# Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School

18th August 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am pleased to confirm the arrangements for school from the start of the new term in September.

**Start and finish times**

All pupils will return to school on Tuesday 31st August from 9:00am -11:00am for a ‘settling in’ day. There will be no bus service or school meals on this day. School will then resume as normal from Wednesday 1st September.

All children should arrive at school anytime between 8.45am and 9:05am and should enter the school through the front door. All children must be in school and ready to begin lessons at 9:10am.

Primary 1 pupils can be accompanied by a parent to the P1 classroom door during their ‘settling in’ period. We would urge parents to abide by Public health Agency guidelines and to avoid congregating at the school gates.

Primary 1 will follow a ‘phased induction’ during the month of September (as detailed in the Primary 1 induction booklet. Following this phased induction, the school day will finish at 2:00pm for all children in Primary 1 and Primary 2.

The school day will finish at 3.10pm for children in Primary 3 to Primary 7.

**Staffing**

For the 2021-2022 academic year, our class arrangements are planned as follows:

P1/2- Mrs Conway

P2/3- Mrs Devlin

P4/5- Ms Treacy and Mr Mc Shane

P5/6- Mrs Mc Cann

P7- Mrs Donnelly and Mr Mc Shane

**Transport**

Our bus service will resume as normal from Wednesday 1st September. If you have not yet applied for Home to School transport, please do so at the following link:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/home-to-school-transport>

Pupils who travel to school by car should be dropped off at our pedestrian gate. In the interest of Health and Safety and Child Protection, parents are not permitted to drive into the school grounds through the school gates.

**Bubbles and Self-Isolation**

Since Monday 16th August there has been no need to self-isolate as a close contact- as long as you have been double vaccinated or are under the age of 18 years. This means that we should not have to close ‘bubbles’ if there is a positive case of covid. People who are positive with COVID-19 themselves will still need to isolate but this will not affect the rest of the pupils. This means we no longer need to keep the children in consistent groups, known as ‘bubbles’.

**Hand Hygiene**

We will continue to ask children to wash their hands regularly and will continue to provide hand sanitiser. Our pupils and staff have been diligent in upholding good hygiene and sanitising habits during the past 18 months. We will continue this into the winter months to protect ourselves and our families from COVID-19.

**Lunchtimes**

Dinner will go back to being served in the Dining Hall, using two sittings:

• Mrs Conway, Mrs Devlin and Ms Treacy’s classes on First Sitting (out to play second)

• Mrs Mc Cann and Mrs Donnelly/ Mr Mc Shane’s classes on Second Sitting (out to play first)

Pupils having a packed lunch will also eat in the dining hall.

Dinners will cost £2.60 again this year. Money should be sent in a labelled envelope at the beginning of each school week. If you think that you may be entitled to help with the cost of Free School Meals and the cost of the school uniform, please ensure that you have applied online at:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants/apply-for-free-school-meals-uniform-grants>

Information about ordering school milk will be sent out at the start of September.

**Uniform including PE uniform**

The school uniform will remain the same as previous years. Jumpers and Cardigans ordered by Select Kidz and Dympna’s School Wear in the future will be printed with our newly designed school crest.

Children will be expected to wear their PE clothes to and from school on the days that they have PE. Your child’s teacher will let you know which days this will be in September.

Pupils must wear full school uniform on non-PE days.

Please remember to send a raincoat with your child as we will be encouraging our pupils to enjoy breaktimes outdoors as far as possible.

**School bags and Pencil Cases**

We are delighted to be able to re-introduce school bags from September and we ask that all belongings are transported to and from school inside the schoolbag. We also ask that children bring a fully stocked pencil case to school because this has worked really well for us and the children during the past 18 months.

**Attendance**

Excellent school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential. Teaching staff monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the 9:10am and again at afternoon registration sessions. It is a parent’s responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil’s absence on the first day of absence by ringing the school office.

**Communication with Parents**

The Seesaw for Schools app has been an invaluable tool for maintaining effective communication between the school, our pupils and our parents during the past 18 months. We have subscribed to this app for another year. Your child’s teacher will send home new access codes and instructions on how to sign up, at the beginning of September.

Please also keep an eye on our website as we will be updating the Calendar section with Dates for your diary. Our School Holiday list will also be made accessible on the website for your reference.

I hope that this information clarifies our arrangements for the beginning of the new school year. All the arrangements in this letter are potentially subject to change. Should the local area see a rise in cases; we might be asked to go back to class ‘bubbles.’ We hope to avoid this eventuality, but we will be prepared to respond quickly if the situation arises.

We are very excited at the prospect of returning in September to a more normal school experience. We look forward to welcoming you and your children again soon.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Amanda Donnelly