

School Restart 8th March 2021



Dear Parent / Guardian

We are delighted to be able to welcome some of our year groups back to Ballymacrickett next week, albeit for a short time. Please see the Education Minister's plan below:

Week beginning:	
8 th March	Nursery, P1, P2, and P3 classes attend school. P4-P7 continue remote learning
15 th March*	Nursery, P1, P2, and P3 classes attend school. P4-P7 continue remote learning
22 nd March-Easter	All classes to engage in remote learning
12 th April	Nursery, P1, P2, and P3 classes attend school. Plan for P4-P7 classes to be confirmed

**School closed on St Patrick's Day...17th March only.*

Key Points

- In line with Department of Education guidance, we will unfortunately be unable to offer a morning club facility to pupils.
- Drop-off and pick-up arrangements and times will be as they were in term 1. Please note that, although we had originally intended to extend the P3 day until 3pm for term 2, however, under the circumstances and in the interests of the children, we have now decided that P3 pupils should maintain the finish time of 2pm.
- School dinners, morning buses and a 2pm bus will be available as normal.
- We ask that parents wear a face mask at all times on the school grounds and that they remain at least 2m apart.

Additional Points

- Our emphasis is on supporting children to re-connect socially, build positive relationships and engage enthusiastically with learning as they return to the school environment. We want to support children's emotional health and well-being and help them to be engaged and motivated to learn. We will be providing opportunities for children to be actively involved in practical and challenging play-based learning in a stimulating environment. Our goal is for a balanced day, where children feel able to re-connect with school and with each other (within their class bubbles). In order to provide a positive re-introduction to school life, we will not be following our usual programme of homework activities.
- In partnership with parents, our remote learning programme has worked very well and has ensured that our teaching and curriculum delivery is on schedule. However, we do understand that some children have been finding home learning difficult. Missed content in itself is not a long-term problem for our children. The language we use with them is very important. We will not be making references to "missed work" or "lost time" or "catch up" as these words are likely to add to pupil anxiety. Our aim will be to support the children to be motivated to learn, through a curriculum that gives them equal emphasis on knowledge, understanding and skills, rather than catching up on missed knowledge. We would ask that parents are equally sensitive to, or in front of children.
- As remote learning will be continuing for P4-P7 classes, we understand that while parents are dropping off younger children at school, their older siblings might need to participate in scheduled Google Meets. We can only suggest that you use the staggered drop-off times to help to avoid clashes, if possible. Please note that the Meets are recorded and saved on your child's specific Google Classroom.

Please be assured of our ongoing commitment to your child's welfare and our appreciation of your continued support.

Yours faithfully

D. Mulholland
Principal