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together  
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## ***Braidside Integrated Primary and Nursery School***

**87 Frys Road, Ballymena Co. Antrim BT43 7EN  
1989- 2019: 30 Years of Integration**

**028 25647899**



***Principal: J McAuley***

**[www.braidside.co.uk](http://www.braidside.co.uk)**

**03/07/20**

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

As we begin our summer break, I would like to begin by thanking you for your support and cooperation over these past months. We have worked hard to maintain a presence online through the lockdown period using the school website, the class pages, school app, our Facebook page and in having some whole school events for the children and you to participate in. We thoroughly enjoyed activities such as the Braidside message video, Avatar competition, Whole School Tea Party and 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration. We are grateful for the positive feedback we have received including messages and emails which have been so supportive and we pay tribute to the work you have done with your children at home during these unusual times. It is now time for a break, to catch our breath and to rest ahead of what is likely to be another challenging period.

At this time, we are planning for 2020/21 and we are establishing the Braidside IPNS Restart Plan, the key objective of which is to allow for a smooth transition back to school, while ensuring that the health and well-being of the pupils and staff remains paramount. This document follows the publication of “NI Re-opening Schools Guidance, New School Day” (19 June 2020) by the Department of Education (DE), PHA guidance and as a result of discussions by the BIPS Restart Committee. It is clear that the advent of COVID-19 has had a profound impact on society in general and will significantly alter the daily operations in school moving forward. School will not look like normal for some time.

We, the Board of Governors, Principal and staff of Braidside IPS, very much want to see the children back to school, working and learning in a supportive and caring environment. While we recognise there may be worries around a return to school, we hope the measures we implement will provide some reassurance to parents and families.

For now, I wish to inform you of our key intentions. We are working towards having full-time classes resume in the autumn and this has been made possible due the fact that we will move into our new school at the end of July. The availability of additional classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, more outside play space and a large multi-purpose hall have enabled us to use all this space to facilitate learning. There will have to be a temporary reconfiguration of classrooms and some larger classes, but we are of the belief that it is in the best interests of the children, families and school to have access to face-to-face teaching time.

Please note the following:

- ❖ P7 pupils will return on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.
- ❖ During the week of 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> August all other P2-P6 classes will have Induction Sessions (1hr duration) to allow for familiarisation of the new school. You will be informed of these dates and times in August.
- ❖ P2-P6 children will return to school on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.
- ❖ P1 children will be issued with start dates for September and will have the usual staggered induction to school, finishing at 12;15pm for the initial period. These dates will also be shared in August 2020.
- ❖ Nursery children will be issued with start dates for September, in line with usual procedures for the transition to starting Nursery.
- ❖ There will be staggered starts and ends to the school day, break times and lunchtimes as we follow the class protective bubble approach. The arrival to school and end of day will be arranged alphabetically, to facilitate family groupings.
- ❖ There will be no before school supervision, morning reading group, 2-3pm supervision in the new term while we work with these health and safety measures.
- ❖ A strict regime of handwashing, hygiene and cleaning protocols will be in place throughout the school.
- ❖ Parents are asked not to enter the school building at this time and to avoid meeting, congregating and parking on the school grounds to assist with reducing the risk of transmission for everyone.
- ❖ It is likely that in the initial return to school we will ask that parents provide a packed lunch for their children, which will be eaten in their individual classrooms. We would hope a packed lunch will be provided for those in receipt of Free School Meals.
- ❖ Children and staff are not required to wear PPE as routine. We want the return to school to be warm, welcoming and something we can all look forward to.
- ❖ We would ask that children have a pair of plimsolls to wear indoors for PE in the new hall (please ensure their name is clearly marked). These can be brought in on the first day back and remain in the cloakrooms.
- ❖ Information about stationary packs has been shared with parents already but please remember that children should not bring pencil cases, school bags or toys from home in to school.
- ❖ The Braidside IPNS Restart Plan will be issued to parents in early August 2020.

As a result of the new start dates for September 2020, there have been changes made to the 2020-21 holiday arrangements. These are available to download from the website for your information. This information above is, of course, **subject to change**, should there be changes to guidance from DE, PHA or scientific groups.

We hope, in providing you with these details, that parents can begin to make plans and prepare children for the return to school. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that all measures are adhered to, for the safety and well-being of everyone.

As noted previously, I would encourage you to visit the website during the summer break to ensure you have up-to-date information.

Wishing you all a safe, relaxing and enjoyable summer!

Yours faithfully,

***J. McAuley***

Principal.