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Newsletter Friday 12th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is with great delight that we welcome our Primary 4-7 children back to our school building from Monday. We realise that it has been a very difficult time for everyone over the last few months and that continuing remote learning was a big challenge for everyone. Thankfully we see a light at the end of the tunnel and despite the challenges we have all faced we look forward to some normality while at the same time keeping to the guidance as we have indicated below.

Returning to school arrangements summary

Guidance on the return of P4-7 is attached for all in our school community. This was submitted to our P4-7 parents but I attach for the rest of our school community. I know there is a lot of information contained on this guidance but please take the time to familiarise yourself with the procedures.

Please can all pupils in P7 and those children in Primaries 1-6 who have 1:1 Digital Inclusion iPad bring them and their chargers in on Monday. We have a Portable Appliance testing engineer inspecting and testing all electrical equipment and there is a requirement for these chargers to be of safe condition and in working order.

Health and Safety reminders

From Monday there will be a significantly larger number of children being dropped off and collected from school. **Can we please urge all parents and children not to wait around and chat after drop-off or collection, as this increases the risk and compromises the safety of all the members within our community? Please drop off/collect your child and go straight home.** Please remember only one adult per child at collection and drop off points and please always wear a mask when dropping off or collecting your child at school. While it is wonderful to see our children back in the building we cannot afford to jeopardise the progress made to date by non-compliance with government guidance to help suppress the virus.

Please also remember that at arrival/dismissal times do not drive through, park on or perform 3 point turns on Crompton Avenue in front of our school.

I would also request if dog owners could stay away from the gate with your pet as the potential for people to gather right at the school gate to pat your dog has made accessibility to the school difficult at times. Obviously no dogs are permitted on school grounds at any time, even if being carried.

Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation

With the restrictions easing and the partial re-opening of the churches we are hopeful that the children who are currently preparing for the Sacraments in school and at home will be able to do so over the coming months and year. We will take our guidance from the Church and of course Father Peter and we will share with you as soon as arrangements have been made. Those pupils who did not receive the Sacrament of First Holy Communion last year will also be informed of arrangements as soon as they are made.

Xpressions App

Several times over the last six months we have raised ongoing issues, faults and glitches that have been highlighted to us by our parents with the provider of Xpressions. We do not manage the Xpressions app, it has been promoted by the GCC to help schools reduce their costs on communications. Following the highlighting of these issues we have taken the decision to ask you to delete the app at the moment and advise we will not be using Xpressions for communication purposes for the time being until we know that these issues have been resolved.

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In order to ensure that messages are being delivered for the moment all parents will receive texts and email to receive notifications and information from the school. The Newsletter will be sent to the email provided by parents and will also be available on the school website. Although this will come at an extra charge to the school we feel it necessary to do this until Xpressions is working more efficiently. Please make sure your details are up to date and if they have recently changed please contact us through the forms system and we will update accordingly.

Cathcart Old Parish

Our friends at Old Cathcart Parish are marking the 1 year anniversary of the COVID pandemic by erecting a cross on the grounds of Old Cathcart Parish on the 21st of March. Reverend Galbraith has invited us to contribute to this. He has asked me to remind school community members to be careful when on the church grounds of this structure while it is in place and ensure it can be a place of reverence and reflection for all.

A special word from our Parents in the PTA

St Fillan's PTA is delighted to announce our first fundraising opportunity for 2021. We understand that everyone within our local community has been affected by the impacts of Covid-19 over these past 12 months. With traditional fundraising opportunities limited, we wanted to provide a way that Parents and Guardians can continue to support our local school to help them make a difference in our children's lives.

As lockdown eases we hope to be able to arrange some activities of a more social nature for our pupils and their families, as restrictions allow.

We understand that everyone's situation is different so we're asking only if you can, to please donate to help our PTA support the school. Our main focus is on helping the school by purchasing STEM equipment suitable for all years of learning. Additionally, our P7 leavers will be receiving their Leavers Hoodie as a token of our appreciation for all those years of hard work.

From everyone at the PTA, stay safe, and thank you in advance for your contributions.

Here is a link to our PTA fundraising page: <https://uk.gofundme.com/f/st-fillans-primary-pta-fund-stem-equipment>

Test and Protect

We will continue to operate our test and protect systems for all school staff and pupils. If your child is accessing the school building, please continue to keep us up to date with any COVID related information and follow the government guidelines on what to do if a child or other member of your household develop symptoms and require a test.

If you require to get in touch with the school please use the form system which can be accessed [here](#) or through the school website.

Thanks

As we journey through Lent I would like to offer a sincere thank you to all of our staff who continue to work tirelessly to ensure St Fillan's School community has stayed together even when we have been apart physically over the last few months. Even though we operate within significant constraints we try to make school as close to normal as we can. We are all extremely grateful for your continuing support of everyone in our school community.

Mr Bourke,

Headteacher

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Guidance on Return for children from P4-7 from March 15th

- Everyone will continue to follow enhanced hygiene and cleaning practices.
- Windows will be open in classes throughout the day to ensure appropriate ventilation.
- Classes will learn and play with their own classes.
- Classes will sit with their peers during lunchtime. There will be staggered breaks and lunchtimes as before Christmas.
- Children will be reminded of the important routines we have in place to keep safe.
- Adults in school will wear masks when moving around and working in open areas within the school.
- Children will be reminded to keep, as far as possible, a 2m distance from the teacher and support staff they are learning with.
- Children will have more opportunities to learn outside.
- Where children are unwell and showing symptoms, they will be isolated as per risk assessment and parents will be notified immediately. Please ensure that your contact details are up to date. You will be asked to collect your child and follow the national guidance.
- Following the above scenario, to ensure enhanced safety and minimise risk for others the classroom will be vacated and cleaned before children and staff can return to the room
- If your child is or says that they are feeling unwell we ask that you do not send them to school and inform us as per usual absence procedures.
- Parents are asked to continue to wear masks, maintain physical distancing and one adult only to collect/drop off your child.
- Please minimise adult interaction when dropping off and collecting your child.
- Please, please take your children straight home after school to reduce contact with others

In addition to these steps we have a number of regularly updated risk assessments in place, enhanced cleaning regime throughout the school and the classes during the day as well as the usual cleaning before and after school.

All staff have been provided with the option of taking lateral flow tests twice weekly.

Children should bring their school bag with their own pencil case.

Lunches will be available for your child as before. Payments for Breakfast club and school Lunch can be made through the Bank Transfer system in operation since August.

Please provide your child with a freshly filled bottle of water each day.

PE will be outdoors. Children can continue to wear PE kits on PE days but on all other days full uniform should be worn. Your child's teacher will inform them of their PE day.

The children will be encouraged to go out to play in all weathers so please ensure that they have a suitable jacket and footwear to keep them warm and dry in the playground.

Pupils will begin school at 9am and finish at 3.10pm as before Christmas. There are staggered exit times for our younger children which will hopefully help keep the areas in and around the school clear.

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