Education Authority - Southern Region

**St. Brigid’s Primary School**

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4th January 2021

Good afternoon parent(s)/guardian(s),

**Newsletter – January 2021**

I hope that you enjoyed Christmas and New Year and looking forward to 2021.

I would like to update you on our reopening arrangements for term 2, following Minister Peter Weir’s revised plans announced late last week. This follows recent advice on the current situation of the epidemic, levels of transmission and numbers of cases.

**Key message to note**

Pupils were due to return to school on Wednesday 6th January 2021. However, this week has now been designated a “remote learning” week.

In addition, school’s first day back has now been designated as a “non-contact” day which means that pupils **do not** attend school. This day will allow teachers to prepare and plan for remote learning and link up with the pupils in their class.

***All primary school pupils will be taught remotely on Thursday 7th and Friday 8th January 2021***, after which they will attend school for face-to-face teaching on ***Monday 11th January***.

**Exceptional cases**

Although this week is a remote learning week, the Minister has asked schools to open for vulnerable children and children of key workers.

The Department of Education’s definition of a Vulnerable Child (January 2021) (as set out in the cross-departmental Vulnerable Children and Young People's Plan 2020) is[[1]](#footnote-1):

* A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
* A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
* A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
* A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
* A child who is ‘on-the-edge’ of receiving support from children’s social services.
* A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
* A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
* A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
* A child who has been placed for adoption.
* Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.

The Department of Education’s definition of a Key Worker (Jan 21) is:

* Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector;
* Education and childcare. This includes pre-school and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response;
* Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles;
* Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response;
* Utilities, and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, banking and waste disposal;
* Financial Services - This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);
* Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical, etc.);
* Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses
* Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency;
* Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

*Please note that if one parent meets this definition then the child can attend school during this week.*

**If your children fall into any of the above categories, please email** **mkeating196@c2kni.net** **or contact St Brigid’s on Tuesday 5th January.**

We will open on Thursday 7th January and Friday 8th January for “supervised learning”. This means that children, supervised by an adult member of staff, will work on the same Seesaw and Google Classroom tasks as the rest of their class at home.

I will continue to update you as updated information becomes available from the Department of Education throughout term 2.

Best wishes

M Keating

1. <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-crossdepartmental-covid-19-vulnerable-children-and-young-peoples-plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)