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Dear Parents/Guardians,

We hope you are all keeping safe and like all of us coping as best you can with this unreal situation. The sudden decision to close all schools on Thursday of last week just gave us three hours' notice. Each child was given a sheet containing lists of suitable age related activities as they were leaving school. These lists, one for 3rd and 4th class children and one for 5th and 6th class children and a list of suitable educational websites were uploaded on to our school website on Thursday also. The list of websites will be added to going forward.

The staff of the school has been busy since sharing ideas and looking up educational resources and online platforms trying to work out how best to help the children with their learning during this crisis while being mindful of not putting further pressure on yourselves during this difficult period. It isn't easy because not every family's circumstances are the similar. Not every child has a device to connect to the internet, children do not all learn in the same way and there are huge ranges of ability in every class.

For the two weeks leading up to the Easter holidays, we have listed activities for each class level on our website. Provision has also been made for the children who receive learning support. This work is based on our learning plans for March. In the present circumstances it is optional so don't put yourselves under pressure if your situation makes it impossible for your children to do all or even some of the work. How long your child should spend daily on doing this work depends on each family's individual circumstances. Next week we will text you a designated phone number you can contact if you are having difficulties or indeed if you have any good ideas which we can share with other parents. You can also contact the school on the school email office@scoilmhuire.net. Right now in the interests of safety the school is not open to collect books and hire books were not sent home when the school closed because of concerns about contamination from the virus. We were dealing with the unknown and still are.

It is important that your child has a routine and that this routine includes physical activity. Time outdoors is vital, taking HSE instructions on social distancing into account. Having fun with your child is more important than ever before. As their primary educators they can learn so much from you. Baking is following a genre of writing called procedural writing, Lego is STEM work, gardening is SPHE, looking at old photos is history, going on a family walk is P.E, everyday maths problems, telling the time, looking at shapes and patterns in the environment "maths eyes" is mathematics. This is all school work.

Children have fears and concerns during these unprecedented times. You might consider your child keeping a diary which he/she might share with you. It might help you to become aware of concerns which you could discuss with him/her. Parents have told me that they

have found this to be beneficial. We hope to have other suggestions on the whole area of wellbeing on the website in the future. Please look at the website regularly for any updates.

If the school closures continue after the Easter break we will make further work available for the children.

Please God, by working together, observing HSE instructions and doing our best to stay fit and healthy both mentally and physically we will get through this difficult time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gerry King', written over a horizontal line.

Gerry King,

Principal.