**TOREAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Covid Update 12.9.21**

The Chief Medical Officer’s letter outlines a change in the guidance in relation to the identification of close contacts. I am sure by now you are aware that schools are no longer responsible for contact tracing. PHA has taken over this role. Should your child test positive for Covid-19, the PHA will be in touch to ascertain who the close contacts are for your child. School may be contacted by the PHA to provide contact details for a child if they have been identified as a close contact or identify close contacts within the school.

Please continue to inform us if your child has tested positive for Covid-19 or has been identified as a close contact. I intend to continue to inform parents if there has been a positive case in your child’s class. I will inform you by text and post a copy of the template letter issued by the PHA, on the home learning section of the website for that class.

It is virtually impossible to identify close contacts of children in a primary school setting, as each class bubble mix significantly throughout the day, in class, at playtimes, during PE and in the toilets etc. PHA will seek close contacts up to 48hrs before symptoms or a positive test. Therefore, PHA can request a class list from me should that be required. I will work alongside the PHA to make their job as effective as possible. Please do not contact your child’s teacher regarding this, any concerns should be directed to me. Parents are expected to work alongside the PHA should your child test positive or is a close contact.

Recent studies suggest that most of the transmission takes place within the community and is brought into schools. While virus transmission can take place in school, we continue to have mitigations in place – ‘protective bubbles’, handwashing, ventilation etc.

If someone in your household tests positive or has symptoms of Covid-19, I would ask that you consider keeping your child off school.

Please do not send your child to school if they are unwell or have any signs of Covid 19. Schools in our area have reported that the children who have tested positive also suffer from sore heads and throats, stuffed up noses and the feeling of tiredness/lethargy. Please continue to get your child PCR tested before returning to school, if they have any of these symptoms.

This continues to be a trying time for everyone and thank you for your support. We all need to work together for the wellbeing of our school community. I will continue to update you as further advice becomes available.

C L Morrow