

Our Lady's Girls' Primary School

Deanby Gardens, Belfast, BT14 6NN
Tel: 028 9074 6325
Principal: Mrs E Hughes
www.ourladydeanby.co.uk



7 August 2020

UPDATE AUGUST 2020

Dear parents/guardians,

We hope you and family are all keeping well.

Following yesterday's announcement by the Minister of Education, Peter Weir, all of our pupils will return to school five days a week from Tuesday 1 September. Principals received a letter yesterday from the minister. It states: *all children and young people will return to school full-time from the week commencing 31 August 2020.*

The minister's letter also states:

- ***Strict social distancing requirements between all pupils will be relaxed from a specific distance to the best spacing that can be achieved but will remain in place between adults and, as far as it is practicable between adults and pupils***
- ***Protective bubbles will be used - A class will act as a single consistent group or bubble, with minimal prolonged interaction with other classes within the school***

Taking this directive into account, I want to assure you that the staff of Our Lady's will do their very best to keep our children safe and provide a secure learning environment, where they will be nurtured. Before coming back to school, it is important to explain to your daughter that she will not mix with children outside of her own class group. The classes will work, play and eat in their groups.

We also have a mammoth task ahead of us in ensuring that our staff stay safe. We would ask you to start preparing your daughter for her return to school. I am sure that at home you have strict hygiene routines. In school we will reinforce the need for perfect hygiene at various times during each day.

At home, encourage your daughter to practise:

- Washing her hands thoroughly
- Coughing or sneezing into a tissue or her elbow
- Keeping hands to herself and not touching surfaces unnecessarily

As directed by the Department of Education, our **Primary 7** pupils will return to school on **Monday 24 August** and attend daily until 1.30pm. There will be no school dinners provided during this week, so children must bring a packed lunch with them. Children in **Primary 2 to Primary 6**, will attend school for one induction session, during the week beginning 24 August – details will follow next week. We will begin to admit our new **Primary 1** children from Tuesday 1 September. Mrs Kelly will be in touch to share those details.

Please note: All starting and finishing times in school will be staggered for the foreseeable future.

Transport

The school bus will most likely run again from 1 September. We will check that this is the case and confirm with you as soon as we can. Information from DE states: *While parents and children should be encouraged to use other means of travelling to school for example, walking or cycling where it is safe and reasonable to do so, we recognise that for many children the home to school transport network may be the only available option.*

As Monday 31 August is a bank holiday, there will be no school for pupils on this date.

FIRST COMMUNION – We hope to celebrate First Communion as soon as possible. We will inform our Primary 4 parents once Fr Darrach has been in touch.

The last few months have been difficult for everyone. Please be patient with us as we roll out our 'Back to School' restart programme. Information is due with us from the Department of Education next week. We cannot pass this information on to you, until we receive it. In the meantime, keep safe and please pass on our best wishes to all our Deanby girls. We hope to see them very soon!

Yours sincerely,

Emer Hughes