



Scoil Naomh Chaitríona

Newsletter - September

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Dear Parents

As most of you are aware our principal Mrs. Scott announced her retirement in June. It is with a heavy heart that we see her leave our staff and I feel I speak for the entire school community when I say she'll be sorely missed by all. We wish her well in her retirement and thank her for all her hard work, loyalty, and support throughout her time in Scoil Chaitríona. There will undoubtedly be a void left in her absence but we will do our utmost as a staff to continue to deliver the same level of passion, energy and ambition.

I am both humbled and honoured to inform you that I have been appointed the school's new principal. I look forward to leading Scoil Chaitríona into a new chapter and welcoming you all back to school on Thursday 27th.

John Carr

School Re-opening



We are now just over one week away from our school re-opening and our staff are working hard to ensure our pupils have a safe and happy return. I am sure you all have many questions but I hope the details below can provide some answers.

The Department of Education advises that in order to keep our pupils and staff safe we must increase separation and decrease interaction between each other. This will unfortunately mean putting strict but necessary procedures in place.

Arrival to School

- The school will be opened for a 20 minute window from 9:10 – 9:30 am each morning to avoid any congestion. We ask that parents do not come onto the school yard but rather drop their children by the Marian Hall or the Market Yard Gate and move off as soon as possible. There will be a teacher or SNA present at either entrance.
- Please, if possible, do not arrive before 9:10 am
- Ms. O' Reilly's class (2nd, 3rd and 4th) and Mr. Kelly's (5th and 6th) will enter the front door and proceed upstairs to their classrooms.
- Mr. Carr's class (Junior Infants, Senior Infants and 1st) should enter the back door and walk straight to their classroom.
- There is to be no lingering or interaction between parents or children on the school grounds.
- We ask that parents under no circumstances enter the school building without making an appointment first. Depending on DES guidelines meetings may have to happen over the phone.

Departure

At collection time we ask parents to either wait at their car in the carpark or to abide by the 2m markings by the Marian Hall when collecting their children. We again ask parents to please move off once your child has been collected.

Classroom Layout

Within each classroom we are doing our best to maximise space by rearranging tables and removing furniture and shelving. Where possible we hope to have each child at least 1 metre apart.

Each classroom is referred to as a bubble. We will therefore have 3 bubbles within our school and these bubbles should not interact with each other throughout the day.

If we cannot adhere to physical distancing then each bubble will be broken down into Pods – small groups of 4/5 pupils who will sit together and not interact with the other Pods within the room.



Lunch Time

Before eating and in returning from yard children will be asked to wash/ sanitise their hands. We are blessed in that we have a large playground and will not need to stagger our lunch breaks. Each Bubble (Classroom) will have a section of yard in which they can play and will not be permitted to mix with children from other classrooms.

Cleaning and Hygiene

At present our school is receiving a deep clean in preparation for reopening. Each evening our cleaner Beata will spend two hours cleaning all surfaces to ensure our school is sanitised for the next day.

We are installing Hand Sanitising Dispensers throughout the school; In each classroom, at entrances, by the toilets and staff room.

Mr Gallagher is the school's Lead Worker Representative (Margaret Cullen – Deputy LWR) and will ensure that we have the required PPE in place throughout the school year.

Teachers will do their best to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres but where this isn't possible they will wear a face mask or visor.

Uniform

In order to allow for washing of uniform throughout the week we ask children to wear their regular uniform on Monday, Wednesday and Friday but can wear their P.E. uniform on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Wellbeing

We understand that many of you and your children may be apprehensive or anxious about the return to school.

Ms O' Reilly is our Wellbeing Co-ordinator and will be in touch over the coming days with a questionnaire to help us make further preparations to ensure your child's return is a happy one.

Children Presenting With Symptoms

We ask that any child displaying any symptoms of sickness does not come to school. If a child presents with symptoms during the school day, that child will be moved to our isolation room and the child's parents will be contacted to take him/her home.

We will not be taking children's temperatures on entering the building but we may request to do so if a child is showing symptoms.

Travel

We ask that any child that has travelled or been in close contact with a person who has travelled to a country not on the Green List would complete the 14 Day Isolation Period before returning to school.

Further Steps to Consider

- We will not be assigning any homework for the month of September to limit transfer of books/ materials from school to home.
- Each child will have their own plastic storage box at their desk for their books and stationery.
- Children should only bring their schoolbag and lunchbox to school each day. Their pencil case should be left in school. Water bottles must be filled at home at wont be refilled in school.
- We insist that your child brings a coat to school each day. We plan on outdoor activity at lunch break regardless of the weather. We also plan on ventilating the rooms by keeping classroom windows open.
- Coats should be hung on the child's chair and not the usual coat hooks in the corridor.
- Please remember to label your child's equipment, jumper etc
- Please ensue that you have downloaded the ClassDojo App to your phone. Many of our parents have now signed up and it is an excellent resource for tracking your child's work in school. More information will be forwarded soon.

A Final Word...

- After a long wait of four months, First Holy Communion for our pupils has been scheduled for 12th September at 2pm in St. Patrick's Church. A letter from Fr. Cathal has been emailed to families concerned today.
- We will be in touch shortly to arrange for payments of Book and Stationery Fees
- Please can you send a packed lunch with your child for the first two days on return to school as our School Meals wont begin until Monday 1st September.

It is my intention to circulate a newsletter on a monthly basis to all parents to keep you updated on school events, significant dates and most importantly the hard work and efforts of your talented children. It is unfortunate that my first correspondence is laden with guidelines and procedures. I know not all questions have been answered but I hope this document has provided some clarity.

If you have any further questions or don't feel comfortable in sending your child back to school please contact me at officescoilchaitriona@gmail.com or mistercarr123@gmail.com

John Carr

Acting Principal