

**Scoil Chroí Naofa**

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Dear Parents / Guardians,

We are living through unprecedented times. Covid-19 has and will continue to have a huge impact on all of our lives. Our school remains closed until such time as it is safe to reopen.

As you are aware, our recent online plans will take you and your child up to the Easter Break. From Monday 20th April we will continue to send home a weekly note with learning suggestions along with revision work that your child may engage with while our school remains closed.

This work will be available under the heading Covid- 19 on our schools website. [www.scnrb.weebly.com](http://www.scnrb.weebly.com). We encourage all parents and pupils to access this resource.

Remember: If you use a mobile phone to access our website materials please click on the **web version** at bottom of screen to enhance viewing of all pages.

At Scoil Chroí Naofa we pride ourselves on being advocates of your child’s Mental Health and Wellbeing. We recently came by these nuggets of information and as a staff, we agree that, this is the core message we wish to convey to you. This is how “school” during Covid 19 should be.

*You might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule for your school going children.*

*You have high hopes of hours of learning, including online activities, science experiments and book reports.*

*You will limit technology until everything is done!*

*But here’s the thing...*

*Our children are just as scared as we are right now.*

*Our children not only can hear everything that is going on around them, but they can feel our constant tension and anxiety.*

*They have never experienced anything like this before!*

*Although the idea of being off school for weeks sounds awesome, they probably pictured a fun time, not this new reality of being trapped at home and not seeing their friends.*

*Over the coming weeks you may see an increase in behaviour issues.*

*Whether it’s anxiety, or anger, or protest that they can’t do things normally.*

*You may see more meltdowns, tantrums and oppositional behaviour.*

*This is normal and expected under these circumstances.*

*What children need right now is to feel comforted and loved.*

*To feel like it’s all going to be ok.*

*And that might mean that you tear up your perfect schedule and show your love.*

*Play outside and go on walks (socially distant of course)*

*Bake together and paint pictures.*

*Play board games and watch tv*

*Do a science experiment together, Start a book and read together as a family.*

*Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing.*

*Do not worry about your child regressing in school.*

*Every single child is in the same boat and they will all be ok.*

*When we are back in the classroom we will consolidate their new learning and meet them where they are.*

*Teachers are experts at this!*

*Don’t argue with your child because they don’t want to do Maths – try something else and then go back to it another time.*

*Don’t scream at your child for not following the schedule*

*Don’t mandate 2 hours of learning time if they are resisting it.*

*If we can leave you with one thing, it’s this:*

*At the end of all of this, your child’s mental health will be more important than their academic skills.*

*How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during those weeks is long gone.*

*So keep that in mind*

*Every Single Day.*

Remember you are and always have been your child’s primary educator.

Some helpful hints to get through the day:

* Put together a rough daily plan with your child, which incorporate a small amount of academic work, some exercise, some fun and maybe a household chore. Remember this is not school you can only do what you can do!
* Pupils should use their homework journals to record this plan of their own learning. This will encourage them to be accountable for their work. Sign your child’s homework journal daily just as you always did.
* Follow the weekly guidance posted for each class level on the school website [www.scnrb.weebly.com](http://www.scnrb.weebly.com) if you can.
* Encourage your child to read every day, it doesn’t have to be a novel – some great online resources are [www.newsmagmedia.ie](http://www.newsmagmedia.ie) [www.borrowbox.com](http://www.borrowbox.com) [www.kidsnationalgeographic.com](http://www.kidsnationalgeographic.com) [www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com) [www.oxfordowls.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowls.co.uk)
* Practice life-skills, these include emptying the dishwasher, vacuuming and hanging out clothes
* Make sure and get some exercise. The community games have some great challenges at [www.communitygames.ie/challenge](http://www.communitygames.ie/challenge)

As I have already said, Your children are young.

They have years of formal education and learning ahead of them.

We will consolidate the gaps in their learning when we return to school.

We ask that you continue to love your children and support them through this tumultuous time.

Please make sure that you look after yourself and your mental health and wellbeing.

Eat well, Sleep well, Exercise, Value and appreciate what you are doing, Set realistic goals and Try to do something each day for you.

Should you wish to contact our school we are available via email at scoilchroinaofarb@gmail.com and will endeavour to reply as soon as we can.

We wish that you all remain healthy and safe over the next while and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Le meas,

Kathleen McNamee

Principal