

## Dear Parents and Students

### Welcome!

We are delighted to welcome back all our students after such a long absence. We have missed you! We are particularly delighted to welcome our new First Year students to Colaiste Na Toirbhirte. While challenging times are no doubt ahead there is reassurance in noting the fantastic efforts that were made by the whole school community, students, staff and parents alike, in overcoming the challenges to date. Where everyone is playing their part most things are possible.

As you might expect, things will look a little different. Measures have been taken, in line with government guidelines, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all the school community due to continued concern in relation to COVID 19. These measures include

- Extensive signage
- A one way system of moving around the school buildings
- Student base rooms to avoid unnecessary movement of groups.
- Reconfiguration of classrooms to facilitate one metre distance between students
- Staggered lunch break
- Removal of lockers to avoid close congregation of students
- Hot water available in all toilet areas to facilitate correct hand washing
- Sanitizer stations in all classrooms and by reception
- New reception area including contact tracing (Please note, in the present COVID 19 we **cannot facilitate visitors to school except in exceptional circumstances**. Such visits will involve at least three days' notice. Any such visitor will need to present at the new reception area, facemasks will be required, the contact log must be signed and they will need to be met by a Staff Member. Parents can, of course, continue to contact teachers through the school office where necessary)

### RETURN TO SCHOOL-INDUCTION DAYS

Please note details of the return to school schedule on the school APP and Website.

We ask for your help and co-operation in ensuring that the return is as safe and smooth as possible. When dropping students to school for induction please do so promptly and leave. We ask that parents do not get out of cars. Students must enter via the PE Hall (at two meters apart) through the external doors where the space will be arranged to facilitate social distancing and where they will meet their year heads and other school personnel for induction. Students will require only a small lunch and copybook on induction day. Induction for all groups will include information on COVID 19, specifically on staying safe in school.

### PPE/Face Coverings

In line with the latest Government guidelines, students will be required to wear face coverings (mask or visor) where two metres distance is not possible. Most classes are at one metre distance so face coverings will be required. Students will be required to provide their own face covering. Where facemasks are used, reusable face coverings (in a plain colour) which may be washed, are advised.

### UNIFORM

School uniform must be worn. Extra items may be purchased in Kevin Bowens Bandon if necessary to facilitate washing of uniform.

Students may come to school in PE Kit and stay in PE Kit on the days they have PE.

### **LOCKERS, MOBILE PHONES, VALUABLES**

Unfortunately, locker rooms will not be available to students as long as the present government advice is in place. This is to avoid the close congregation of students. The fact that student movement has been greatly reduced should be helpful in this regard. It would be very helpful if parents can assist in ensuring that younger students in particular are not bringing unnecessary books to school. Teachers will also assist in this respect.

As always we ask that students do not bring valuables to school as the school cannot be responsible for them. This is particularly relevant where lockers are not available. Further to this point we ask that students do not bring mobile phones to school. In the absence of lockers phones must be powered off throughout the school day and kept locked away in school bags

Mobile phone use is not allowed in the school building during the school day. Please note that in accordance with the school Code of Behaviour any use of a mobile phone during the school day will result in the usual sanctions (Confiscation and Detention)

### **BAGS, BOOKS, EQUIPMENT**

Students are required not to share books or equipment. It is advised that books are covered with a material that may be wiped clean. Recommended protocols are in place in the school library. School bags may take a bit of creativity from everyone. Teachers, students and parents will all be asked to consider how to minimise weight. We are fortunate that the school is on one level and that wheeled bags are an option. The fact that measures have been put in place to minimise the need for students to move will be helpful.

### **LUNCH TIMES**

Small break (11.00am-11.15am) will stay at the same time for everyone. Big Lunch will be staggered. Junior students (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>) will break at 12.35pm -1.15pm. Seniors (4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>) will break from 1.15pm to 1.55pm

Students may eat their lunch at their desks in their base classrooms or out of doors. Indeed we expect students to go out into the fresh air at lunchtime (weather permitting). We are so lucky to have 12 acres of grounds! They may socialise outside while maintaining a social distance.

### **TUCK SHOP**

We hope to keep our Tuck Shop going at big lunch only. A reduced menu will be available. There will be a socially distanced queue. (This situation will be monitored and reviewed). Tuck Shop will be available from Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September

### **RUBBISH**

Students will be expected to keep their own desk area clean and to bring their rubbish home

### **Dropping off and Collecting Students during Term Time**

Students are encouraged to walk or cycle to school where possible. Where students are being dropped off by car we ask that parents do not add to congestion by entering the school car park or by parking. Also, where possible, please do not drop students to school before 8.50am. Students

may be dropped nearby and can walk in the school pedestrian gate and proceed to school (maintaining a social distance)

If students arrive on **buses** before 8.30am they are to proceed directly to the Assembly Hall. If they arrive after 8.30am they are to proceed directly to their classrooms. PLEASE NOTE THAT ONCE IN SCHOOL STUDENTS CANNOT LEAVE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

### **Buses**

School buses will be running as usual on 28<sup>th</sup> August. Any enquiries regarding school buses should be directed to the School Transport in Capwell Cork at 021-4557137

### **Attendance**

Please notify the school office, through the school APP, on every day of absence before 8.30am noting the reason for absence. If there is a prolonged absence for medical reasons a medical cert is required.

### **ILLNESS**

***NB: It is important to note that if your daughter is displaying symptoms of COVID 19 she should not attend school.***

To conclude, we are extremely happy to have the school open and to welcome back all our school community. Through the combined efforts of parents, students, staff and management we strive to ensure a safe arrival and positive school year for all. May God bless the work!

Yours sincerely

Mary Galvin

Carolyn O'Flaherty

**Please note the DES COVID -19 Response Plan at [education.ie](https://www.education.ie) is on the school website [presbandon.ie](https://www.presbandon.ie)**