



Rainey Endowed School

Information for Parents - Phased Return for Pupils 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

As we approach the end of this school year, I would like to thank you for working alongside us as we have all adapted to new routines and learning from home in a COVID world. On occasion, as parents, you will have experienced frustrations with this and it has been no different for us as educators. However, as we look to a new school year, our staff have evaluated the success of learning from home to date and have been planning and preparing positively to be ready for a return to school in late August.

We look forward to welcoming back the whole school on a full-time basis as soon as it is safe for us to do so. Recent guidance from the Department of Education as to how we facilitate a return to school states that **'a distance of 1m is appropriate between children and young people.'** However, all adults in the building, will be **expected to maintain the current distancing guidance of 2m.**

Class Sizes

- If current guidelines from DE are followed, Rainey Endowed School will be able to deliver contact teaching with half of the school population from Years 8-12 each day, as well as the **entire sixth form.**
- If you have a child in Years 8-10 they will attend school for one week and will be at home learning the following week.
We understand that this may present difficulties for some families at this time, so we will be offering the option of supervised study in school for the 'at home' week in the hope that this might assist parents as they return to work themselves. Please note, though, that we will be unable to offer access to ICT facilities to KS3 pupils availing of this option.
- Years 11 and 12 will attend school for one week for their contact teaching and will continue the blended learning provision from home the following week.
- In sixth form, classes will run as normal and pupils will be expected to attend every day. There will also be socially distanced sixth form supervision.
- ***Parents/ Guardians are asked to ensure that returning Year 12 and 14 students should have a well organised set of notes, with all work completed to ensure a crisp start to their studies.***

Blended Learning- an Overview

You may have heard the term Blended Learning being used and have wondered about what this will mean for your child. Blended Learning has been defined as **'a mix of instruction both inside and outside the classroom'**. In the past, this has generally been done in university settings where students may experience lectures online and then follow these up in smaller face to face tutorials. In recent weeks, researchers and schools have been turning their attention to how the best of this practice can

be adapted to school settings for the beginning of the new academic year. The good news is that the research tells us that such an approach can have a very positive effect on pupil learning and confidence.

Staff at the Rainey have already been working hard to ensure that pupils can have the best possible experience on their return in September. It is important to stress at the outset that this cannot match or replace the experience of full time classroom based instruction. However, we can promise that we will do our best to ensure that blended learning is a positive experience for your child.

Blended Learning in Practice

During the week when pupils are physically **in school** they will be working with their teachers as new concepts are introduced, more difficult content is tackled and learning is advanced through all of the collaborative and interactive learning that will be practical under current circumstances.

The **at home** week will see pupils involved in a mixture of consolidation, practice, writing up notes, doing preparatory reading and the like. This work will be set by the teachers in school and all resources will be given to pupils and will also be available via **Google Classroom**, which will now be the school's sole online platform.

Teachers will plan carefully to ensure that work is appropriate to the age of the pupil and also that it will advance the learning and ensure curriculum coverage. **It will be essential, though, that pupils develop effective routines at home and return to school the following week with all work completed.**

Keeping Pupils Safe

Accessing School

As arrangements for children who travel to school by bus have not been finalised, we are assuming that there may be an increase in the volume of traffic in Magherafelt and the number of children who travel to school by car. Please be mindful of this when coming into Magherafelt. **The school site will be open initially from 8.30am for controlled access. New arrangements for accessing the school will be as follows:**

- Pupils who walk to school or travel by bus must use the Tunnel Entrance and will be directed by a member of staff to use the new hand washing facilities.
- **All pupils will wash their hands at the new hand washing areas on entry to the school site and at lunchtime each day.**
- Staff, parents and all visitors will enter via the front door of the school only and use the new hand washing facility at the front door area. New hand washing/sanitising facilities will be installed for staff and pupils to avail of as they enter the school site.
- **Parents and visitors must make an appointment before entering the school.**

The School Day

- All classes will be set out to ensure that social distancing is maintained.
- On induction day, pupils will be given some stationery to help organise their resources. However, parents are reminded that pupils must attend school fully resourced with their own

pens, pencil case, colouring pencils, glue, sellotape, art equipment and calculators. **These items cannot be given out by teachers or shared between pupils.**

- All classrooms will be provided with hand sanitiser which pupils will receive on entering the classroom. Pupils will also sanitise their hands prior to leaving the classroom at the start of break and at the start of lunch. Each classroom will be provided with a 200ml bottle of anti-bac hand sanitiser which will be regularly checked/re-filled.
- Staff and pupils will be asked to maintain social distancing in classrooms.
- Pupils will not be engaged in the practical element of taught lessons until further notice.
- A one-way system will be implemented for moving around the building and pupils will be encouraged to be outdoors whenever possible. This will be put in place to avoid close contact in the corridors and will be clearly marked by the means of signs and floor markings.
- Areas where queuing may occur, e.g. toilets and canteen, will be marked out to maintain social distancing. Toilets will be monitored by staff to ensure numbers are kept to a minimum at both break and lunch. Signs will be in place to ensure social distancing is maintained in toilets and that hand hygiene is carried out.

Breaktime and Lunchtime

- The canteen will be open as normal and routines will be in place to ensure that social distancing will be observed in the canteen, study centre, the old gym and the sports complex areas.
- We are offering an online school payment system for all pupils on their return to school. Therefore, we strongly advise all parents to sign up to Sims Pay as the use of cash in school will be severely restricted.
- This will enable us to collect payment for items such as: school meals, trips, events, clubs, PE uniform and other school activities in a safe and secure way. Please email Mr Ryan Donaldson at rdonaldson958@c2kni.net if you have not already signed up to Sims Pay and Sims Parent App.
- Children will be encouraged to be outside and Years 8-10 will socialise with classmates only in allocated areas. Indoor supervision will only be available in very cold or inclement weather conditions.

Leaving School

The school day will end on a staggered basis to ensure a controlled and safe exit from school. Commencing at 3.20, pupils will be released from class on a staggered basis in order to minimise congestion in the corridors. Parents should be mindful of expected extra traffic in the town and should arrange a safe pick up for their child if they cannot walk home or are unable to take a bus.

There will be no access to the school site for cars at the end of the school day, except for parents of disabled pupils.

What will happen if a child is unwell?

At home, if a pupil is unwell and has any of the symptoms of COVID -19 i.e. temperature, cough, fever, please do not send them to school. Please call 111 and seek advice from your GP. Where possible, please take your child's temperature before sending them to school.

If a child is unwell at school, the following steps will be implemented:

- The child's teacher will contact the Estates' Manager, who will take the pupil to the medical bay and wipe down the table and chair at which the child has been sitting.
- A member of staff will be assigned to support the pupil in accordance with guidance from the PHA.
- Parents/Guardians will be notified ASAP to collect their child from the medical bay and to seek urgent medical advice by dialling 111 or to contact their GP by telephone, if required.
- Water, tissues, paracetamol will be provided for the child who is in the medical bay.
- The medical bay will be deep cleaned immediately after the child leaves school.

Other Proposed Changes

No Assembly – until further notice

All day trips and visits for the academic Year 2020-21 are postponed until further notice.

Further information on school trip refunds will be disseminated as and when information becomes available to school.

There will be no lunchtime clubs or team sports until further notice.

Parents' Evenings will be arranged as and when allowed.

There will be no Prize Distribution Evening, Christmas Concert, Spring Concert or School Production.

Potential Return Dates

From 24th August we will begin a phased return of all of our pupils. As you will appreciate, the current situation is an evolving one and all arrangements will be kept under constant review and updated in line with any guidance issued by the government and the Public Health Agency. We will be in touch again in August when we hope to be able to provide you with more concrete details of the arrangements for each year group. In the meantime, we would ask that you discuss these hygiene and social distancing arrangements with your child and before they return to school to ensure as smooth a start to the school term as possible.

Please stay safe and I wish you all the best of health, success and happiness.

Take care.

Yours sincerely,

Mark McCullough