

Parent/Carer Update: Friday 19th March 2021

Dear parent or carer

We are delighted to be welcoming back ALL children on Monday. It will be an absolute pleasure to hear the corridors and rooms full of chatter and laughter – and the sound of children where they need to be.

This too, shall pass.

When things are bad, remember: It won't always be this way. Take one day at a time.

When things are good, remember: It won't always be this way. Enjoy every great moment.

TAKE TIME



Take time ... to say a great big thanks to everyone who helped at home. Your kitchen table was not a school desk and the adults at home weren't teachers. You all did amazingly well!

Take time ... to say well done to yourself! You have achieved so much over the past year – especially how you can do more on your own with less help from adults. Not for everything – but for some of your work.

Take time... to appreciate the blessings we have enjoyed. Lots of time together to discover a love of outdoors, baking, art, gardening...time together is always time well-spent

Take time... to settle back to work. There is lots of chat about getting 'back on track'. This won't happen overnight. This won't happen before Easter. This won't happen before the end of Term 3. But together we will work to help everyone move forward. By the time you kids are really old (maybe 15 or even 16) you will be back on track. You can still achieve your dreams of being a doctor, a teacher, a plumber, a chemist, a vet, a nurse, a baker. If you can dream it, you can be it.

I would like to take time ... to thank everyone at school. I saw all the hard work the staff put in – the extra effort to make activities interesting and fun – the way they tried to stay connected, the lovely messages they have sent you all about your work, how many hands prepared all the learning packs. Teamwork makes the dream work 😊 #bestschool

Dates for the diary

Mon 22 nd March	• All Y1-7 pupils in school for face-to-face teaching until Easter holidays
Tues 23 rd March	• PE with Liam (IFA coach) – all classes. Wear trainers/ outdoor shoes <i>every day</i>
Fri 26 th March	• NRPS Birthday Party Part 2: Y4-7 in school to celebrate TOGETHER!
Wed 31 st March	• Last day of Term 2. School closes at 11am
Thurs 1 st April	• Teacher training day (moved from 12 April)
Mon 12 th April	• Normal School day <i>No longer a teacher training day</i>



Now it is the turn of our Y4-7 pupils who have **ALL had a COVID birthday** –celebrating with a few family members and missing being able to invite your classmates. Now we celebrate with all our school friends!

New Row Birthday Party Afternoon

When? Friday 26th March 2021 Where? Your classroom

*A little cake for everyone * A few party games * Lots and lots of singing of Happy Birthday *Treats*

Wear your own clothes - Remember your smile! No presents please – being together is the best gift!

Return to school arrangements: Reminders

- If your child is sick, do not send them to school
- Ensure anyone with COVID-19 symptoms does not attend school
- Wash hands thoroughly and more often than usual to prepare your child for returning to school
- Promote respiratory hygiene using the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- Minimise contact and maintain social distancing when possible – stay in your family bubble

Practical Arrangements

Breakfast club

DE continues to instruct schools to pause their Breakfast & Afterschools provision until further notice.

Drop off and collection times

	Y1	Y2 & Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7
Drop off	9am	8.50am	8.50am	8.50am	9am	9am
Collection	2pm (1.50pm Fri)	1.50pm	2.50pm (2pm Fri)		3pm (2pm Fri)	
From	Front door	Back gate	Back gate	Front door	Back gate	Front door

Parents/Carers: At drop off and collection times:

- You must follow social distancing rules and wear a mask
- Do not linger or loiter at the school gates.

ParentPay

We are aware that refunds are owed for overpaid milk and break. We are processing these and amounts owed will be returned in due course. Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Booking Canteen Break for March on ParentPay

- **SELECT MARCH BREAK** which has a reduced charge of £2.10. This covers the remainder of March.
- Normal charges of £5.50 per month will resume after Easter
- If not taking canteen break, bring a healthy snack
- IF YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTIES, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE by phoning 02879468426 or by emailing info@newrowps.castledawson.ni.sch.uk on/before Monday morning.

Lunch

- Children entitled to FSM will get a dinner each day. All payments from EA will stop.
- All pupils can take a dinner as normal. This must be prebooked & paid via ParentPay before 9.30 daily
- Menu covering until Easter break has now been uploaded to the website

Milk

There will be no milk until we return to school after Easter. Please send a *labelled* water bottle in daily.

Schoolbags etc

We continue to follow guidelines to reduce what travels between home and school.

- Children should not bring a schoolbag.
- All pupils use the wipe-able plastic folders supplied earlier in the year for materials that need to travel
- Water bottles should be washed in warm soapy water daily along with lunchboxes if your child is not taking dinner. Disposable paper bags for lunch are also still welcome.
- Lunchbags should also be wipe-able rather than cloth

Supervised Learning: Vulnerable pupils & children of key workers

Many thanks to all our staff who were so willing to help our New Row families with supervision of children of key workers and vulnerable children. Thanks also to the parents who worked with us on this. The flexibility was great and meant that we could reach out to help more families. However, we are very glad that it is now over and children are back in their own rooms – where they belong!

Back in the classroom: returning to learning (& other info)

Homework

There will be no formal homework set until after Easter. We will be easing the children back in to school and they will be tired! Their enthusiasm may not be as great at the end of the day – and that is ok.

Dress for outdoors

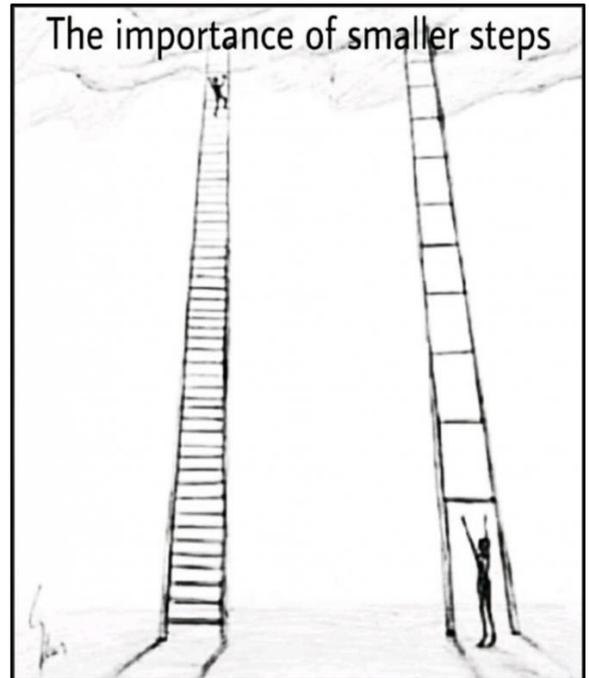
Remember that your child will be spending time outside so will need to have a warm coat – with a hood - and sensible shoes every day. There will be daily PE lessons.

Assessment: What does my child remember?

There will be a strong focus on ensuring the children enjoy and engage in lots of learning experiences when back in school, reconnecting with friends and spending time adjusting. This is not a time to conduct lots of tests and assessments. Any gaps and next steps will be identified and addressed as learning moves forward in a planned and supportive way.

Reading: building confidence and moving on

We know there has been lots of reading during lockdown – both real books and online. Reading at home is different than at school in several ways. Reading at school requires greater independence and is rarely in a 1-1 situation. Children will need time to readjust to this. For this reason, we will be mixing new reading material with more familiar, comfort level books and stories. Pupils will often re-read books they are already familiar with. This builds confidence and fluency – vital in moving on from simply decoding.



Communicating with teachers

During all face-to-face teaching times, parents will be communicated with in the usual ways. If there are any issues etc. please contact the school office as normal. *There will be no facility to contact teachers via Seesaw unless remote learning resumes (hopefully never!).*

Year 7 Education Authority Primary Schools Programme

Our school will be involved in a health and well-being programme organised by our local EA. Pupils do not need to return their art task until they come back to school on Monday – see class Seesaw for more information from Mr Hasson.

Recycling Collection: Advance Notice



Our annual collection will go ahead this year as normal. If you're doing a spring clean, please keep your bin bags . We will hold a collection just after Easter. Until then, please keep us your bin bags safely at home - *all types of clothes, curtains, bedding, handbags, belts & shoes*

Online safety at home: Thank you to Mrs Scullion for her weekly updates during lockdown – lots of useful advice!



Have a lovely weekend and many thanks for your continued support – the dark days are passing!

Mrs D Graffin

Mrs Deirdre Graffin

Principal