

Dear Parents,

I hope you and your family are keeping well and safe during these extraordinary times. The school management is currently endeavouring to prepare the building for a safe return of children and staff. Despite the new measures introduced in County Kildare we will continue our planning and preparations to reopen on the 28th of August. To this end we are being advised by the Government on the necessary steps we have to take. In the meantime, we would appreciate if you would advise the school;

1. Are any of your children in what Public Health Advice would describe as in a High Risk Category?
2. Has your family has been out of Ireland prior to the school reopening and if so, that you have all self-isolated for the required two weeks.

The school is implementing measures to have as safe a system of work in place in advance of the 28th of August. There has been a deep clean of the school and sanitising stations and Covid-19 signage is to be established throughout the school. It is anticipated that the teachers will be clearing all bookshelves and presses and spaced out desks and chairs to a distance of 1 metre in their respective classrooms. We are pleased to announce that there is a new contract in place with a cleaning company who have considerable experience in Covid 19 deep cleaning services with a number of large state bodies. Rules on spacing and non-contact activity will be explained to pupils and movement about the school will be more restricted than what the children would have become previously accustomed to. You will appreciate that we are doing our best under the government guidelines to keep everyone safe and to this end a hot water system is currently being installed to help improve the new hygiene requirements.

As you will appreciate, the guidelines recommended by the Government have been amended quite regularly, and we will endeavour to implement any new recommendations and requirements as they arise. There is an obligation on all of us to continue to take personal responsibility to reduce the spread of Covid-19. We as citizens are fully aware of the general recommendations which are implemented across the world, including the regular washing of hands and social distancing. It is acknowledged by HIQA that while the evidence is limited, it appears that children are not substantially contributing to the spread of COVID-19 in their household or in schools and that transmission rates are very low among children under the age of 14. Notwithstanding this, we believe that the measures which have been taken will assist in providing as safe an environment as practicable for your children and their teachers. The Department has reiterated advices to schools to advise pupils as follows;

- 1 If they have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;

- 2 Do not attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a contact for person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;
- 3 If symptoms are developed at school, to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly;
- 4 Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- 5 Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contact point;
- 6 Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

We are open to accepting any assistance or specific suggestions from any of the parents to improve the safety and wellbeing of children and staff.

In the meantime please talk to your child about returning to school, as we very aware there a number of students who are anxious about returning to school. As we move closer to the 28th. of August more of our children may become anxious and nervous about coming back to school. We are very conscious of this and our main priority will be to support all children to settle back in to a routine and focusing on their wellbeing.

We know that some families have faced extremely difficult times and we will allow each child time to talk and discuss what their experiences were during the school closure.

Communication between home and school is vital, if you think that we need to be made aware of incidents which occurred since March please let us know.

We will let you know when our school office is back open and you can contact us by phone. If you would prefer to discuss this in person, under the new restrictions you will need to phone and make an appointment. We will always do our best to meet with you as soon as we can.

We will soon see you all again, in the meantime please enjoy the rest of the Summer holiday and stay safe.

Nick Coy

Chairperson Board of Management

Irene Keogh

Principal