

Letter from the Principal - March 2020
Tuairisc an Phríomhoide

Dear Parents,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well in these unprecedented and challenging times. I know many of you are worried about family and friends. I know many of you are also facing an uncertain future regarding work. We are thinking of you all at this time.

There is also a lot of uncertainty surrounding school work, and how best to keep school work going during this time. As a staff, we are working together to find a solution that works best for our school.

Each family will have different challenges and worries, so I suggest that you find a routine or plan that works for your own family. We do not wish to bring any stress or anxiety into your home. If you cannot do school work or activities at home, please do not worry. The health and well-being of you and your family must always be the top priority. Please contact us if you are having difficulties and we will try to support you as best as we can.

I know this is also a very confusing and worrying time for many children. They may have picked up on our conversations about the current situation. They may be behaving differently as they try to process everything that is going on. There are social stories and resources available on our website which can help you to chat to your child about Covid-19.

Mr. Hugh McDaid, Chairperson of our Board of Management, would like to thank all parents for their ongoing help and support at this time. By following social distancing guidelines last week, the collection of school books was very successful. There have also been many offers of help from parents and we really appreciate this. Thank you!

Home Learning Activities: Teachers will be sending home learning activities to you **after the Easter holidays** via Aladdin. We hope to do this on Monday, 20th April. Children can continue to complete their Busy Books (sent home on Thursday, 12th March) at home. They can also continue with work in their school books. As well as sending work home via Aladdin, there will also be extra supports for you on our school website. Each class has a class blog. You will find a letter from your child's teacher here in the coming days, as well as further information about home learning activities and links to websites. All school staff are concerned about the health and well-being of their students. We hope the work we have set will be of benefit to you and your child. However, if at any time you find this work too much or your child is struggling with it, please take a break and contact us. Our aim is to help you and to

continue our links with you and your child. We have set up a special email address for any concerns or questions which you may have regarding school work during this time. This email address is c19parentsupport@newtownprimary.ie.

School Website: We are setting up two new pages in the “Covid-19” section of the school website to allow the children of Newtown P.S. to share some of the lovely work they are doing at home.

- The **Our Work** art gallery page on the school website will display photos of the children’s colouring, artwork and projects, etc.
- The **Newsletter** will feature class news, as well as stories/book reports/diary entries, etc. that have been written by the children.

We will try to publish as much material as possible on these pages every week. We will not be able to publish photos of your children so please do not send these.

If your child would like to contribute to the art gallery or the newsletter, please email their work to c19parentsupport@newtownprimary.ie. Please do not feel under any pressure to do this if it does not suit you. It is not a requirement of home learning activities.

School Lunches: As part of the lunch scheme, we are able to offer food packs to families in our school during the school closure. These packs will be provided by Carambola (our lunch supplier). Parents who are interested in receiving one of these packs can email schoollunches@newtownprimary.ie. Please include your child’s name in this email.

HSCL: Ronan Keddy, our HSCL co-ordinator, is available to chat to parents during school hours. You can contact Ronan on 0862434741 or email him at hscl@newtownprimary.ie.

Ronan has kindly organised art packs for families who do not have these resources at home. If you need one of these packs, please contact Ronan by phone or email.

Staff news: Congratulations to Ms Egan on the birth of baby Bláithín last week. It is wonderful to have happy news to share during this time.

We will keep in regular contact with you during the school closure. Teachers will try to answer your questions in a timely manner. I am mindful that it is a challenging time for everyone - parents and staff. It may therefore take us a little longer than usual to get back to you. I am also aware that many of you

are working in frontline and essential services. We would like to thank you for your wonderful work.

We will not be setting work during the Easter holidays. I hope that you enjoy these holidays with your family, even if it is different to what you had planned. Thank you once again for your ongoing help and support. I hope you all stay safe and healthy.

Tabhair aire agus fan slán,

Deirdre Lennon

School Principal.