

St. John the Baptist P.S.
250 Garvaghy Road
Portadown
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Tel. (028) 3833 6211
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Principal:
Miss C McCooe

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August 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope you and your families have enjoyed a lovely summer break and continue to keep safe and well.

As a school community, we are looking forward to welcoming back all our pupils on Tuesday next, 31st August and in particular, those pupils joining us for the first time. We also extend a special welcome to new members of staff working with us this academic year.

In line with the latest Covid-19 advice and guidance from DE and the Education Authority we will be continuing to have mitigation measures in place to maintain a safe environment for everyone.

Our classes will continue to operate in a 'bubble' system and staggered breaks and lunchtimes will remain in place. We will also endeavour to encourage and implement as much social distancing as is practical where physical capacity and curriculum permit. Regular hand washing will be encouraged in all classes throughout the day and the "catch it, bin it, kill it" rule will also be reinforced. Hand-sanitiser stations are located at all entrances and exits which everyone must use when entering/leaving the premises.

The school gates will open **at 8.45am** with class beginning for **all pupils at 8.55am**. Pupils will be directed to the entry point for their year group when they come into the school grounds.

Pupils in P2 – P7/R2 – R7 will finish at **12pm on Tuesday 31st August**. These pupils will remain until 2pm (P2 – P3/R2 – R3) and 3pm (P4 – P7/R4 – R7) from 1st September. At home times pupils will be walked to the main exit gate at the front of the school. Please note it will be important that pupils are collected promptly.

Primary 1/Rang 1 pupils will finish at **11am** the week commencing Tuesday 31st August. With reference to P1, on Tuesday morning, pupils may be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the main entrance doors in the Foundation area. Teachers will bring the children to the front playground to be collected at 11am.

Rang 1 pupils may be accompanied to the Naiscoil yard where they will be met by their teacher in the mornings. For weeks one and two only, parents may also collect Rang 1 pupils from the same space. From week three onwards, Rang 1 pupils will be walked to the front gate for collection at home time.

For those Rang 2 pupils being taught in the main school building next year, Bean Mhic Roibín will be in the front playground on Tuesday morning to welcome pupils and to direct them to their new classroom.

School meals will be available from 1st September. It is important that **ALL** parents have registered to use our online cashless payment system, **EZ-Payments**, including those parents whose children are entitled to Free School Meals. Going forward, this is the method that will be used to cover **all school payments** eg. music tuition, swimming etc.

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School bags are permitted and pupils may also bring their own pencil case. A healthy snack for break will be required. Those pupils not taking school dinners will need a packed lunch.

We would also ask that you send inhalers/medication, agreed medication plans to school on the first day in a sealed plastic lunchbox clearly labelled with the child's name and class teacher.

In order to help us protect the school community and maintain a safe environment, we ask that all adults escorting pupils to and from school adhere to social distancing guidelines and ensure that there is no loitering around the school gates.

Should parents wish to make contact with their child's class teacher or other staff personnel, we would ask you to phone the school office to leave a message or to arrange an appointment. Where a meeting has been arranged, a parent must wear a face covering whilst on the school premises and sanitise their hands on entering and exiting the building.

Further information will be issued next week.

As always, your co-operation and support are most appreciated. We hope you all enjoy a lovely Bank Holiday weekend and we look forward to seeing everyone on Tuesday.

Kind regards,

C. McCoole