



# Gaelscoil an Chaistil

5, Bóthar na hÁithe, Baile an Chaistil, BT54 6QQ

Guthán : 20768883 / 07969212524

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## Uasdátú Covid-19 / Covid-19 update

20/3/20

A thuismitheoir, a chara,

Seo thíos an t-eolas is úire faoi shocrúithe na Roinne agus na scoile i leith an ghalair seo.

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Here is the most recent information about arrangements from the Department of Education and the school in relation to this illness.

We have received some clarification on the position of schools for this coming Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Information and clarifications are coming to us in piecemeal fashion, so we are doing our very best to respond to this, plan for the coming days and weeks and pass on the most up-to-date information to our school community. We can't be certain that circumstances won't change again soon, but the situation as it stands is as follows.

The ultimate aim remains to keep the number of children in school to an absolute minimum. We have been asked to facilitate pupils in school whose parents fall into the category of key worker. The following headings have been provided, but hopefully more detail will follow in the coming days.

- Health and Social Care: doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers and home carers.
- Education and Childcare: education professionals who remain active during Covid-19 response.
- Public Safety and National Security: police, fire and rescue, prison.
- Those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating.
- Utilities: staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water and key staff in telecommunications, post and waste disposal.
- Food production and processing and those essential to the provision of key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical).
- Key national and local government.

If you are in the above category as a sole parent or both parents, we would ask you to text the school number 07969212524 or email the school office – [gaelscoilanchaistil@gmail.com](mailto:gaelscoilanchaistil@gmail.com) as soon as possible today, please. Parents must only use this provision if absolutely necessary as we will only have a skeleton staff working in school from Monday. If you are a part-time worker, we would state that pupils are only to be in school on your working days. The government stresses that “every child who can be safely cared for at home should be” and workers are asked to consult their employers to confirm whether “their specific role is

necessary". The Education Minister Peter Weir has said that he was trusting parents to decide what was best for their children. "This is only for key workers, where they cannot find an alternative. For a lot of key workers, they will have somebody at home... to look after them."

When in school the pupils will be supervised by various staff members. At present, no hot meals will be provided so parents should send in lunch with their child. Again, we will update you of any changes in this regard.

As you're aware, we have already uploaded various work suggestions for the individual year groups on the school website and are continuing to upload suggested sites on our Facebook page. We will endeavour to put these on the school website as well as we realise that not all parents are on Facebook. We will be collating some workbooks for children this week and will arrange for collection of same. In the meantime, please don't fret about school work. As much as possible, try to enjoy this opportunity to spend quality time with your children. We have been forwarding the various suggestions so that you have plenty to work from, but don't in any way feel that you have to cover everything or that the children have to be studying all day. Set aside a couple of hours, one in the morning and one in the afternoon and try some of the following,

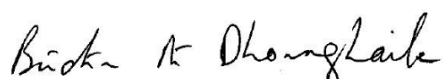
- Some reading
- Free writing – your child might keep a diary or design a comic or write a short story
- Some mental maths – addition, subtraction, doubles, halves, multiplication, division, tables, fractions and percentages
- Practical hands on maths – if we're laying the table for dinner, how many plates, knives and forks do we need
- Some fine motor work – lego, construction, playdough
- Physical exercise, either outside in your own yard or inside
- Lots of free imaginative play and some artistic endeavours – art, music, dance.

It's very important to keep stress at a minimum, both for yourselves and for your children. So love your children and support them through this difficult time. Keep them in touch with their learning but enjoy your time together.

Last but not least, you may find it more difficult to access work in Gaelic. We're working on finding sites for you. But don't worry that your child will lose their Gaelic. What they have already learned is still there and can be very quickly refreshed on their return to school. Trust in the immersion education system, in the school and in our staff.

We will continue to support each other through this difficult period.

Le gach dea-ghuí,



Brídín Ní Dhomhghaile