



St. Brigid's Girls' National School

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope that the girls enjoyed the school your activities today, it's a pity that the weather wasn't better but that's Ireland for you! Active week 2020 will begin on Monday 22nd; all details will be on the website. There will be no written work from teachers during this week.

Thanks to all the parents who came down to the school on Tues & Wed to collect and return books, it was great to see everyone in such good form. Don't worry if you didn't make it down. The books that were not collected will now be put into storage until September so that we can move the furniture and resources into the new classrooms. Please don't come down to the school before September looking for books as we will be unable to get them out of storage easily.

Thanks to all who have returned the Aladdin Connect consent forms so far. Please post the form back to the school if you haven't already done so. Towards the end of this week you will receive a link to download the app and then we should be able to receive contactless payments for next September.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those parents and guardians who have been working on the frontline throughout the past few months. Talking to parents over the Tuesday and Wednesday made it very clear how difficult and frightening this has been for those working in the healthcare sector, shops and all other frontline areas. It is for these parents and people in our community that we follow the guidelines as asked and #Hold Firm.

V Ferguson, Acting Principal. Roll No. 18324c. RCN 20119751.

I have been in contact with the parish office about communions and unfortunately they are not in a position to give clarity on when Communion will take place. Please remember that it is not the decision of the Palmerstown parish office alone but that they receive direction from the Archbishop's house of Dublin.

The parish office has asked me to inform parents of the following.

I am aware that Archbishop Diarmuid Martin did mention Confirmations and First Holy Communion when speaking to the media over the last two weeks but he has given no directives to the parish on this. We had also heard that some parishes were furnishing dates for First Holy Communion. Our Parish Priest, Canon Tony Reilly, telephoned Archbishop's House to enquire what the directive was in respect of this. He was told that no decision had been made with regard to First Holy Communion and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin would advise in due course when parishes were permitted to hold these ceremonies **so no dates may be given out at the moment**. It was also pointed out that the Sacrament of Reconciliation (First Confession) would need to be held before the First Holy Communion Sacrament could be performed. The indications from the Archbishop at present seem to be that whenever First Holy Communion does take place, it will be in small groupings. For instance, when our Church re-opens on 29 June 2020, the capacity is 75 people in the church at any one time to be in adherence to social distancing (which at present is 2 meters).

If you check out the Archdiocese website and updates: <https://www.dublindiocese.ie/update-on-arrangements-concerning-coronavirus/> you will see that Archbishop Diarmuid Martin is focusing on Confirmations at the moment as these ceremonies were stopped when the lockdown happened. What I would advise you to do is to check in on this website regularly as we receive communications from Archbishop Martin at the same time as this website is updated.

I am sorry I am unable to provide you with any further information other than the above but the decision on Communion rests with the Archdiocese.

Churches are only opening up from June 29th so it may be some time before the Communion takes place, keep an eye on the Dublin diocese website and we will pass on any further information when we get it.

On a different note the teacher emails that were set up for the duration of the school closure will not be in use after June 30th so if you want to contact the school make sure you use the school email stbrigidsgns@gmail.com

There has been a lot in the news over the past week about the return to school in September, August 31st for our school. I would urge everyone to not get too wrapped up in the media storm as there are all sorts being reported. The reality is that there are so many unknown variables that no one can give a definite informed answer.

So while I may not have a definite answer for you I want to assure you that we are working towards opening our doors on the 31st of August. We are **hopeful** that pupils will return to school five days a week. For this to happen we may have to stagger start and finish times and break times. This will be inconvenient for parents, especially if you have daughters in different classes but we will be asking everyone to be patient.

We are working towards a situation where each class will be a unit, a bubble, so that within each class there will be no social distancing but a focus on stringent hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette. So when the children are in their own classroom life will pretty much be back to normal. I understand that children might be anxious coming back in but now is the time to start reassuring them that when they go back to school Ms Ferguson and the rest of the teachers will make sure that they are safe and happy. Let them know that we might be washing our hands more often and that we will have hand sanitizer in each room but that school will be just like it was before.

As I said I am hopeful that this will be the case but the reality is we still have to wait and see as the summer develops. It will be late August before we can share a definite timetable so once June 30th is here it's time to just enjoy the holidays.

Certain things will change next year, for example, unnecessary visitors will not be allowed into the school building. That means the dropping off of forgotten books, lunches etc. will have to cease. You will need to ensure that your child has everything she needs for the day. It might be a good idea to have a pencil case for school and another one that can be left at home. A clean hand towel should be placed in the school bag each day and washed on a high temp, so it might be a good idea to have a set of 5-7 towels. We may not be able to allow parents onto the yard in the mornings/evenings to limit the contact of adults but this will all be made cleared at end of August.

Thank you for your continued support and patience, I look forward to life going back to normality for all and I want to assure you that our focus will be on pupil wellbeing when we return.

Have a lovely weekend, send any question or queries into the school email and I'll do my best to answer what I can.

V. Ferguson

V Ferguson, Acting Principal. Roll No. 18324c. RCN 20119751.