



25th June 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

As we come to the end of the school year I would like to thank all of our families and members of staff for their commitment to Nettlefield over the past three months. Living with Covid-19 has not been easy and many members of our Nettlefield family have sadly been affected but through Seesaw remote learning and providing a space for key worker children some sense of contact and continuity has been maintained.

This was absolutely a team effort and without many members of staff putting forward their ideas, solutions and backing we would not have been able to provide for families in the way we have.

I realise that there are many questions that remain, and I have attempted to answer some below. If families have specific concerns please be aware that I can be contacted through our help@nettlefield.co.uk address.

New School Day

Hopefully, by now, you will be aware of the Department of Education's New School Day programme that was published on Friday. You can find the documentation here: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-re-opening-school-guidance-new-school-day>

This is what we will use to determine how the new school day will look in Nettlefield from August. Each school will make arrangements that will work in their setting. Therefore, what our school day looks like could be different from other schools because this is designed to give schools the flexibility to work to their setting.

As principal, I will not be sharing any rushed ideas regarding how this will look because we want to do this properly. We want to make sure that we open the school in a way to maximise the care and learning whilst, at the same time, ensuring that children and staff feel confident in what is going to be a different environment – but, hopefully, not vastly different.

Our own 'Project Restart' will fall into 5 areas:

- **Health and Safety**
- **Care and Welfare**
- **Learning and Teaching**
- **Communication**
- **Access and Administration**

We will be working on these 5 areas to deliver as smooth as possible transition for everyone involved because we want to get it right.

However, the bottom line is that we want to get all the children back to school as soon as we can – this will begin on August 24th when, at the very minimum, the Primary 7 children and those regarded as ‘vulnerable’ will be in school.

We are aiming for more than this to happen, but I would like to be able to have that properly planned out before making any promises.

I also would like to make very clear that our plans will be subject to review through our Board of Governors and I want this to be the best possible solution for everyone involved. I can promise you, though, that we will be working through the summer to get this right.

More concrete information will follow through our normal communication channels (website, Facebook, text message) at the beginning of August 2020.

New Classes

With reports being shared on differing days, new class information for 2020-21 will be shared to all classes via SeeSaw on Monday 29th June 2020. Thank you for your patience in this matter

Holiday Dates

Holiday Dates have been included in your report packs. **There may be some changes** around dates at the start of the academic year but if this is the case we will inform families at the beginning of August 2020.

Uniform

Thank you to parents who completed our uniform survey. **For now, uniform will not be changing for 2020-21** with the exception of Primary One who have been given their own guidelines.

Over the course of 2020-21 we will be sharing **extremely small** changes to our uniform that parents can put in place for 2021-22.

Parents Consultation Group

We are in the process of creating a group of parents and relatives to help with reviewing documents and ideas about school. The types of areas discussed could potentially be new ideas for school, uniform, how money is collected (cashless system), etc. These are important areas for the future of the school, and we would like to hear from families about how decisions affect them.

We cannot promise that every idea will be taken onboard, but we can promise that families will be listened to.

Everyone's voice is incredibly important at Nettlefield and some of these sessions we would be hoping to carry out over Zoom when we can't meet. If you have an interest in helping school in this way please contact help@nettlefield.co.uk for more information.

And Finally,.....

As the new principal of Nettlefield and being the very first year of my time in the role, this year has been incredibly unprecedented and surreal.

The staff have been working hard to collate their approaches to online learning and these will be shared with each other in case we ever need to do this again.

Some families will be leaving us permanently and we thank you for choosing to entrust your child's or children's learning to Nettlefield. We wish you all every success for the future and I would like to let you know that you are always welcome back to the Nettlefield family.

To those who will be returning in the new school year, we are working very hard as a team to ensure that we get the new school day right for everyone.

I trust that everyone will keep safe and well over the summer period and we cannot wait to see you all soon.

Mr McLean
Principal