



Reopening Newsletter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We hope that everyone is well at this time and is enjoying the summer holidays. As you are aware at this point, the school will reopen fully on the 31/08/2020. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform you of some of the measures and procedures that the school will have in place prior to reopening so that everyone in our school community can return in the safest way possible. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have had to make a number of changes to the normal school routines in order to follow guidelines that have been issued by the Department of Education. A number of these changes have been outlined below. We are asking everyone in the school community, pupils, staff and parents, to work together to ensure that the children can return to school safely. Once we reopen, we will constantly review the measures outlined below and make adjustments if necessary. There is no 'perfect solution' to reopening our schools but we will be working hard to follow the best public health advice. We would like to thank you for your patience and support over the past number of months while we prepared to reopen our school.

We are really looking forward to welcoming back all our pupils and in particular our new junior infants. While there will be some changes for everyone, we know that these sacrifices will be worth it in the long run. We will be updating our guidance and providing further detail in the coming days before we reopen.

Regards,

Síle De Cléir
Chairperson of Board of Management

Ger Kelleher
Principal

Back to School:



Our main aim is to prevent the risk of infection coming into school and we can not do this without your help!

YOU SHOULD NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF THEY HAVE A TEMPERATURE, A COUGH OF ANY KIND, LOSS OF SMELL/TASTE OR HAVE ANY KIND OF SHORTNESS OF BREATH.

If you are in any doubt whether you should send your child to school or not, please err on the side of caution.

Class Allocation:



In order to comply with physical distancing requirements we have had to make some changes as to how the classes will be allocated this year. The Board of Management has decided to make this 'exceptional decision in exceptional circumstances' so as to ensure the safety of our pupils and staff. This school year, we will have eight single classes. The classes and teachers are outlined below. By allocating classes in this way, we feel we have the best possible chances of physical distancing from 3rd to 6th class.

Class	Teacher
Juniors	Ms. Conmy
Seniors	Ms. O'Dea
1st class	Ms. Hannon
2nd class	Ms. Dillon
3rd class	Mrs. Murnane
4th class	Ms. Hynes
5th class	Mr. Reidy
6th class	Ms. Cussen

You will note from the above table, that 3rd class will not be split as was outlined in June. They will remain as a single class and will be taught by Mrs. Murnane. 5th class will be taught by Mr. Reidy in the school hall. The decision not to split a class is for this **exceptional year only** and was only considered because physical distancing would have been impossible using the class allocation outlined in June.

Mrs. Irwin and Mrs. Walsh will continue in their roles as Special Education Teachers. Eileen O'Connell, Frances Killeen, Paula O'Grady and Claire English will work as Special Needs Assistants in the school and will be placed with pupils who have shared access. I would like to welcome Claire to our staff as our new Special Needs Assistant.

Bubbles and Pods

You may well have heard about 'Bubbles and Pods' recently in regard to a return to school. In the context of our school, bubbles will consist of each individual class and within that class there will be pods of between 4 and 6 pupils. Although there is no physical distancing requirement between juniors to 2nd class, teachers will also organise these classes into pods. Pupils in these pods will sit and work together and will leave and enter the classrooms together during the school day. Each pod will have hands on materials and resources and these will not be shared with other pods in the classroom.

Staggered Breaks and Lunches:



In order to maximise yard space and to keep classes separate from each other during the school day, we will now have two small breaks and two lunches each day. The pupils will get the same amount of time outside as always but only half the pupils in the school will be outside at any one time. Pupils will play in a zoned area on the yard and will only play with other pupils from their own class. They will enter and exit the school onto the yard through the same door each day.

Entering and Exiting the School:

In order to keep our classes as separate as is possible we will have different routines for entering and exiting the school for classes when we return. Members of staff will be on the yard for the first week to explain these routines to pupils as they enter the school. We will be making use of all entrances and exits and pupils will use their assigned entrance and exit at all times during the school day. **Unfortunately, parents cannot enter school grounds as they may have in the past.** If you have reason to speak to a member of staff, we ask that you ring or email the school and we will contact you as soon as possible to discuss the matter with you. We would like to thank parents/guardians for their cooperation with this request.

Car Park:



We will have to make some changes this year to drop off and collections from our school yard. We are currently developing a 'drop and go' system for our yard. We will be asking parents to follow a one way system around the car park before stopping and dropping off their children at the small gate. This system will require patience and cooperation from everyone.

In order to stagger drop offs as much as possible in the morning, we will be providing supervision from 8.50am in classrooms. We ask that early times are left to parents who must drop at this time. If you do not need to drop children at 8.50am, please wait until after 9.00am before coming to school. Children can be dropped to the school at any time up to 9.15am. **Formal instruction will not start until 9.20am.** We hope that by providing extra time in the morning to drop off children at the school, that there will be less queues in the car park and we will be able to maintain physical distance as pupils enter the school.

Infant pupils will finish at the usual time of 2pm and this means that there will be less pupils leaving at 3pm. We will also have a cohort of pupils who will leave by bus. We will continue to monitor and review drop offs and collections once we return to school and will make adjustments if necessary. More detail on our proposed, 'Drop and Go' system will be made available to parents before we return.

Hand Washing and Sanitising



The school has fitted sensed hand sanitisers in every classroom and at every entry and exit point of the school. There will also be pump sanitisers available in classrooms for children to use. Sanitising only works if hands are already clean and we ask that children wash their hands before coming to school each morning. We also ask that parents remind their children about the importance of hand washing and sanitising before they return to school. We are upgrading hand washing facilities so that pupils can wash their hands regularly.

Cleaning



As per Department of Education guidelines, the school will be cleaned on a daily basis. All desks, commonly used surfaces, door handles and toilets will be cleaned every evening. I must thank all our staff and especially our caretaker, Gerard Sexton, for all their hard work cleaning out classrooms and toilets over the summer. All staff will be involved in the daily cleaning of the school and I am very grateful for their cooperation and willingness to ensure that our classrooms are cleaned to a high standard daily.

Illness at school

As mentioned at the start of this newsletter, we cannot stress how important it is that pupils do not attend school if they are displaying symptoms outlined above. If a pupil becomes ill at school, they will be taken to an isolation room while their parents are contacted. This is inline with Department of Education advice. We ask that you come to collect your child as soon as possible if you receive a call from the school.

To help us with contacting you, please ensure that your details are up to date. If you have been receiving texts and emails from the school in recent weeks, we have your correct number and email address. If you have changed your number or email address over the summer, please contact the school by email with your new details as soon as possible.

Covid-19 Policy

The school has developed a Covid-19 Policy following guidance from the Department of Education and it is available to view by clicking [here](#).

The school has also developed a Covid-19 School Response Plan and this is available to view [here](#). It is important to note that it is very much a 'live document' and will be updated as more advice from the Department of Education and public health bodies becomes available.

[Covid-19 Policy](#)

[Covid-19 Response Plan](#)

Enjoy the remaining weeks of the holidays.

I hope that all our families enjoy the remaining weeks of the summer holidays. The school will be in contact again in the coming days with further information regarding our reopening.

