



**Dates for the Diary**

**January**

Thurs 27 7.00pm PTA Zoom

**Fri 28 Closing date for Nursery & Y1 Applications**

**February**

**Tues 1 Online Portal opens for Post Primary Applications**

Tues 1 Teaching Staff will inform you of the day & time for your Parent/Teacher Consultation

Sat 5 AQE results

Mon 7 – Thurs 10 Parent/Teacher Consultations (by telephone). **SCHOOL WILL FINISH @1.45 (Y1-4) & 1.50 (Y5-7)**

Fri 11 **SCHOOL WILL FINISH @1.45 (Y1-4) & 1.50 (Y5-7) FOR HALF TERM**

Mon 14 – Fri 18 **HALF TERM HOLIDAY**

Mon 21 **School will start at the normal time**

**Wed 23 Online Portal closes for Post Primary Applications**

**PTA**

It would be wonderful to get PTA back up and running again, even if it is only to begin thinking about next year. In recent years PTA has been vital in organising events that the children absolutely love and in raising lots of much needed funds for the school. There is a PTA zoom meeting planned for Thursday 27 January at 7.00pm. I would love as many parents as possible to join us, as it will be like starting PTA all over again and that is very exciting. If you would like to join us, please contact Mrs Lowry and she will share the meeting ID and the passcode with you.

**DRAFT SCHOOL HOLIDAY LIST**

**September 2022 – June 2023**

I have attached a draft copy of the holiday list for the academic year 2022/2023.

**ON A POSITIVE NOTE**

It is very encouraging to see the Executive beginning to relax some of the restrictions. As we proceed through the year it would be my hope that we will introduce year group bubbles in the playground, get back into canteen for dinners and begin to re-introduce assemblies in the assembly hall. It would also be my hope that after Easter we will be able to re-introduce after school activities as organised by outside providers such as Short Tennis, Coding Club, Burns Soccer School and Irish Dancing.

My intention would be that by the final half term of this year (June) we will be nearing normality within school, allowing us to prepare for September 2022 and the beginning of hopefully, a much more normal school year.

**COVID-19**

As you will be aware the situation regarding Covid is constantly changing and based on information that I have received this morning, the Omicron wave is expected to peak within the next 2 weeks. With this in mind I would encourage you to extra vigilant and please read the information below carefully as I endeavour to outline the ever-changing arrangements relating to school.

Current arrangements if your child:	What you need to do.
<b>Develops symptoms of Covid-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arrange a PCR test</li> </ul>
<b>Tests positive on a LFD or PCR test</b>	<p>Text our Covid number 07359015420 leaving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your child's name</li> <li>▪ The name of your child's teacher</li> <li>▪ <b>The date that your child was last in school.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>The date that your child developed symptoms/tested positive</b></li> </ul> <p>Up until now I have been able to respond to each message, however, going forward, this may not always be possible, given the increasing numbers and the expectation that the Omicron wave will peak within the next 2 weeks. I would therefore ask you to read the following information very carefully.</p> <p><b>YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER WILL BE IN CONTACT VIA SEESAW TO ARRANGE WHEN YOU SHOULD COLLECT A PACK OF WORK FOR YOUR CHILD. THE TEACHERS NORMALLY NEED 2 DAYS TO PUT THE PACK TOGETHER.</b></p>
<p><b>Is required to isolate</b> - Isolation is now 5 days, with day zero being the day that your child either developed symptoms or tested positive. For example, if day zero was Sunday 23 January, then day 5 would be Friday 28 January.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On day 5 &amp; day 6 your child can undertake LFD tests. Don't test them prior to day 5 as the children are being subjected to a lot of tests.</li> <li>▪ If both tests are negative and your child doesn't have a temperature they can come out of isolation and return to school.</li> <li>▪ If either of the LFD tests are positive your child should remain in isolation until they have had 2 negative LFD results, 24 hours apart on consecutive days or they have completed their 10-day isolation.</li> <li>▪ If your child has a temperature they should remain in isolation until they have had a normal temperature for 48 hours.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Is identified as a close contact in school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ have had prolonged close contact with the case (someone who tests positive for COVID-19). This could mean a child in the same household or someone who has stayed overnight.</li> <li>▪ Have had intimate contact for example, kissing and where a child has received help with personal care in a school.</li> </ul> <p><b>It does not include all children in the same class or all those who sit next to each other.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your child should isolate and take a LFD test.</li> <li>▪ If they are negative and they are coming to school, they should complete a LFD each day for ten days. <b>If your child is under 5, they should undertake a single LFD test, daily LFD tests are not required.</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Is identified as a close contact outside of school:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>anyone who lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 with a PCR test: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within one metre</li> <li>skin-to-skin physical contact for any length of time</li> <li>been within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact</li> <li>sexual contacts</li> <li>been within two metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)</li> <li>travelled in the same vehicle</li> <li>travelled in the same plane</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your child should isolate and take a LFD test.</li> <li>If they are negative and they are coming to school, they should complete a LFD each day for ten days. If your child is under 5, they should undertake a single LFD test, daily LFD tests are not required</li> </ul> <p><b>If you have Covid in your household and you decide to keep your children at home, please contact your children's teachers via Seesaw and they will arrange for packs of work to be sent home.</b></p>
<p><b>Is in a class where there has been a positive case –</b> I will continue to inform our whole school community if the positive case was in school within 48 hours of testing positive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a close eye to your child in case they develop symptoms.</li> <li>You may wish to use a LFD test if your child is visiting someone who is more vulnerable</li> </ul>
<p><b>Is in a class which has been identified as a cluster (over 20% of the class have tested positive) -</b> Please read and keep in a safe place the attached generic information sheet from PHA. I will not send this sheet out every time but I will merely inform that your child's class has been identified as a cluster.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Even if your child has no symptoms, please undertake a LFD test before coming back into school.</b></li> </ul>



**Whitehead**  
Primary School  
& Nursery Unit

**'LEARNING AND GROWING TOGETHER'**

## HOLIDAY CALENDAR 2022-23

**DRAFT**

SCHOOL BEGINS	SCHOOL CLOSES	HOLIDAY (dates are inclusive)
Thursday, 25 August 2022	Thursday, 29 September 2022	<b>School Development Day</b> Friday, 30 September 2022 (1 staff training day)
Monday, 3 October 2022	Friday, 28 October 2022	<b>Halloween Half Term</b> Monday, 31 October - Friday, 4 November 2022 (4 days + 1 staff training day)
Monday, 7 November 2022	Wednesday, 21 December 2022 No school dinners	<b>Christmas</b> Thursday, 22 December 2022 – Wednesday, 4 January 2023 (10 days)
Thursday, 5 January 2023	Friday, 10 February 2023	<b>Winter Half Term</b> Monday, 13 February – Friday, 17 February 2023 (4 days + 1 staff training day)
Monday, 20 February 2023	Friday, 31 March 2023 No school dinners	<b>Easter</b> Monday, 3 April – Friday, 14 April 2023 (9 days + 1 staff training day)
Monday, 17 April 2023	Friday, 28 April 2023	<b>May Day</b> Monday, 1 May 2023 (1 day)
Tuesday, 2 May 2023	Friday, 26 May 2023	<b>Spring Half Term</b> Monday, 29 May – Friday, 2 June 2023 (4 days + 1 staff training day)
Monday, 5 June 2023	Friday, 30 June 2023 No school dinners	<b>Summer Holiday 2023</b>



DATE

## **ADDITIONAL LATERAL FLOW DEVICE TESTING IN CLASSES WITH A NUMBER OF CASES OF COVID-19**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The school has been notified of a number of confirmed cases of COVID-19. All those who were high risk close contacts of the cases will have been identified, advised on self-isolation and testing by the PHA Contact Tracing Service.

It is inevitable that with high cases of Omicron in the community there will also be cases reported in school age children. The school is taking actions to minimise in-school transmission, following guidance from the Public Health Agency and the Education Authority.

Some people can have active COVID-19 infection but have no symptoms, so when there are high numbers of confirmed cases in a class a one-off test is recommended to the rest of the class to identify other infected children or staff as early as possible so that they can self-isolate.

Even if your child has no new symptoms, we are asking pupils in XXXX class to undertake a **lateral flow COVID test (LFT)** at home **before coming back into school**.

If the Lateral Flow test is negative, and your child has no symptoms, your child can return to school.

**If the lateral flow test is positive your child should isolate immediately and is now to be treated as a case of Covid-19. They do not need to have a PCR test.** It is extremely important that you report your child's positive lateral flow test online using the link: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). This will trigger contact tracing processes to alert those your child has been in close contact with and to provide them with advice regarding their potential to become infected and spread the virus. **You should also inform the school.**

### **How to order a lateral flow test**

You can order these tests online, ring 119, or collect from a local pharmacy. Details are available on the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/rapid-tests>

### **How to book a PCR test if your child develops symptoms**

If the lateral flow test is negative but your child develops new symptoms, please book a PCR test online at [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or by phoning 119. You can choose your closest testing site or request a postal kit which will be sent to your home. Going for a COVID test is one of the reasons your child can leave home during the self-isolation period, however they should not use public transport. Please order a postal test if you do not have private transport to a test site.

Please see [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): self-isolating and close contacts | nidirect](#) for guidance on whether other people in your household also need to self-isolate and take tests while you are waiting for your child's PCR result.

### **Help stop COVID-19 spreading**

If you or your child are eligible, getting your free vaccination and taking part in regular lateral flow testing if that is offered to you will help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19. More information on protecting yourself and your family is available at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): keeping your household safe from COVID-19 | nidirect](#)

I know that organising tests and staying at home waiting for results may be hard for you and your child but it is vital to help reduce the risk of transmission in the school community.

Your support is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely