

Knockconan N.S., Knockconan, Emyvale, Co Monaghan

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**School Re-opening Information**

12 August 2020

Dear Parents,

We are continuing to plan for school re-opening on Thursday 27th August. However, due to Covid 19 we are making a number of changes of which you need to be aware. We know there will be a lot to take in and we don’t want to confuse people so this letter will deal with essential information to get us all started for the new school year.

The Department of Education has provided us with guidance, funding and access to PPE and the Board of Management has been working over the summer months to progress issues with the water treatment plant and other issues.

As you may have heard, the Dept of Education has now approved two new classrooms and a temporary prefab for Knockconan. As it will take some time to build this extension the board has removed the wall between the library and the resource room to make a temporary classroom space.

This means that classes can be of a more equal size and teachers have been moved accordingly. We will be uploading a map on the school website and doors will be clearly labelled to ensure your child knows which room they will be in.

I would like to remind you all that Book & Uniform Day is on Friday 21st August 3 – 6pm when parents can pay for books and uniforms. Please note uniforms must be collected and paid for on the day. We hope, weather permitting, to hold this outdoors.

Next we would like to point out a number of safety measures we are taking

1. There will be an enhanced cleaning regime and every classroom will have a cleaning kit to ensure the ongoing cleaning of desk tops, door handles and other surfaces during the school day.
2. Regular handwashing will be encouraged and easy access to sanitiser at locations throughout the building will continue.
3. Children in Infants – 2nd class will enjoy a less formal approach to the school day but children in 3rd – 6th classes will have their desks spaced out following the 1 metre distancing guidance.
4. During the school day children will remain in their class bubble with their class teacher and in some cases, an SNA.
5. We will be following social distancing advice requiring pupils from 3rd class up to remain one metre apart and 2 metres distance where possible from staff.
6. We are minimising the number of adults who will supervise each class/group.
7. The children in each class bubble will stay together for breaks. There will be NO mixing of children from different classes at break-time and breaks will be staggered to reduce the number of children on the playground at any time.
8. There will be no assemblies or any other gatherings of large groups in the school until further notice
9. There will be STRICTLY NO ACCESS to the school building for any adults including parents without an appointment in advance. Please send an email (knockconanns5@gmail.com) or phone the office.
10. Children will need their own stationery (pencils, pens, markers, crayons, eraser, pencil parer etc) in an easily opened/closed case or ziplock bag which can be easily wiped down. There will be NO SHARING of stationery between pupils.
11. School staff will be wearing face-shields / visors and other PPE equipment will be used as necessary.
12. Staff will have the use of handheld temperature gauges during the day to check temperatures.
13. It is not required for primary school children to wear masks.

**Reception and Dismissal**

**Classes begin at 9am.**

**There will be no supervision on the yard before school.**

**Children to arrive from 8.50am. No children allowed on the grounds before that time.**

* Junior, Senior Infants and First Class (Mrs Mc Ginn and Miss Mc Kenna) to assemble on the tarmac in two groups with their teachers (there will be cones to mark the areas), teachers will bring these classes in through the **front door** and proceed directly to their classrooms.
* 2nd – 6th classes – Children on entering the grounds will proceed along the concrete path to the **exit door** of their own classroom where their teacher will allow them in. They will then proceed **directly** to their seat.

**Dismissal** (home-time) will be the reverse of the above procedure. Home-time for Junior Infants until 14th September will be 12.30pm.

Parents please remain outside the school gates, please use social distancing while you wait and when you have collected your child/children please leave the car park promptly.

**Break-times**

Children will also need an easily opened/closed lunchbox with fruit only for little break and something more substantial for big break. Wrappers etc must be put back in the lunchbox and taken home.

Please ensure that all lunchboxes and water bottles are well labelled.

All class teachers will be having their lunch in the classroom and supervising their own class at break-times.

Parents will need to teach children to open bottles, cartons etc, children must have their own spoon, apples and other fruit must be peeled for children in advance.

(Teachers will not be able to assist with lunches as previously)

**Break-time groupings**

Group A: Junior infants / 5th & 6th (ie Mrs Mc Ginns & Mrs Donnellys)

Group B: Senior Infants/First Class, 2nd/3rd and / 4th/5th (ie Miss Mc Kennas/ Miss Keenans/ Mr Buckleys)

**Break time schedule**

Little break – Group A 10.30am – 10.40am Group B 10.50am – 11.00am

Big Break - Group A 12.00pm – 12.30pm Group B 12.30pm – 1.00pm

**Other requirements:**

Children must be taught to tie laces or have easy slip on shoes (black shoes please as per uniform)

Children must have necessary coats, hats, gloves etc for outside as the Department of Education is encouraging as much work outside as possible.

If your child has a problem with zips or buttons it’s a good idea to have them wear trousers with elasticated waists or tracksuit bottoms.

There will be NO children staying in at break times under any circumstances.

**If a child becomes unwell during the school day parents will be notified immediately and the child will wait in an isolation space until they are collected.**

**Children or staff who are unwell or showing any covid symptoms must not come to school**

You can play a crucial role in not sending your child to school if they show even mild symptoms such as coughing, the beginnings of a higher temperature, shortness of breath or a loss of taste or smell.

**If your child or any member of your family shows any symptoms you must access a test for covid 19 as soon as possible and not return to school until given the all clear.**

If you feel your child cannot return to school for health reasons such as an underlying condition please consult with your GP / consultant for advice and liaise with the school regarding support.

**Curriculum**

Our guidance from the Department of Education is “Slow down to Catch up” meaning to take it bit by bit at the start of the year and assess where children are and what needs to be covered. To that end class teachers and SETs will be doing some assessments during September. This will be done in an informal way. SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) will be given a particular focus this year with a view to supporting children’s well-being.

**Homework**

Once we have settled in each class teacher will advise you on homework according to their class group and when this will commence. However, we do not propose any written homework for the first few weeks until everyone has settled back.

School will be different for everyone this year and we will all have to become accustomed to different ways of doing things. We must all do our best to ensure that coronavirus does not come into the school.

Over the next fortnight preparations will continue in advance of welcoming all pupils back to school on August 27th. In the meantime there will be further information and regular updates by email and on the school web site.

Please take care and enjoy the remainder of the school holidays,

Le gach dea ghuí,

Eimear Ní Bhraonáin, Príomhoide