

17<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian,

**RE: Physical Distancing and Safe School Attendance**

We are currently working on upgrading our procedures and routines within the school to ensure that there is as much Physical Distancing as is possible in our building. Teachers, SNAs and caretakers have been very busy decluttering classrooms and laying out the classrooms according to government guidelines on social distancing. Larger classes have been moved to the bigger classrooms in the school building.

We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

**Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -**

***Increasing Separation.*** This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Each class will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles. Within the bubbles, children will be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children (normally 6) who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the bubble, or classroom.

***Decreasing Interaction.*** This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. There will be marked routes for various bubbles to enter and exit the school and to access their classrooms. Bubbles will have different mid-morning and lunch-time access to the playground. We will make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times.

While all children will be welcome back to school, we would remind parents that, where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms, they should not be sent to school. Children who display such symptoms in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school.

**Children who have travelled from countries not on the Green List should not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period**

Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: -

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

Teachers will make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. We would be grateful if you could also emphasise safe behaviour in this regard to your children at home as part of the preparation for returning to school.

**Following much discussion and planning, we intend to publish our Draft Logistics Plan here on our website later this week. This will go into the finer details of all aspects of our return, from the pupils arrival in the morning, to their departure in the afternoon.**

Our aim remains to re-open the school in an orderly safe manner, while reassuring the children and making them feel comfortable, safe and relaxed with their friends in the new school environment. This will be achieved by all of us working towards this common goal.

Kind regards,

Brendan Tynan  
Príomhoide