

29 March 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

As we come to the end of another term it would seem that COVID-19 rates are once again on the rise and the negative impact of the pandemic continues to be something which we need to be mindful of in our attempts now to live with COVID-19.

As a school community our thoughts and prayers at this time, and particularly throughout Lent and Easter, focus on those who suffer the at the hands of armed conflicts around the world. Those who live in Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine are uppermost in our prayers since the suffering and fear must be almost unbearable. Last Friday Pope Francis consecrated Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary with a prayer asking for peace in the world.

The full text of his prayer can be found at :

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/250796/pope-francis-consecrates-russia-and-ukraine-to-the-immaculate-heart-of-mary>

As a school we have preparing for the new term already. We will ensure that the school is as clean, safe and presentable as possible for the pupils return. To this end we would like to remind all pupils that;

- Gum, of any kind is not allowed in school. When it is discarded it causes huge damage and also represents an infection risk
- Mobile phones and headphones are not allowed in school and must be switched off and put out of sight before entering the school premises. They must not be used again until **outside of the school grounds** at the end of the school day. The addiction to phones and tech items is something that we need to help pupils overcome
- Jewellery and makeup are not to be worn for school
- Pupils are to be punctual to school and punctual to lessons once in school
- They are to remain focused on learning when in classrooms
- Conduct throughout the school day must be at least good
- Conduct whilst in a school context (whilst wearing the school uniform and when on their way to or from school) must always be at least good
- Pupils are reminded that their language is important and foul and abusive language is never going to be acceptable
- Pupils understanding of and consideration for the nine protected characteristics remain something that must be mindful of at all times and respectful towards

After the Easter break, we will expect all pupils to be wearing their uniform correctly. Non uniform items such as trainers and hoodies should not be worn as they are not part of the school uniform. The wearing of outside coats inside the school building is no longer necessary. Pupils will not be allowed to wear coats inside, as was our practise prior to the pandemic. Pupils can wear a school jumper under their blazer should they feel the need. The way that a growing number of girls choose to wear their skirts is an issue in school. This is causing considerably more instances of confrontation between pupils and staff. If they continue to roll them up at the waist band in order to shorten them we may have no alternative but to make school trousers compulsory for all pupils.

A larger number of pupils are now cycling to school. This is good to see, but we have very few who wear cycling helmets. Bikes and personal belongings are brought to school at the risk of their

'I have come that they have life and have it to the full' John 10:10

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Owners. Whilst we make every effort to keep them secure on site, there is a need for pupils to take their own precautions too. Locking bikes to the bike sheds or the bike stands is one such precaution. Standards of road safety by some of our cyclists leave a great deal to be desired – despite our constant efforts to remind them to be responsible road users. Pupils are asked not to fall into the habit of “pulling wheelies” outside school in order to impress their peers since the roads are very busy and the road outside of school is particularly dangerous.

We have recently been fortunate in having a crossing patrol warden return to the road at Harrytown. He does a marvellous job and is helping to keep our young people safe as they cross the road. The crossing patrol warden has fed back so far that the majority of our pupils are respectful and grateful for his presence.

Local schools, bus operating companies, housing associations, community groups and the police are planning a series of safer community strategies where a multi-agency approach is being taken to work together to create safer circumstances for everyone. There is a joint operation between schools and transport providers to deal with anti-social behaviours. This will happen at various points next term. There are initiatives already underway where measures are being taken to deal with issues of anti-social behaviour around shops and local businesses.

Attendance is compulsory for all pupils each day. The new regulations, recently updated by the government, state clearly that adjustments made during the COVID-19 restrictions to attendance rules and coding have now come to an end.

School will close at **12:30 on Friday 01 April 2022** for the Easter break. The majority of school buses are available to collect pupils but we have just two which are unavailable. This was communicated last week to parents. If you are collecting your child by car then please arrange to park and meet your child along Harrytown, leaving the marked areas in front of the school building free so that School Buses can use these designated areas for safe collection of pupils.

We have been asked to request your support in encouraging your child not to turn up unannounced at their old primary school because they happen to have a half day. This causes issues for the primary school which they do not have the resources to manage. Furthermore, we have also been asked to do all we can to avoid instances of nuisance and disruption at local shops and fast-food outlets on the last day of the term.

It would be hugely helpful if parents could encourage their children to take a Lateral Flow Test prior to our return for the new term to help protect the wider community and avoid instances where an outbreak causes further disruption. Awareness of the symptoms and regular testing will still help avoid the need for wider restrictions to be re-introduced.

School re-opens for all pupils on Tuesday 19 April at 9am. School buses will run as normal on this day. Finally, I would like to wish you all a happy, healthy, peaceful and Holy Easter. In the current situation it is ever more important for us to give thanks for the many blessings that we are fortunate enough to enjoy. The school community (in year groups) will undertake a liturgy at different times on Friday morning to help our spiritual preparations as we approach the final weeks of Lent in advance of the celebration of Holy Week and the resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Yours sincerely



Mr. K Turmeau
Headteacher