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| St. Matthew’s Primary School.  296 Drumsurn Road  Limavady  BT49 0PX  Telephone 028777 63887  Email: akealey695@c2kni.net |

**Return to School on Thursday 6th January 2022**

**Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),**

**Happy New Year to everyone.I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and got to spend some precious time with your families.You will all be preparing for your child(ren)’s return to school on Thursday 6th January.Please note that all After School Clubs will not start again until week beginning Monday 10th January.**

**As a school we have managed to navigate our way through first term very well and were able to continue to support and teach all our children .However,you will be aware that the latest variant, Omicron, is spreading rapidly in our own communities.Because of this, we will need to increase our vigilance regarding the mitigations that we have in place to minimise risk.**

**Our classes will continue to operate in ‘bubbles’ and hand hygiene remains very important .However, there will still be times when close contact is unavoidable and this is potentially dangerous due to the highly infectious nature of this latest variant.**

**Adults in the school will wear face coverings when outside of their class bubbles and we ask that you too, wear a face covering should you need to enter the school or when waiting to pick up children too at home times.**

**We ask you to please not send your child to school if they are unwell and please check their temperature in the morning too if they are felling sick.**

**The greatest challenge for our school and for you, will be the absenteeism of staff and pupils due to the need to isolate should they receive a positive test result.**

**It is just impossible, at the moment, to access substitute teacher cover. Ms Mallon our P6/7 teacher is no longer with us as she has taken up another teaching post in Belfast. I am now back teaching full time in the P6/7 class which means I can no longer cover classes either !**

**This may result at times in your child(ren)’s class(es) having a lack of continuity in who will be delivering lessons,or possibly reverting to remote learning too.However, continuity of content is ensured, as all of our teachers prepare schemes of work in advance, so the curriculum will be delivered in line with planning.**

**It is also impossible to access classroom assistants so should a member of non-teaching staff become ill and need to isolate, we will have no pool of classroom assistants to provide cover where most needed.**

**Should your child need to isolate, teachers will upload work via Seesaw and will communicate with you and your child via Seesaw.Please remember, your child’s teacher may be providing work for several children who are isolating as well as continuing to deliver lessons to the remainder of the class in school too!  This can be extremely demanding especially if classroom assistants are also unavailable due to isolation, so please bear with us and be patient!**

**Should your child be too unwell to complete work, we will make every effort to ensure they catch up on their return.**

**Therefore as children return we would ask you to do the following:**

**-Inform school immediately if someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19**

**-If there is a positive case in your household or someone awaiting COVID test results, please consider keeping your children at home and contact myself at school.Work will be provided via Seesaw for children isolating at home.**

**We have approximately six weeks until our mid-term break and our next opportunity to catch our breath. Please don’t hesitate to contact the school should you need any advice or support throughout the coming weeks.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**Ann-Marie Kealey**

**Principal**