



# Mountnorris Primary School

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**Principal:**

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Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian,

As the situation regarding Coronavirus continues to escalate, many of you will be feeling anxious regarding what this means for your children and their education. As a school we have already begun exploring ways in which we can play our part, as directed by the government, to ensure children are catered for in the most conducive way possible.

**At this point it is important to note that schools will be continuing to function as normal. There has been no directive to close.**

Yesterday, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March, the Education Minister, Peter Weir, issued a letter to schools regarding the current situation. Although this will change as the situation continues to change, this is the most current advice which we as a school have in writing from the Department of Education. It is however important to note that already the letter is dated in its content due to changes from the Prime Minister last night, but these are reflected in the advice which I am now sharing with you:

- 1) Anyone displaying symptoms of Covid-19 should self-isolate for 14 days. In addition to this, if anyone displays the symptoms of Covid-19, the whole house should self-isolate. This includes, parents, guardians and siblings.
- 2) The symptoms to look out for are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature.
- 3) According to the Minister, *'Covid-19 appears to affect children less than other age groups. However, it should be remembered that children can pick up the infection and spread it to others.'*
- 4) Everyone must practice good hand-washing for at least 20 seconds, before and after any activity such as meal times, break times and sporting activities.
- 5) Children who are not displaying symptoms should be in school.
- 6) If anyone in your house is displaying symptoms, your child should not be sent in and should be self-isolating for 14 days.
- 7) Children who develop symptoms during the school day will be sent home immediately. Failing parents being able to be contacted or being able to collect children immediately, children will be isolated in a room, behind a closed door. If this is not possible, children will be placed at least 2 metres away from other people.

## What will we as a school be doing?

- 1) Staff will be frequently washing their hands to lessen the chance of germs spreading.
- 2) Frequently used items will be regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- 3) Staff will be monitoring the health and well-being of each child to ensure they are well and not displaying symptoms of Covid-19.

School App: Download 'School Jotter' and select 'Mountnorris Primary School'



- 4) Staff will be exploring ways to provide for children in the event of closure. It may be necessary to take a Staff Development Day, at short notice, to enable staff to prepare for closure.
- 5) Staff will be preparing 4 weeks worth of work for children.
- 6) The Principal will continue to listen to and act upon advice from the Department of Education regarding steps which need to be taken.
- 7) Assemblies will be postponed for the foreseeable future.
- 8) After School Clubs will be under constant review.
- 9) Packed lunches will be consumed in classrooms to limit the amount of children in the assembly hall at one time.

**To support us, here are some steps which the NHS website directs you to take:**

- 1) Make sure children have **disposable** tissues in their pockets to catch coughs and sneezes.
- 2) Dispose of tissues immediately after use and wash your hands.
- 3) Encourage your child to cover their mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- 4) Teach your child to wash their hands correctly; this should be using soap, water and for approximately 20 seconds.
- 5) Encourage your child to keep their hands away from their nose and mouth, in as far as is possible.

Above all, at this time it should be noted that the children in our care take priority over all else. As a school we will endeavour to ensure that children feel comfortable at school and that any worries are dispelled, where possible. School is a constant routine which brings comfort to children therefore we would urge you to make sure you send your child to school if they are well and able.

Finally, these are challenging days. Many of us feel the pressure regarding future provision, but we would ask you to work with us to ensure that children's needs are being met accordingly.

Thank you for your help with this. If you have any individual concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via email; [afrizzell135@c2ken.net](mailto:afrizzell135@c2ken.net)

Regards,

Mr Andrew Frizzell

