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6th May 2020

Dear Parents,

No doubt you have heard the latest news that it seems unlikely we will return to school before September. We are all upset at this news – children, parents, staff and the Board of Management. Nevertheless, if these actions save lives then we are committed to complying and co-operating. We continue to pray for a vaccine and we send all our hopes and prayers to scientists all over the world who are working on this every day. We miss the children every day. We are actively exploring ideas for the celebration of the graduation of 6th class and will be in touch with those parents separately.

Meanwhile, the wellbeing of the children and of course the adults, remains a priority. I cannot stress enough that activities and work posted on the website are purely voluntary and families must use this time at home in a way that suits *their* particular circumstances. As I have said before, when we return in September, teachers will adapt their teaching and differentiate to the various levels of attainment – no child will be left behind. No one expects parents to turn in to teachers and whilst you are all doing an incredible job, everyone needs to have realistic expectations of themselves and their children. We have been blessed with beautiful weather for the past few weeks and now that we can exercise for 5km, I suggest that you keep the children active outdoors as much as possible. Ms Tallon has written a wonderful poem for the children which is available under the resources section of the website – please ask them to read it or read it to them.

Thank you to those parents who completed our recent survey which had a response rate of 57 out of 65 families. The results were very positive and the teachers were delighted to hear some very complementary comments. Thankfully, the wellbeing of children seems generally to be very positive.

98% of parents surveyed had engaged with the activities on the website. We are very pleased about this as it is beneficial that children have a little routine every day.

55% would like work assigned daily and 45% would like it assigned weekly. Therefore we have decided to keep assigning work daily but where possible, to provide it in a week's block in advance.

96% of Third to Sixth class parents felt that the amount of assigned work was just right. 62.5% of Junior Infants to second class felt it was just right, with 25% stating that there was too much and

12.5% stating that there was too little. It is difficult to get the balance right but teachers will bear these facts in mind when assigning work.

In answer to the question, "Would you like the option of submitting some of your child's work to your class teacher for review?" 73.5% of parents said they would and 26.5% said they would not. Bearing this in mind, we have decided to utilise the SeeSaw program for uploading of work. This is a digital platform that we will be able to continue to use as an assessment tool in the future and as a digital portfolio of your child's work. The teachers will assign one piece of work to be uploaded in the beginning and then perhaps move to two or three items per week. Once again, this will be purely voluntary. In order to engage with this programme, parents must firstly sign a consent form and return it to their child's class teacher. Each child will then be assigned a code which they will use to log in to the system. If you have several children, they will each have their own unique code. If your child attends learning support/special education, they will need a separate code for that teacher. This code should be kept safe and treated like a password.

I attach an explanation note and web link on how to operate See Saw. Please access the consent form on the resources section of the website. Please email your child's teacher(s) and SET (if applicable), with a copy or photo of the signed consent form – email addresses are outlined below. These relate to Google Suite for Education and may be different from contact details on the website.

We are all on a steep learning curve and no doubt there may be teething problems with this system. However, with a little bit of patience we will hopefully soon be "seesawing" like pros!

May God keep you all safe and well. Please tell the children we are very proud of the fantastic work they are doing and that we hope that they are playing the "glad" game every day.

Yours sincerely,

Philomena Cleary

Principal

EXPLANATION NOTE AND WEB LINK ON HOW TO USE SEE SAW

Quick Start Guide for Students

1. Students should download the Seesaw Class app (free) or visit Seesaw.me
2. Choose I'm a Student.
3. Enter the home learning code received from the teacher into the Text Code box at the bottom of the screen.
4. Once logged in, check the Journal view on the left hand side of your screen to see if your teacher has assigned work to you. If the work you have been assigned doesn't show up here, click the Activities tab. Click +Add Response to work on the activity. Press the green tick to submit your work when you are finished.
5. If your teacher hasn't assigned a task within Seesaw but has asked you to take a photo of some work you have complete for example press +Add button. Choose which format of work you want to add.
6. Check the Inbox to see if you have any announcements from your teacher.
7. Students sign out by clicking on their name/avatar in the top left hand corner of the screen, then click the cog and then sign out.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsxDUABH8q4&feature=youtu.be>

EMAIL ADDRESSES OF TEACHERS TO BE USED FOR RETURN OF CONSENT LETTER & PROVISION OF ACCESS CODE:

pcleary@edmondstownns.ie

mtwallnutt@edmondstownns.ie

ltallon@edmondstownns.ie

abrocklebank@edmondstownns.ie

segan@edmondstownns.ie

mdunne@edmondstownns.ie