



@ballygarrettns www.bgns.ie

St. Mary's National School, Ballygarrett
Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Mhuire, Baile Ghearóid

Ballygarrett, Gorey, Co. Wexford. Tel/Fax: 053 9427196
Email: secretary@bgns.ie

8th January 2021

School Closure Newsletter

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year & I hope you and your family had a happy & safe Christmas. As you are aware, our school will now remain closed until the end of January due to the COVID-19 situation. While we would love to be back in school with our pupils, we accept that it is not possible to do safely at present. We remain hopeful that our school will open at the beginning of February.

Distance Teaching & Learning

This will move online from January 11th, thankfully our school now has Aladdin Connect & Seesaw in place for all classes. As parents, you will be able to see the suggested learning for your child on the Aladdin App, please look at the homework section for the teacher's instructions. Our teachers will be using Seesaw also for engagement and activities with the children. Our Special Education Needs (SEN) teachers are also linked into the Seesaw platform, this will enable our SEN team to engage with the children also. If your child is not setup for Seesaw, then please email your child's teacher for an access code.

The Dept. of Education have instructed us to continue with the following subject areas.

Maths, English, Gaeilge, Social Personal & Health Education, PE.

Teachers will set work in these curricular areas and provide sample timetables for the pupils to use at home. We suggest that your child submit at least one or two pieces of work via Seesaw each week. Our teachers will endeavour to review this work during school hours & repond to the pupils.

We acknowledge that distance home learning is very challenging & that the circumstances are different in every household. Like so many of our families, some of our staff will now have to juggle working from home, childcare & home learning for their own children. I kindly ask for your understanding & patience please.

Staffing

We have two new teachers joining our staff this term, welcome to Ms Aoife Goldsmith in First Class & Ms Aisling Meuiner in Second Class. Our new teachers will be making contact with the pupils to say "hello".

Collection of Books/Materials

We held a Zoom staff meeting yesterday morning & have put in place the following procedures for the collection of books/materials. It is very important that your child's books/materials are collected as work will be set by teachers in these books and your child will need them.

Books/materials can be collected between 12 noon and 3pm next Tuesday, January 12th. We ask that one person only, wearing a face covering, comes to collect books/materials.



Parents will have no access to the school building & school staff will take every precaution when organising your child's items for collection.

Each pupil will have a plastic bag with a label attached. The bags will be placed on tables at the front of the school. Junior Infants, Senior Infants, Second Class & Fifth Class parents can pick up the items from outside your child's classroom, as these classrooms are located at the front of the school building.

Items belonging to First Class, Third Class, Fourth Class & Sixth Class will be situated on tables beside the main entrance to the school reception. We ask that parents/guardians do not linger, it should be a "collect & go" operation.

If you are unable to collect your child's items, I would ask that you make an arrangement with somebody else to collect their items. If you are isolating or restricting your movements at present, and cannot collect, please email me principal@bgns.ie & I will contact you to make an arrangement.

NB If you are feeling unwell, please do not come to collect books/materials.

Contacting the School

Please note that the school phone will not be manned during the closure. Teachers may be contacted via email.

J. Infants: sabrinah@bgns.ie, S. Infants: jobshare@bgns.ie, 1st Class: aoifeg@bgns.ie,
2nd Class: aislingm@bgns.ie, 3rd Class: conors@bgns.ie, 4th Class: clionar@bgns.ie,
5th Class: sorchad@bgns.ie, 6th Class: lizs@bgns.ie, Ms Kehoe: carolinek@bgns.ie,
Ms Doyle: maryd@bgns.ie, Mrs O'Sullivan: eveleenos@bgns.ie,

We will continue to send emails and notification via Aladdin Connect, if you recently changed your contact details then please email secretary@bgns.ie & Mandy will help you.

Laptops and Ipads

We have a limited number of laptops and ipads that we are offering to families who need a device to support distance teaching & learning during this closure. If your family does not have a laptop or device to help support learning in your household then please email principal@bgns.ie and I will assist you.

We all acknowledge that home learning is challenging for everybody concerned but it is important for your child to stay connected with their school work. No-one has the perfect solution, I would make the following recommendations based on research attained from schools and families after the last school closure;

- Try to establish a routine. Find out what works for your family & have a clear delineation between home life & school life. Remember, our pupils are not working from 9am – 2:40pm everyday, so it is unrealistic to expect them to sit and work for that length at home. Try to mix things up, physical activity, school work, lego, online activity etc. Physical activity is very important & hopefully the weather will improve.
- Read, get in the habit of reading alone, aloud and often.
- Children are online more than ever now, so be mindful of what and who they are engaging with online.
- Keep positive, easier said than done & hopefully this too will pass. As parents, be kind to yourself, nobody can be all things to all people. Our pupils are excellent & I know they will play their part in helping out at home with chores and responsibilities.

Finally, our school is here to support our community, all our pupils have enjoyed our new type of schooling since September, they have adapted and engaged fully since we returned. Hopefully, we can all be back in school again very soon.

Keep safe,

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Naill Hadden

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**Ballygarrett National School
celebrates 50 years of
primary education**



