



'Every Child Matters'

# St Mary's High School Downpatrick

Principal: Ms R McLaughlin B.Ed MSc PQH(NI)



Celebrating 60 Years of Education  
1957 - 2017

5<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

## UPDATE ON COVID REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOLS FROM PHA

The Department of Health has updated the contact tracing arrangements for schools, as of Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021, which comes into immediate effect.

The PHA's previous arrangements were that if a student is identified as household-based close contact, the student should take a PCR test on days 2 and 8 following the last contact with the positive case.

The PHA have now requested that, in addition to the PCR test on day 2 and 8 that students take Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests before coming to school each morning from their initial negative PCR test result (the result which enables the student to return to school).

Also, the PHA now recommend that selected pupils take a one-off LFD test instead of arranging a PCR test if a cluster of cases is identified within the school. Should this happen, we will be in touch with the parents/guardians of the identified pupils as soon as the school is informed.

The additional LFD testing is advised by the PHA, but it is not mandatory.

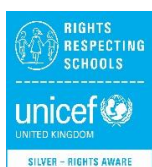
As a school we operate a twice weekly asymptomatic testing programme, every Sunday and Wednesday evening.

We would encourage all our students to participate in the Northern Ireland Schools Lateral Flow COVID 19 Testing Programme, if not already doing so. A Consent Letter can be obtained by emailing [ccaldwell264@c2kni.net](mailto:ccaldwell264@c2kni.net), or for collection from the Principals PA.

Yours sincerely

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Ms R. McLaughlin  
Principal



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