



Dear Parent/Guardian

We understand that many of you will be fearful about sending your child to school. This is entirely normal and to be expected. It is our aim in Ballysillan Primary School to provide a safe environment for your child. I wish to advise you that we are taking all possible steps to ensure the health and wellbeing of the pupils and staff from the effects of Coronavirus.

To date, there have been no positive cases reported to me. No school staff have displayed the symptoms as outlined by the PHA guidance. We know many of you have vulnerable people in your family and wider community that this virus could harm. Our best advice is to take appropriate measures that you feel is right for your child and family.

If any child, parent or family member has –

- **Recently returned from a high risk area.**
- **Has been in contact with a tested and confirmed person with the illness.**

We ask that you 'self-isolate' as per government advice. Please **do not** come into school, as it is clear this may spread infection to others. Please inform school using the usual channels if this is the case.

If your child or close family members have been tested as positive for the Covid-19 virus, please let school know as a matter of urgency, so that we are able to take appropriate actions. Confidentiality will of course be fully respected. All children are expected to wash their hands regularly at home. The twenty second rule has already been reinforced in school and any child coming to school should come with clean hands.

It is probable, based on recent ministerial announcements, that schools will close sometime soon. We want to reassure parents that staff are now working tirelessly to create home/school learning packs. We are also creating an online learning system via our subscription to Purple Mash. Children's login details will be sent home in these packs and we will be communicating to our pupils via the website and Facebook very frequently in the event of school closure. However, until the Education Authority announce closures the schools will remain open with the following precautions in place;

- All trips and visitors to school are cancelled (including swimming). If you have paid for a trip that is planned in the next TWO weeks we will be sending a refund home in your child's bag.
- All outside agencies coming to school are cancelled.
- Children will have packed lunches in the classroom and dinners in the dinner hall to reduce a large gathering.
- Assembly is now cancelled or any whole school gathering.
- Staff will be outside at 8.45 to immediately bring children into school to reduce lining up time.
- No parent should enter the school building. If you are dropping your child off late please come to the front door and a member of staff will bring your child to class.
- All after school clubs are cancelled. We are still running **breakfast club** and **Afterschool Stars** to help support our working parents. During after school hours' staff will be conducting extra cleaning duties and preparing work to be sent home in the event of closure.
- Please put any money (dinners, milk, school funds) into a sealed bag/envelope and place it in your child's school bag. Correct money would be very helpful. You must put a note to record what the money is being paid for, this is essential.
- Water fountain will be turned off-please send your child to school with a bottle of water.
- Children will wash their hands as soon as they enter school, throughout the day and when they leave.

In order to protect staff and pupils please respect the fact that no parents or visitors are allowed into school. If you need to speak to a teacher, please message them through email ([info@ballysillan.belfasat.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@ballysillan.belfasat.ni.sch.uk)) or call the school office. The situation is fluid. Please be mindful to check social media channels for further updates from school.

Many Thanks

Mrs Kelly

