



01/01/2021

Dear Parents

I hope that you and your family had a lovely Christmas and I wish you every blessing for 2021.

As I'm sure you have heard in the media yesterday, due to the huge increase in transmission of the Covid 19 virus, Minister Weir has directed schools to move to 'remote learning' when we reopen after the Christmas holiday. While we had planned to welcome the children back to school on Wed 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021, due to the Minister's directive this will now not be possible. Wed 6<sup>th</sup> Jan will be a planning day for staff. Teachers will begin online learning through ClassDojo on Thur 7<sup>th</sup> Jan. The letter from DE, which was sent to schools late yesterday afternoon, stated that primary schools will be open as usual from Mon Jan 11<sup>th</sup>.

**"Primary school pupils will be taught remotely until 8th January, after which they will attend school for face to face teaching"**

St Therese will be open on Thur 7<sup>th</sup> and Fri 8<sup>th</sup> Jan for children of keyworkers who require childcare and have no other options, and for vulnerable children. See appendix 1 for a list of designated key workers and for information regarding vulnerable children. If your child meets these criteria, and you need to avail of this service on Thur and/or Fri next week please email the school by 10am on Tue 5<sup>th</sup> Jan at [info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk). We will respond to requests as soon as possible.

I know that this is a disappointing start to the year but given the deteriorating nature of the pandemic and the risks to public health it is an understandable decision by the Executive. I urge you all to redouble your efforts in following PHA advice, and in particular, to minimise your contacts to prevent transmission of the virus.

I would like, once again, to thank all of our parents and carers for your continuing cooperation and support, and our pupils and staff for their positive approach and commitment to learning at this very challenging time.

Enjoy the rest of the holidays and best wishes for 2021.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S McTaggart  
Principal

## Appendix 1

### Key workers are defined as:

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector;
- Education and childcare. This includes pre-school and teaching staff, social workers, youth workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response;
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles;
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response;
- Utilities, and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, banking and waste disposal;
- Financial Services - This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical, etc.);
- Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency; and
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

### Vulnerable Children are defined as:

- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.