

St. Brigid's Primary School, Tirkane
130 Tirkane Road
Maghera
BT46 5NH
Phone: 028 796 43346
Fax: 028 796 43346



Bunscoil Naomh Bríd, Tír Chiana
130 Bóthar Thír Chiana
Machaire Rátha
BT46 5NH
Fón: 028 796 43346
Facs: 028 796 43346

Principal/Príomhoide: Mrs. Patricia Mc Master, B.Ed., D.A.S.E.
Email/Rphost: info@stbrigidsps.maghera.ni.sch.uk
School Website / **Seoladh r-phoist:** www.stbrigidspsstirkane.com

10th April 2020

Dear Parent / A Thuismitheoir

I am writing today as we commence the official Easter holiday break.

I doubt if any of us could have predicted the situation we find ourselves in and even now, things are constantly changing.

I wish to say a huge 'thank you', 'go raibh maith agat' for your understanding and support over the last 3 weeks. It has been far from business as usual in Tirkane and we are all still coming to terms with what the 'new normal' is. I really miss seeing the children arriving at the school gates in the morning full of joy, energy and stories to tell, even on the bleakest of the winter mornings.

Principals across the country are dealing with challenges none of us have faced before in this time of national and international crisis. I am truly blessed to have had great support from staff, school governors and families and for that I am very grateful.

As parents I know you will have many questions at this time. When will school be open again? In short, I don't know. When schools were closed by the Department of Education on 23rd March, we were told that they were closing until further notice.

What should my child be doing in terms of schoolwork? I want to be absolutely clear that families must do what is best for them. We are living through difficult and unusual times and how you choose to organise your child's day is entirely your decision. There is enough stress and worry in our community currently without you feeling that you must suddenly become a teacher and deliver hours and hours of home schooling every day. Teaching staff are preparing and uploading resources onto the Home Learning pages on the school website, so work is available. Whilst I would strongly encourage all children to keep up with the work set, you should manage this as best you can.

Staying safe must remain our priority at this time. The current government advice is very clear. Stay at home. I understand that having had your children at home for a number of weeks without them having their usual freedom of movement could be a challenge, but there is a reason why we are being asked to stay at home – to protect our NHS and to save lives.

I strongly encourage all parents to ensure that they are monitoring their child's internet use to check that they are safe online. The Department of Education has signposted the following link to support parents and carers to help keep their children safe online.

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/news/new-safer-schools-app-launched>

The 'Safer Schools' app focuses on safeguarding particularly in the online world.

Minister Peter Weir has encouraged all schools and parents to use this app. Keeping our children safe and ensuring their mental health and well-being is looked after has never been more important.

On behalf of all Staff and Governors, I wish our pupils and parents every blessing at this Easter time.

Finally, I pray that all members of our school community stay healthy and continue to look after themselves and their loved ones.

St Brigid pray for us and all the Key Workers who are providing for us and keeping us safe.

God Bless

Beir bua agus beannacht.

Mrs Patricia Mc Master

Principal/ Príomhoide