nd May	Early May Bank holiday (school closed)
Thursday 5 th May	NI Assembly Elections (school closed due to use as balloting station)
Thursday 12 th May	P6 parents transfer procedure information evening
Friday 27 th May	Sports Day (Wednesday 1 st June is reserve date in case of bad weather)
Tuesday 31 st May	The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations
Thursday 2 nd June	Spring Bank holiday (school closed)
Friday 3 rd June	Platinum Jubilee Bank holiday (school closed)
Tuesday 28 th June	P7s last day
Thursday 30 th June	Last day of summer term; 12 noon finish for all pupils