

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Just an update on the progress this week in relation to the coming year.

Our School Covid Response Plan has been signed off by the Board of Management. It is very much based on best practise and the Department template.

Everything that we have in place is with the health and safety of all our students and staff. Your support in these measures is, as ever, really appreciated and most important.

There will be some slight changes to the day to day running of the school including the following

1. Classes are now room based and they will remain in the same room each day as much as possible except to move to a specialist classroom for Art, Science, Technical graphics etc
2. In so far as is possible we are keeping these year groups in PODs in certain areas of the school. As part of this system, each year group will have a designated entrance door in the morning.
3. Each year will have specially allocated toilets for their use only.
4. We will have a 1-way system to improve the flow of students who are moving around the corridors in school.
5. Lunch time will be shortened to 40 minutes for students and staff and will now be staggered so that 1st Year, 2nd Year and 6th Year will have Lunch at 12.20 (12.30 on Monday) while 3rd, TY and 5th will have lunch time at 1pm (1.10 on Monday)
6. Morning breaks will also be staggered. On Monday the break times will be 10.10am for 1st Year, 2nd Year and 6th Year and 10.50am for 3rd, TY and 5th year. Tuesday to Friday 1st Year, 2nd Year and 6th Year will have break time at 10.50 – 11am followed by tutor time at 11am while 3rd, TY and 5th will have tutor time at 10.50 followed by break at 11.00.
7. Face coverings are now recommended for all staff and students except in certain medical cases. Parents/Guardians are advised to purchase a number of masks for your son's use. For those who have medical issues with face coverings we would ask you to contact the school directly.
8. Visits to the school will be reduced to essential visits and only in cases where the issue cannot be dealt with by phone, email or teams meeting. There will be strict protocols for all visitors to the school and prior appointment and permission is required.
9. Students lockers will not be used this year. We realise that this will present difficulties for students but we will be encouraging the students to use ebooks (the access codes for these books come with the text books that the lads have already purchased for various subjects)
10. Students will be expected to go to base class in the morning and remain there until school starts. Lunch will also be eaten in the classrooms for the first 15 minutes of lunch and then the students can go to assigned external zones for fresh air and a break
11. The Canteen will not be open in the short term. All junior students will be remaining on site for lunch times as usual and students will be expected to bring their lunch to school with them. Our healthy Eating policy still remains in place. Water fountains and student microwaves are also gone for the coming year.

12. We will also be ensuring that all students are not leaving the school building at the same time at the end of the school day.
13. There will be enhanced cleaning routines throughout the school.
 1. Please discuss the importance of hand hygiene, coughing and sneezing etiquette and physical distancing with your son in keeping your family and the school community Covid free.
 2. All students travelling on school buses are expected to wear masks.
 3. Students are not to share books, pens etc.
 4. Hand sanitising stations will be located at entrances to the school and also in every classroom. Students are expected to use them on entry and egress to the school building and to every classroom.
 5. Room furniture has been reconfigured to enable 1m social distancing in the classrooms.

We will be back with more details next week but plans are well advanced and we look forward to seeing our students returning and resuming their studies in a healthy safe and supportive environment in early September. As always if you have any queries please feel free to contact us.

Best wishes

John Hegarty