

Dear Parents,

We hope that you and your families are keeping well during the COVID 19 crisis.

We are navigating very different and unprecedented times and together we are adapting and adjusting to the changes around us. It has been a rollercoaster in terms of emotions and feelings- sadness in loss and grief; anxiety about the virus and possible exposure; confusion about how all this happened and how our world became a different place; worry about separation from loved ones.. And then, the time to do things we never got a chance to do before; spending time together; the joy of gradual freedom, of meeting our loved ones; of a return to some kind of normal again.

And we have missed school and all that school is for each of us. We've missed the school community, the celebrations of birthdays, the choir, the outings, Fr. Derek and the Friday Mass, the deer, the First Communions and the Graduation, and much more...

So, with a large measure of delight and excitement, and a small measure of trepidation, we begin the July Education Provision this Monday. We are glad to be opening our doors and welcoming those joining us for the 3 weeks. We want to assure you the parents that we aim to provide a safe, warm, welcoming and relaxed space for your child, mindful of all we need to be aware of to protect all of us in the school. The following are measures we have taken in the school in line with guidelines from the Department of Education and the advice they receive from the HSE and HPSC.

"The most critical part of managing the risks of COVID-19 related to schools is doing everything practical to avoid introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If the infection is not introduced it cannot spread." (Interim Recommendations for the reopening of schools and educational Facilities)

- A COVID committee with Colin McGillicuddy, teacher, Emma Cremin, SNA, Liam Twomey, Principal and Caroline McCarthy, School Nurse, has been formed. Caroline is the lead worker representative. This group will oversee the school's adherence to COVID 19 measures, including the safety and welfare of the whole school community, providing regular up to date information on the virus, ensuring protective measures against the virus are in place and being a point of contact for any queries or concerns.
- All staff have been strongly recommended to eLearn on Hand Hygiene and Infection Prevention and Control.
- Posters on awareness of COVID 19, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, stay safe, physical distancing etc are posted around the school
- Hand sanitisers are available on entry to the school and all classrooms and common areas
- We have supplies of gloves, aprons and PPE should it be required in a suspected case. The use of face masks will be for protection in carrying out first aid, attending to a suspected case of COVID 19 and if necessary when attending to personal hygiene of a student. Pupils will not wear a mask.
- Our cleaning staff will now work longer hours to ensure the school is cleaned and sanitised prior to the school day and will perform regular cleaning throughout the day and after school
- Each class will establish a regular schedule of cleaning and sanitising of all equipment and common areas during the day. Areas such as the playground, OT and sensory rooms will be cleaned and sanitised following use
- An isolation room away from classrooms will be used should we have a suspected case of COVID 19 in the school. We have a protocol in place for suspected cases of COVID 19
- Visitors to the school will be by prior appointment and a visitor log will be kept for the purpose of contact tracing. All visitors will be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser and to maintain physical distancing
- To minimise the number of people entering the school, you are asked to remain in your car with your child until a staff member collects your child when coming to school. Your child will be escorted to your car when school finishes.

- You are advised not to bring your child to school if they have symptoms of a viral respiratory infection or if there is someone in the household suspected or known to have COVID-19.
- You are also advised not to bring your child to school if they have been identified as COVID-19 contacts
- Routine temperature taking is not recommended in school according to the Interim guidelines (only if a staff or student becomes unwell will this be done) but we do ask you to confirm by writing a note in the school diary each day that your child does not have symptoms of COVID-19 infection. Please ensure that your contact details for the school are up to date and visible in the diary
- If your child should present with symptoms of COVID 19 or other acute infectious disease, they will be accompanied and cared for in the isolation room. It will be explained to them what is happening. You will be contacted immediately and asked to collect your child
- All staff members have been encouraged to read the Return to Work safely guidelines and a Return to Work form has been completed by them
- Staff members are advised not to present to the school if they have been identified by HSE as a Contact of a person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement
- Staff members that have symptoms of COVID-19 or other acute infectious disease are advised not to attend the school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Staff members that develop symptoms at school are advised to make this known promptly and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Staff will be asked to confirm on arrival to school each day that they do not have symptoms of COVID 19 infection and will sign a record sheet

Our school response plan is available to read on the school website. The guidelines are current, but they can change from day to day. We will keep abreast of the changes and adapt them as we go. We are all learning and we welcome your suggestions, thoughts, and advice. The HSE, WHO and HPSC websites are updated daily and we encourage you to read the information provided there. We are so looking forward to seeing our pupils next week and we hope it will be a happy time for all involved.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries. Stay safe.

Yours Sincerely,

Liam Twomey, School Principal

Caroline McCarthy, School Nurse