



Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

## **Planned School Return August – September 2020**

Dear Parents & Guardians,

I hope that you and your families are well and looking forward to the return of school life very soon.

As promised and based on the guidance provided by the Department for Education late last week, the following is a proposed summary of the way we plan to safely open the school for children over the coming weeks. As with all plans and particularly at this time of great uncertainty, we may have to apply some changes as we go but I can assure you that the central focus of the many hours of planning over the past weeks and months has always been the children's health, safety and well-being. We are all aware that COVID-19 still presents a serious risk to our communities and we will continue at all times to be guided by PHA advice. I trust that you will continue to support the school during this challenging time as we endeavour to do what is best for our children and the wider Good Shepherd community.

### **Health & Safety**

In order to provide you with the necessary assurances that the school your children are coming back to is clean, safe and ready for learning the following measures are now in place:

- Hand sanitising stations
- Corridor and classroom markings to remind and encourage social distancing for adults and children
- Increased signage
- Regular hand washing
- Class 'bubbles' to minimise interaction
- Staggered start and finish times
- Careful timetabling to avoid any contact moving in and out of the school building
- Important hygiene protocols for all staff
- Limiting visitors to the school building
- Where possible the children will be taught by their teacher from last year

**Principal : Mr Damian O'Neill**

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### **Class 'Bubbles'**

To minimise cross infection, we will be keeping children and staff together in the same group or 'bubble' where possible. Any outside activity will also be restricted to each bubble.

### **Lunch Arrangements**

The children will eat together in their classroom. A packed sandwich lunch will be delivered each day for the children in receipt of Free School Meals. All other children will be required to bring a packed lunch in disposable bags & bottles. All items brought into school will be disposed of after use at lunch time. In order to minimise the spread of infection, **no lunch boxes** should be brought in to school.

For the first half term (until Hallowe'en) we will not be supplying paid dinners so **no money will be handled on the premises**. You will be kept informed of any changes to this arrangement as we review measures nearer the end of October.

### **School Bags**

Again to minimise the spread of infection, the children will not be permitted to bring a school bag into school. Instead they will be supplied with an individual wipe clean folder which will contain all pencils, rubbers and other essential items needed for the school day. This will remain in school.

### **School Uniform**

The school uniform policy will be relaxed so that children will be able to come to school in normal comfortable clothing suitable for outdoor activity. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, it is important for hygiene purposes that children are in fresh clothes each day. Secondly it is hoped that the children will be outdoors and physically active every day of the week so parents should consider this when sending children in to school. A suitable coat will be essential each day.

It is perfectly reasonable to send children to school wearing the PE uniform on certain days.

This policy will be reviewed in October before the mid-term break.

### **School Clubs**

Unfortunately, all After School clubs will be suspended for the foreseeable future but this situation will be kept under review.

### **Visitors to the school**

To keep everybody safe, we will be limiting visitors to a minimum. If you wish to speak to the Principal or any member of staff, please contact the school by phone or email where we will endeavour to solve any issues or concerns. Any visitor to the school must wear a face covering.

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## Arrangements for School Return

The Minister for Education has stipulated that pupils in Primary 7 and small group settings should return to school on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August. School meals will not be available so these children will have shorter school days starting at 9.30am until 12.30 pm.

The arrangements for the full reopening of the school, effective from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September are outlined below:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Starting Date</b>	<b>Starting Time</b>	<b>Assembly / Dismissal Point</b>	<b>Monday – Thursday Finishing Time</b>	<b>Friday Finishing Time</b>
<b>Primary 1</b>	Week beginning Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> September (more information to follow by post)	8.50 am	Door 1 (Outside Primary 1 classrooms)	12.30 pm (until further notice)	12.30 pm (until further notice)
<b>Primary 2</b>	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	8.50 am	Door 3 (Outside Primary 2 classrooms)	1.50 pm	1.50 pm
<b>Primary 3</b>	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	9.10 am	Door 3 (Outside Primary 2 classrooms)	2.00 pm	2.00 pm
<b>Primary 4</b>	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	9.10 am	Regular morning line up yard	3.00 pm	2.00 pm
<b>Primary 5</b>	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	9.10 am	KS 2 Playground (near pedestrian gate)	3.00 pm	2.00 pm
<b>Primary 6</b>	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	8.50 am	KS 2 Playground (near pedestrian gate)	2.50 pm	1.50 pm
<b>Primary 7</b>	Returning again for full days on Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	8.50 am	Regular morning line up yard	2.50 pm	1.50 pm

Social Communication and Nurture class arrangements will be communicated directly to parents.

We respectfully ask that in the mornings and afternoons, parents of Primary 3 – Primary 7 children remain at school gates and do not enter the school premises.

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## Key Points

- Ensure that you update contact details so that we can contact you via our text service. A valid email address must be supplied.
- Ensure that you have downloaded and registered for the Seesaw Communication App so you are able to receive all relevant information including vital elements of the curriculum.
- If a parent needs to get a child out of school early for an appointment, they must telephone the school office, the child will be sent to the main entrance at the designated time. Parents should remain outside the front door.
- When a meeting has been scheduled for parents they must wear a face covering.
- Children should not bring anything from home apart from their break and lunch and a disposable water bottle. Please do not send in lunch boxes – use disposable bags.
- School bags and pencil cases will not be permitted.
- Children must wear fresh, comfortable clothes each day.
- Pupils who present with Covid-19 symptoms must remain at home and adhere to government guidance.
- If a pupil displays Covid-19 symptoms in school, the child and any siblings will be removed from class and parents contacted immediately for collection.
- PPE will be available for staff use, as and when required.
- Communication will be conducted during school hours via the Seesaw app.

Thank you for your ongoing support and continued cooperation.

**Kind Regards,**

*D. O'Neill*

**Mr D O'Neill**

**School Principal**

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