



## COVID-19 Update - 1.3.2021

Since the start of the pandemic a year ago, the welfare of the children, staff, parents and visitors has been paramount at Stormont School and we have made sure we consistently exceeded the recommended advice from the Government, Herts CC and PHE to keep everyone safe and to limit the potential spread of the virus. The measures we have in place have succeeded in preventing any additional closures; we have been able to remain open to all year groups when permitted.

At the start of the 1<sup>st</sup> lockdown a blended curriculum of live lessons, recorded sessions and independent tasks across all year groups was provided. This included the core subjects and the majority of the foundation subjects including PSHEE, Music, RE, Geography and History. Topics were set for Art and Design as well as suggestions for PE sessions.

We were fortunate that most of our parent body had technology provisions to enable their daughter to access the curriculum and we were able to offer the loan of a device for those families that did not. As the lockdown progressed, it was important for us to adapt to the needs of the pupils and by June 2020 all of the lessons we were offering were live with alternative provision for any pupil that was unable to access the live curriculum.

On June 1<sup>st</sup> Stormont opened its doors to Reception and Year 6 pupils as well as children of key workers. We went above and beyond to open up for every pupil before the end of term allowing every girl in Stormont the opportunity to have face to face teaching and some much needed social interaction before the long summer break.

Prior to our return in September 2020 a significant amount of changes were made to the school to ensure we were COVID ready. This included:

- Remodelling all of the classrooms in Pre-Prep to allow for self-contained cloakroom areas
- Moving the position of the interactive whiteboards in 2 pre-prep rooms to allow more space between tables and pupils
- Refurbishment of the Dyson Room and setting it up as a classroom
- Creating a new Learning Support classroom for Pre-Prep providing a dedicated space for small group learning.
- Designing a new separate library area for Y3&4 to increase the space in both classrooms
- Removing the cloakrooms for Y3-5 to allow for greater corridor space and replacing with locker areas
- Assigning all Prep classes with 2 separate classrooms allowing them to continue to work in half classes without any cross over
- Providing sanitisation stations across the school
- Creating 2 separate dining areas to reduce the contact between classes/bubbles
- Increasing the house keeping hours to ensure that all touch points were sanitised at least twice a day and all lavatories and classrooms were sanitised at frequent intervals each day, including in between classes.
- Purchasing 30 new tablets and adding new PCs and webcams where needed
- Creating a new Head of Digital Learning role and successfully recruiting for this position
- Training all staff to be proficient in Microsoft Teams

Throughout the Autumn term we were able to support families who were needing to self-isolate by having a live stream in to the classrooms allowing their daughter to take part in each lesson as it happened in school.

Following the announcement of a second lockdown in January the Senior Leadership Team supported the 'stay at home' message and took the decision to close the school to all but our critical workers and a skeleton staff, the majority of who are able to work in school without any contact.

Almost 90% of our pupils have been working from home accessing a fully live curriculum. Every student is following their usual school timetable and we are continuing to provide all pupils with online TA support, intervention groups and time with their Form Teacher.

The Head, Deputy and Head of Pre-Prep have weekly catch up sessions with classes to monitor pastoral issues and the staff meet remotely each week to discuss and review pupils' welfare and the development of the online curriculum.

We have been keen to provide each girl with the continuity of their typical school day and have visiting speakers and observed themed days as part of the remote curriculum. Praise postcards are regularly sent by post and feedback to parents and the girls is regularly given to promote well-being. We firmly believe the live lessons give structure to the day, a routine and keeps learning consistent whilst also encouraging learning. The lessons are recorded so that the children can refer back to them at another time if necessary. Our live curriculum is accessed by our critical pupil workers in school so all of the children are following the same curriculum and receiving the same provision.

Staff still meet once a week remotely. Pastoral care is still paramount in order to discuss any issues or share positive feedback about the girls' progress. From those meetings changes can be made to adapt and improve the learning experience. Children's welfare is discussed and parents are contacted if necessary.

At the start of February, we welcomed a visit from the NHS to check on our provision for pupils and staff. They provided us with very positive feedback on our efforts.

*"A very impressive School set in large grounds. Very well maintained to an exceptional standard throughout. Very well run and have gone above and beyond in their protocols and procedures for the current pandemic."  
NHS*

A survey of parents was conducted at the end of half-term in February from which we received encouraging and positive feedback. Parents were asked specific questions about remote learning and where comments were valid we have been able to respond and improve further the learning provision. Just some of the replies are below.

*"Delivery of live lessons in an engaging way. Planning for this has clearly been thought about through teaching the use of teams prior to the 2nd lock down."*

*"Providing a full and varied curriculum. Thank you so much! Thank you too for the pack that was put together for the girls, having their textbooks and books to work from has made this situation so much easier."*

*"The breadth of the curriculum and continuation of specialist subjects e.g French, ICT, art and music is excellent and keeps Eloise interested. Each teacher is clearly passionate and enthusiastic and it shows in the lesson planning and engagement!"*

As we now have the firm date of 8<sup>th</sup> March to return to school, the Senior Management Team is working closely with governors and staff to ensure there is a seamless transition from remote learning to learning in school. Bubbles and social distancing will be reintroduced as per the Autumn Term 2020 and remote learning will only be reverted to if a 'bubble' has to isolate.

Miss L A Martin  
Head  
March 2021