** St. Laurence O’Toole’s P.S.**

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August 14, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We sincerely hope that you and your families have had a lovely Summer vacation and have enjoyed these last few months together. We totally appreciate the work that you have done and continue to do at home with your children and truly appreciate your continued support.

As we are making our final preparations for the return of all children to school, we wanted to send you a final update following the latest guidance produced yesterday by Peter Weir, Minister for Education. He has pointed out that schools, like everywhere else cannot be guaranteed to be 100% safe. However, we would like to assure you that, we are doing all in our power to ensure that your child(ren) will be safe in our school environment. The measures that we have taken to minimize risks to our staff and pupils have been detailed to you in a prior communication but I have attached these as an Appendix to this letter.

Please note, the Minister for Education has provided information in the form of a letter and leaflet for parents on Education Restart which can be accessed on the Education Restart section of the DE website, link:

www.education-ni.gov.uk/education-restart-information-parents-and-carers

We will also upload these on to our school App.

You will note the importance Mr. Weir has placed on ensuring that children who are displaying symptoms of Coronavirus should remain at home. Therefore, if your child is displaying any such symptoms, they MUST NOT be sent to school. If our Staff become aware of a child displaying symptoms in school, that child will be isolated and you will be contacted to come for your child immediately.

Initially there will be no afterschool provision, but this will be kept under review as we realise the importance of this service.

In my last communication with yourselves, I requested that you forward us an up-to-date email for yourselves. We also have asked you to contact us regarding the drop off times for your child. We would strongly advise those of you who have not yet responded, to contact us immediately in order for you to determine which Cohort your child belongs to.

We are very much looking forward to having the children back and we hope you enjoy the last week of the holidays.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs B. Friel

(Principal)

Appendix A

* Children should be encouraged to wash/sterilize their hands before leaving home
* Children will be dropped off in staggered Cohorts between the times of 8:45 and 9:15 (these times are being kept under review). The children will proceed directly to their classrooms and enter the school at the various entrances as detailed previously.
* Sanitizers have been placed at all entrances to the school and children will be required to wash their hands immediately upon entering their own classrooms
* During the day children will be encouraged to wash their hands at regular intervals eg before/after breaks and lunchtimes.
* We have placed screens on the desks in all classrooms and desks have been placed as far apart as is possible.
* Each class will operate as a distinct bubble as much as possible and there will be minimal interaction between bubbles.
* Following DE Guidance face coverings are not generally recommended for use in schools.
* Breaktimes have been staggered to ensure that there are no more that two teacher’s classes in the playground at any one time. The playground will be separated to ensure that each class bubble does not intermingle. The front of the school will be used to further separate class bubbles.
* Lunches and dinners will be eaten in the children’s own classrooms
* No school bags or lunchboxes should be brought into school. Children are required to use their own equipment that they bring in at the start of the year. These need to be clearly labelled with your child’s name and these will remain in school. The school will not be responsible for these items.
* As per DE guidance fresh uniforms need to be worn daily. It is acceptable to alternate between full school uniform and PE tracksuit if you wish.
* There will be no P.E. initially due to social distancing, sharing of resources etc. This will be kept under review. We will continue with our Daily Mile initiative.
* The school will be cleaned at the end of each afternoon in preparation for the next day.

PLEASE BE REMINDED THAT THERE WILL BE NO SCHOOL DINNERS DURING INDUCTION WEEK 24-28TH AUGUST. SCHOOL IS CLOSED AT 12 NOON DURING INDUCTION WEEK. SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED 31ST AUGUST (BANK HOLIDAY.) DINNERS WILL BE SERVED FROM TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER.