



On 6<sup>th</sup> August 2020, Peter Weir – NI Education Minister announced that schools would return as normal, without social distancing, for pupils from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August. Following this announcement, we shared the updated guidance issued to schools on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020 with you to help us prepare, as a school community, for our planned return.

At Mill Strand Integrated School & Nursery, our priority is the emotional, physical and educational welfare of our pupils, staff, parents and wider community. We are operating in a climate of continual change, preparing for the unknown where everything can change in an instant. Even as we plan our return, there is uncertainty in the news regarding increasing cases of COVID-19 in the community and talk of increased measures including lockdown to prevent its spread.

In returning to school, we wish to create a happy, safe, secure, nurturing and welcoming environment where we all have the opportunity to enjoy learning together. To do this, we have adapted the DENI Guidelines to suit the unique environment and circumstances of the school. We need your understanding, co-operation and support to put these into practice and to secure a safe environment for our pupils, staff and wider school community.

Our strategy for return can be summarised by the SWAN approach:

- 'S' Safety (Feeling physically & emotionally safe)
- 'W' Welcoming (Delighted that children are back in school. An environment of connection, including parents & staff)
- 'A' Altogether (All stakeholders, child-agencies and staff working together)
- 'N' Nurture (COVID-19 has impacted on all our lives. We need to REBUILD in order to be ready for learning)

We realise and accept that children and young children in particular don't socially distance. To mitigate for this, we will be operating 'social bubbles' on a class and Year Group basis. We will also try to minimise the risk of COVID-19 by asking children to be 'SAFE'

### **SAFE**

- S- Stay apart
- A- tissue close by
- F- Frequently wash hands properly
- E-Everyone use their own belongings

All the adults and children will be keeping these rules in school. We will learn and encourage one another to keep them.

The guidance to parents is summarised in the page overleaf. We would ask everyone in our school community to follow these basic rules. To keep your child safe, the school will adhere to these guidelines, particularly when children display symptoms that could be indicative of COVID-19 or flu like symptoms.

**Should your child display symptoms they must be kept at home and you must arrange for a COVID-19 test.**

# EDUCATION RESTART



## Everyone has a role to play in keeping our schools safe and helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.

### Everyone should continue to:

- wash hands regularly
- cover coughs and sneezes
- practise social distancing
- follow the latest public health advice

### What should I not do?

- Don't** send your child to school if they have COVID-19 symptoms
- Don't** allow your child to use public transport unless you have no alternative
- Don't** gather at the school entrance/gate
- Don't** allow your child to share food/drinks with friends

### What should I do?

- Do** let the school know if your child will be absent due to COVID-19 symptoms
- Do** encourage your child to socially distance, if it is possible
- Do** encourage good hand hygiene
- Do** use alternative transport if you can
- Do** walk or cycle if it's safe and appropriate to do so
- Do** use park and ride or other car-parking facilities (if available) and walk the remainder of the journey to school
- Do** avoid parking close to or at the school gates
- Do** encourage the use of face coverings on school transport

Further information, including Frequently Asked Questions for parents and carers, can be found on the Department of Education's website at [www.education-ni.gov.uk](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk).



Department of  
**Education**  
[www.education-ni.gov.uk](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### How is the school going to communicate key information?

The school will communicate through the following:

Seesaw (Contact with class teacher)

Website (Restart 2020 page)

Social Media Platforms – Facebook & Twitter

Text Messaging Service/School App (under development)

Printed material & letters

### What do I need to do before my child returns to school?

- Please reassure your child/family that the school has been working extremely hard to ensure the school is a safe environment. (Videos to be shared via the school web site/social media).
- Look at the Restart Page of the school Website.
- Send your child with their own stationery as outlined by the teachers on the Restart 2020-year group page. The personal equipment will be stored in your child's individual tray / drawer in their classroom. For the first half-term we are asking pupils not to bring school bags to school. This is to minimise what pupils bring from home and to help keep classroom clear of items. This will be reviewed at Halloween.
- The school will be providing children with a folder to take things to and from school that can be stored and wiped down easily. Please ensure your child brings their folder to school every day. This folder is easily sanitized and will stay on the rack under your child's desk during the day.
- Discourage your child from touching their eyes, face, nose and mouth, putting hands/fingers into their mouths;
- Show your child how to cough into their elbow if they don't have a tissue / paper towel;
- If they have a paper towel, they should be shown how to cough into it and then dispose safely of it into the nearest bin. – "Catch it, bin it, kill it."
- Please complete and return the DATA Capture forms. We must make sure we have **up to date contact telephone numbers and associated documentation**.
- Talk to your child about **social distancing**, we can't pretend it will happen in every situation, but we will make every effort to follow the guidelines in place.
- On a daily basis check your child's temperature-if it is raised. Please do not send your child to school if they have a raised temperature or display any COVID-19 symptoms.

### Do the children need to wear their school uniform?

- All children and young people should wear a clean uniform each day.

#### **GIRLS**

Jade polo shirt with logo

Navy Sweatshirt/Cardigan with logo

Navy Pinafore/Skirt/Trousers

Navy Tights

(Blue/Green Gingham Dress with white socks optional Summer Term)

#### **BOYS**

Jade polo shirt with logo

Navy Sweatshirt with logo

## Navy Trousers (Plain Navy Shorts optional Summer Term)

Plain navy jogging bottoms may be worn by Foundation Stage pupils Nursery, Year 1& 2 only.  
All pupils should wear plain navy or black flat 'school' shoes

Please Note – All items of uniform MUST be marked clearly with your child's name and class.  
Unfortunately, the school cannot be responsible for lost items of clothing.

### What will the first week look like?

We have planned that the first week back to school will be a gentle, phased one. We are doing this to allow the school to monitor, evaluate and review the measures we have put in place and help ensure that the social and emotional needs of our pupils are met. The school will be operating in class/Year Group 'bubbles' and this will include staggered drop off and collection arrangements.

### What is the start Date?

**Start Date:** Our intended start date for pupils is Monday 24 August 2020. There will be a gradual transition each day as follows:

Date	Year Group	Drop Off Time	Location	Pick-up Time	Location
Monday 24 August 2020	Nursery	8.30am	Side Nursery Gate	See Restart web page	Side Nursery Gate
	Year 1	8.55am	Class Playground Doors	See Restart web page	Green Gate
	Year 6 & 7	8.30am	Green Gate	3.00pm	Green Gate

The return of remaining year groups to school, where new, COVID-19 preventative measures have been put in place, will require a phased restart over the course of a week. This will enable the school to assess the effectiveness of measures put in place, any additional procedures or adjustments required, monitor access and drop off and focus on the welfare of pupils.

Date	Year Group	Drop Off Time	Location	Pick-Up Time	Location
Tuesday 25 August 2020	Year 2	08.45am	Pupil Entrance	2.00pm	Milk Door/Pupil Entrance
Wednesday 26 August 2020	Year 5	08.35am	Green Gate	3.05pm	Green Gate
Thursday 27 August 2020	Year 3	08.45am	Green Gate	2.10pm	Green Gate
Friday 28 August 2020	Year 4	08.40am	Green Gate	2.50pm	Green Gate

All pupils, with the exception of early years transition pupils will therefore be in school on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020. The above times for Year 3 will be reviewed after the initial period of restart.

### What time will I drop my child off at school?

Normally we have significant numbers of children waiting for the doors to open at 8:30am. Given the necessity to manage and reduce traffic flow however we have had to introduce set drop off and pick up times for each family. Families are asked to drop off all of their children at the time of their youngest child. While pick-up cannot be readily co-ordinated for families, we would ask that those collecting children observe social distancing at the school gate. We will have further traffic controls in place to try and ease traffic congestion. This will be communicated, through Seesaw, website and Social Media.

**Currently, in line with DE Guidelines, parent/carers will not be permitted in the school building unless to attend a pre-arranged meeting.**

### **What do we do about Healthy Break?**

Healthy Break will be available for Nursery- Year 3 Week beginning 24 August 2020. Please see the class information pages for how this works for each year group. This will be at a cost. Year 4-7 pupils are required to provide their own healthy breaks. Break times will be staggered.

### **What is happening with School Meals?**

- School meals will be available from 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020. The arrangements for the serving of meals have been updated to take account of COVID-19 measures. These will be similar to those found in any appropriately operating restaurant.
- We are delighted to announce that Bang Bang Chicken will be the first item on this year's menu for our Year 6&7 pupils.
- You may send a Packed Lunch with your child.
- **Should you wish to order a school meal please do so in the normal way, via your child's class teacher.** We had hoped to have an on-line ordering system in place, but this is not fully operational at present. As the school cannot operate a credit system, meals must be paid for on ordering. This can be done through Schoolmoney.

### **How do I pay through school money?**

- Use this link:
- <https://login.eduspot.co.uk/public/portal/parent/?app=schoolmoney&source=website&version=20190314>
- Enter your mobile number
- Enter your email address
- Enter your password: This will have been sent via text. If you do not remember this contact the office.
- Enter your child's first name
- Follow the instructions to make the payment
- Children entitled to free School Meals should be applying for their entitlement **NOW**. There is a link on our school website to the page where you can download the application forms <https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants>. **If you were entitled to FSM last year, this does NOT carry forward to this new academic year. Please apply now!**
- Packed Lunches will be eaten within the classroom as the Dining Hall is restricted so that children remain within their protective classroom bubble.

NB School Money will be used to pay for all aspects of school where payment is require to reduce the handling of money.

### **Are the children eating lunch/playing at the same time as normal?**

Yes, there will be staggered lunch/play times with three sittings this year. These will be broadly similar to previous years.

**What is happening with the school toilets?**

We will be encouraging each class to visit the toilets at timetabled parts of the day, allowing staff to clean them immediately afterwards. Of course, we fully appreciate that the human body isn't necessarily that predictable! If you gotta go, you gotta go! ...so cleaning will be undertaken throughout the day.

**What happens at Home times/Pick Up?**

The normal school day will be followed, with the exception of the Nursery and Year 1 pupils as they will have a differing transition timetable for the first few weeks. Parents of children in these year groups can visit the specific class pages on the school web-site Restart 2020/Seesaw notifications for more information about finishing times for each year group. Finishing times for Year 2-7 can be found in the above table. This is to help us maintain social distancing measures.

**My child has additional need what provision will be put in place?****Children with additional needs:**

Classroom assistants normally work in close proximity to children. Where possible, we will attempt to maintain appropriate social distancing between children and adults. Where this is not possible, appropriate PPE will be worn.

**What will be the approach to teaching and learning?**

Considering the time children have spent out of school over the last five months, we will be focussing primarily on settling everyone back and meeting their child's emotional and social needs. We need to make sure everyone is ready to learn so that the curriculum including the fundamentals of Literacy and Numeracy can be delivered effectively and that children flourish in the school environment. Our starting point will be the individual needs of every child. All learning will be planned and teaching differentiated to take account of these needs.

**Physical Education:**

With the hall out of use we will be suspending any indoor PE at the moment. Weather permitting, we will facilitate non-contact PE outdoors. Your class teacher will inform you when this will take place and what to send to school.

**Outdoor Learning:**

As a school we use the outdoors to extend and enhance our learning experiences. The staff will be working hard to ensure the necessary risk assessments and safety procedures are in place so that this learning can continue as normal.

**How do I contact my child's class teacher?**

Send a message to my child's class teacher via SeeSaw. Alternatively phone the school and leave a message. Your child's teacher will respond to you as soon as they can. Please be mindful that during the day, the teachers are teaching, so they may not be able to respond until after 3pm.

**Are After school activities starting when school returns?**

No, these are likely to be suspended for the time being.

**What measures are being put in place for handwashing?**

- Handwashing can reduce the risk of infection. Frequent washing with soap and water for 20 seconds will be facilitated and encouraged both before and after activities and at different times of the day.
- Should your child have any allergies to regular soaps, please supply your child with soap that meets their needs.
- At our school entrances/exits and throughout key areas of the school, including the classrooms, hand sanitizer is available.

### **Mill Strand Children's Centre:**

The Children Centre are still waiting for guidelines from the government as to what the school day is going to look like, so that this childcare service can resume. This decision will be granted by Social Services who oversee this provision as their statutory body. The Children's Centre will inform the parent community what is happening when a decision has been made.

### **Is Breakfast Club running?**

Breakfast Club will not run for the first half-term. This provision will be reviewed at Halloween and reintroduced should it be feasible.

### **Cleaning in school:**

Our cleaners in school will continue as normal with a specific focus on key areas such as door handles, bannisters, toilets etc.

### **Will the school be using PPE?**

DENI Guidelines, Guidance to support safe working in educational settings in Northern Ireland 4th June 2020: Using personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriately

### **If any child is displaying coronavirus symptoms they should be sent home.**

PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases. These are for adults:

- Working with children, young people and pupils whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE, due to their intimate care needs
- Giving children medication

### **Working safely in specific situations, including where PPE may be required**

Reference to PPE in the following situations means:

- fluid-resistant surgical face masks
- disposable gloves
- disposable plastic aprons
- eye protection (for example a face visor or goggles)

Where PPE is recommended, this means that:

- A facemask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from someone with symptoms of COVID-19. **[Symptomatic children should not be in school]**
- If contact is necessary, gloves, an apron and a facemask should be worn
- If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of fluids entering the eye (e.g. from coughing, spitting or vomiting), eye protection should also be worn

When PPE is used, it is essential that it is used properly. This includes scrupulous hand hygiene and following guidance on donning (putting on) and doffing (taking off) PPE safely to reduce the risk of contamination

Face masks:

- MUST cover both nose and mouth
- MUST be changed when they become moist or damaged
- MUST be worn once and then discarded - hands must be cleaned after disposal
- MUST NOT be allowed to dangle around the neck
- MUST NOT be touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal
- 

**Children should not wear PPE** (Medical and DE guidance clearly states that children under the age of 13 should not wear face masks in school. As a school, however, we will not be preventing any child from wearing PPE if that is the parent's wish)

### **What happens if my child becomes ill?**

DENI Guidelines, Guidance to support safe working in educational settings in Northern Ireland 4th June 2020 states:

*“If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature/fever or anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste) in an educational setting they must be sent home together with other family members and advised to follow the guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.*

*A child awaiting collection should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. A window should be opened for ventilation.”*

[We have designated a room near reception as our isolation room. If the child needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they use the disabled toilet adjacent to the sensory room. The bathroom will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.]

PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if direct personal care is needed and a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

If the child is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk, we will call 999.

If a member of staff (who was wearing the appropriate PPE and adhering to the social distancing guidelines) has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of taste/smell, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.

The member of staff will wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. The affected area will also be cleaned with available cleaning products, followed by disinfection after someone with symptoms has left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

**Should your child display symptoms they must be kept at home and you must arrange for a COVID-19 test.**

#### **What happens if a staff member takes ill?**

DENI Guidelines -Guidance to support safe working in educational settings in Northern Ireland 4th June 2020 states:

*“If a staff member becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms, they should go home as soon as possible. Cleaning the affected area with available cleaning products, followed by disinfection after someone with symptoms has left, will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. Staff testing will be arranged. “*

#### **Pupil Attendance**

##### **NORTHERN IRELAND RE-OPENING SCHOOLS GUIDANCE-NEW SCHOOL DAY**

Schools should follow latest guidance on attendance for children and young people who have health conditions, who live with people with health conditions or who are pregnant.

- Pupils who are clinically vulnerable are those with pre-existing conditions who have been advised to stringently follow the social distancing guidelines and **should learn from home where possible**. A small minority of pupils will fall into this category.
- Pupils who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, **can attend** their education or childcare setting.
- Pupils who are shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable people) will have serious underlying health conditions. These pupils should follow shielding measures and **should not attend** school in person. Schools should consider the distance learning and support needs of pupils who are shielding.
- Pupils living with someone who is shielding **should only attend** the education setting if they are able to stringently adhere to social distancing. Such pupils should have an individual risk assessment conducted before the most appropriate place of learning is determined.

- **If you have concerns about the above information, please get in touch with your child's teacher via Seesaw.**

### **Test, Trace and Protect**

Children and young people who exhibit any symptoms associated with COVID-19 should not attend educational settings. The Department of Health has implemented a contact tracing programme called Test, Trace and Protect designed to control the spread of COVID-19. All pupils are expected to follow the requirements of this programme: to self-isolate if they are identified as close contacts of cases and to obtain a test for COVID-19 if they develop symptoms. All members of their household should follow the appropriate isolation guidance as provided by the Public Health Agency.

### **We encourage families to download the stop COVID NI Contact-App.**

Where an individual has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution. If every-one with symptoms who was tested in their household receives a negative result, they can return to school providing they are well enough and have not had a temperature for 48 hours.

### **Where the result is positive, they should follow PHA isolation guidance which currently requires that everyone in your house must stay at home:**

- if you develop symptoms of coronavirus you should arrange to have a test as soon as possible, you will need to stay at home for at least 10 days from the onset of your symptoms;
- if you live with someone who has symptoms or has a positive test, you are a close contact and you will need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms, it is important that the full 14 days are completed;
- if you develop symptoms during this 14-day period, you will need to arrange to have a test and if your test is positive you must stay at home for 7 days from the onset of your symptoms (regardless of what day you are on in the original 14-day period);
- 7 days after your symptoms started, if your condition has improved and you have not had a temperature during the previous 48 hours you can complete your period of self-isolation. If you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. You do not need to self-isolate if you just have a cough after 7 days, as a cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone;
- If you have symptoms and live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else they can stay for the 14-day isolation period
- It is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days if you are a close contact or 7 days if you have the infection will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.
- It is essential that all staff and pupils follow this guidance. By doing so staff and pupils will not only protect themselves but they will also limit the spread of the virus to educational settings and the wider population.
- Staff or pupils who have been part of the same 'protective bubble' as someone who has/develops symptoms and/or who tests positive for COVID-19, must follow PHA isolation guidance under the Test and Trace and Protect programme. All other contacts in the same 'protective bubble' as a person with symptoms or who tests positive will have to self-isolate for the required 14-day isolation period. They can return to school when they have completed the necessary period of isolation as advised by the Test, Trace and Protect service. This will help contain any potential transmission to those staff/pupils in the bubble and will also assist in protecting the wider community. A 'protective bubble' is effectively an extension of a household. COVID-19: Information for the public

- Where staff or pupils, in a cohort that is not operating as a 'protective bubble' (for example, in some senior school classes or where smaller numbers permit social distancing within existing classrooms), have developed symptoms or tested positive all staff and pupils within this cohort who have been in direct contact with the individual must self-isolate and follow PHA guidance.
- They can return to school when they have completed the necessary period of isolation as advised by the Test, Trace and Protect system.
- Enhanced cleaning will be carried out within any classroom in which an individual who has developed COVID-19 has been to prevent the spread of the virus and this should be clearly communicated to staff, parents and pupils to provide assurance that the environment is safe.
- Specific guidance in respect of pupil attendance whether at school or at home will be issued separately.

We appreciate that this guidance is quite extensive, extending to ten pages. We believe, however, that it is important to be as clear as possible in communicating this information and that parents fully understand why it is in place and what we hope to achieve through it.

As stated at the outset, our priority is the welfare and well-being of your child/children. We are also aware that this duty of care extends to the wider school community and extended families. We hope, with your continued understanding and support, to work together over the coming days and weeks to create a safe, welcoming and nurturing school environment for all of our children.

The last five months have been challenging for us all but have they have also afforded us the opportunity to 'reset' our lives and appreciate so many things that we often take for granted. We look forward to seeing you next week and hope that we can gradually rebuild over the coming weeks to create a sense of normality in an ever-changing world.

#### **Mill Strand Integrated School & Nursery**

