



17/03/2020

Dear Parents

The latest government advice last night instructs all of us to:

- Stop all non-essential contact with others
- Do what we can to limit our social contact with others
- Work from home where we possibly can
- Avoid social venues
- Self-isolate for 14 days if we have any of the key symptoms or if any of our family have these symptoms.

This advice is completely at odds with the Department of Education's (DE) strategy of keeping schools open, and in opposition to the strategy adopted by most European countries.

We have pupils and family members with compromised immune systems. We have staff with underlying health issues, going home to loved ones with compromised immune systems. We have a duty of care to all of these. Therefore, we ask that all families, allow their children to work from home **from tomorrow**, where they are safest. We believe that school closure is imminent but that as a community we would be very foolish to wait for this announcement from DE.

All of the pupils who were in school on Monday took their learning packs home. Learning packs for all of the children who were absent on Monday are now ready to be collected tomorrow. Hopefully the morning will be dry. The packs can be collected in the main playground, staggered by year group, to try and maintain social distancing, at the following times. If you have more than one child, you can collect all of their packs at once. If it is raining the packs will be distributed from the back door of the school hall.

P7	9.30-10am
P6	10-10.30am
P5	10.30-11am
P4	11-11.30am
P3	11.30-12noon
P2	12-12.30pm
P1	12.30-1pm.

If any packs are not collected by lunchtime, we will ring to arrange collection/delivery. We know that some of our families are in self isolation at the moment and we can deliver these packs if necessary.

We also understand that a number of families will not be able to facilitate their child/children working at home at short notice and I want to reassure you that your children can continue come to school. **However, we hope that we will continue to have enough staff to provide a skeleton service. Breakfast Club is cancelled until further notice.**

Our telephone lines were extremely busy yesterday. If your child is not in school tomorrow, we will presume that they are working from home. **Please do not phone unless you have an urgent message to convey, as we need to maintain open lines as much as possible.**

While DE keeps schools open, the staff who are well, will be working to develop our ability connect with you all during what is likely to be a long closure.

From next week, if you want to contact your child's teacher, please email [info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk)

Please put the teacher's name in the title line and the email will be forwarded to the teacher, as long as the teacher is well. We will try to respond to you as soon as possible. However, we ask for your patience in this matter as we cannot guarantee anything at this time.

I want to thank you all for your support at this unprecedented time and I also wish to thank all of the staff who have worked so hard to put together the home learning packs at such short notice.

Regards  
Mrs S McTaggart  
Principal