



21st August 2020

Revised Opening Dates & General Information

Dear Parent / Guardian,

There will be a phased return of students to allow for the safe induction of staff and students regarding the new protocols that are in place. Every effort is being made to ensure a safe environment for all members of the school community on their return.

The school calendar has been adjusted as follows and the revised opening dates are:

First Year Induction	Tuesday 1 st September 2020	9 am – 3.00 pm
	Wednesday 2 nd September 2020	9 am – 3.30 pm
1st 2nd & 3rd Years only	Thursday 3 rd September 2020	9 am – 3.30 pm
Senior Students only	Friday 4 th September 2020	9am – 3.30 pm
All Students Return	Monday 7 th September 2020	9 am – 4.00 pm

First Years First Day

Regrettably, parents/guardians may not accompany their child(ren) into the school on the first day. Students should come to the front door of the school and then they can enter the school through the front door after signing in. Students should arrive no earlier than 8.30am and remain 2 metres apart from other students as they arrive and follow the signage and floor markings for guidance. On entry they will be told to go to the Sports Hall and sit in their designated area on an assigned seat. As per national guidelines, all staff will wear face coverings and students will be required to do so where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres. This will be explained to students during the induction training. Certain students may not be required to wear face coverings and that will be arranged on an individual basis.

Breaktimes

There are some changes to breaktimes this year to maximise physical distancing and interaction between year groups. However, it is not possible to show these changes on the students' timetables so they will be adjusted by each student as it is explained to them.

Break

1st, 2nd and 3rd years are expected to bring in a snack for break time to be eaten in their designated area.

- TY break pre-ordered and delivered to classroom beside the canteen

Canteen access

- 6th years 11:00 -11.08
- 5th years 11.08 – 11.15

Lunch

- **1st and 3rd Year** Groups pre-order lunch delivered to Sports Hall and Rm103.
- **2nd Year** Group access canteen: First 15 minutes of lunch break:
 - Monday /Tuesday 1.15-1.30pm
 - Wednesday – Friday 12.35 – 12.50pm
- **TY Students** access canteen 10 minutes earlier (1.05pm Monday and Tuesday, 12.25pm Wednesday – Friday)
- **5th years** access canteen: 1.30 Monday /Tuesday and 12.50 Wednesday – Friday to end of lunch can access the canteen
- **6th years** are allowed to go to Cullens for lunch. (6th year privilege)

Break and lunch will be facilitated as stated above. We will be asking parents to remind students to eat directly from their lunch boxes, canteen packaging and not to use the surface of the table to place their food on. It has been necessary to remove tables to maximise the available space. Please remind students that sharing of food is not permitted. Lunch boxes and drinks bottles should be washed thoroughly, inside and out, each day.

Hygiene and Cleaning

Sanitiser dispensers will be installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, at the door of each classroom, etc. Soap (which emulsifies at low temperatures) and water is available in all toilets. Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.

Handwashing and Sanitising Regime for Students

Time	Method
Upon entering school	Sanitiser
Before eating at little break	Sanitiser (wash hands if visibly dirty)
After returning from break	Sanitiser
Before eating at lunchtime	Sanitiser (wash hands if visibly dirty)
After returning from lunch	Sanitiser
Before going home	Sanitiser
*After using toilet	Handwashing

Students will be distanced insofar as is practicable, with approximately 1m distancing achieved in all rooms. Classrooms have been modified to create as much space as possible and students are assigned to base classrooms as much as possible.

Disinfecting wipes will be provided in all classrooms and where student have to move to a different room or desk, they will be provided with a wipe to clean their area before taking their seat. Teachers will do the same when they enter a new classroom. Students are expected to carry out this task efficiently. Specific foot operated bins will be provided in each room for the disposal of wipes, masks and any other potentially contaminated item.

Entrance and Exit Points

To facilitate students arriving and entering and exiting the grounds safely, we ask that no students be present on school grounds before 8.10 am. From 8.22 am to 8.52am, staff will be supervising inside the school building. Over this period, students can enter the school grounds through the front side or rear gate but must use the one way system inside the school building. The student must proceed directly to their locker to organise books until lunch time. Students are only allowed to sit on assigned seats in their designated area.

Lockers

Students are only allowed to access their locker in the morning before school, during the second half of lunch by permission of the teacher on supervision duty and during the last class of the school day. Students are not allowed to access their lockers at any other time. Students can only access their locker when the lockers beside them are not in use. Visual displays demonstrating this must be adhered to.

Induction re Covid-19:

Each Year Group will recommence with **Induction re Covid-19** and managing the safe and sustainable return to school, designated areas for year groups, safe movement around the campus and wellbeing for all. This staged re-opening means that all students will be back to full time education by the 7th September.

Students and staff must wear masks and may also wear visors while inside all school buildings with the exception of when eating or with prior permission from a member of staff. Maximum ventilation will be maintained at all times.

All 1st years will remain in base classes for core subjects and all Year Groups will have designated areas and seats before school, break time and lunch time.

School Uniform

Full uniform is expected to be worn at all times unless permission has been granted by a teacher for extra-curricular activities.

Yards

No access for the short term unless with direct teacher supervision of a specific student group / class cohort. We are in a unique position where all students stay on campus all day with the exception of our 6th Year Group at lunch.

PE

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined to the sets for that class group. No changing rooms will be available and students should wear their PE gear only on PE day. Students are also encouraged to bring spare footwear on PE days.

Students' Equipment and Stationery

- Students should bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc. to school in their own pencil case to prevent the sharing of equipment.
- Students may be required to submit homework through Microsoft Teams and there will be training for this in the early stages of the school year. While it is not essential, we would encourage parents/guardians to invest in a laptop device for their student's schoolwork, if possible.

Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, computers and the equipment used for practical subjects. Cleaning of such shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products must be done by students after each use under the supervision of teachers to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

PPE

The Department of Education advise that face coverings should be worn by staff and students in post-primary schools where 2m social distance cannot be maintained. WWETB is supplying all staff with the personal protection equipment they will need. Gloves and aprons will also be provided for providing intimate care or first aid. Students must wear facemask where required and when asked to do so. Within our school community there are people who may have underlying health conditions or who live with family members with underlying health conditions and we must all do what is required to avoid COVID-19 coming into our community.

While students should utilise their own face covering on a day-to-day basis, the school will have available a stock of additional disposable or multi-use face coverings available in case a back-up face covering is needed throughout the day or where required on an ongoing basis.

Learning Support

In keeping with our special educational needs (SEN) policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class and small-group support. Initially, the focus will be primarily on welcoming the students back, giving them a chance to speak about how they feel, and establishing relationships and routines. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within the confines of the minimum amount of interaction between students.

- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
- Where students from receive support in one of the SEN rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each student in the group. Only students from the same year group may be withdrawn together for SEN purposes
- The tables and chairs in SEN rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending. Where possible, resources in SEN settings will be stored in individual pouches for each student in order to limit sharing, and the pouches can then be wiped and sanitised.
- SNAs will continue to provide support and will wear appropriate PPE. They will bring the students outside as much as possible.

Sports and extra-curricular activities

This is currently under review.

Ventilation

Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces. To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible.

Assembly

Whole school assemblies will not take place for the foreseeable future.

Payments

We have an online payment system (WAY2PAY) that minimises the amount of cash that needs to be handled. Parents/guardians are asked to co-operate in helping to keep school staff safe by arranging for online payments through the school office.

Corridors

Students must strictly follow the one-way system, restrictions on number in the toilets must be adhered to.

Teacher Absence and Substitution

In the event that teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class. If a substitute teacher is not available, another member of

staff will supervise the class. The class will not be divided into groups and accommodated in other year groups.

Limited access to school grounds

We will continue to need and look for parental/guardian support in ensuring we are best placed to work through the coming weeks. **Parents/ guardians and visitors are not allowed on school grounds.** Drop off and collection arrangements remain the same as last year. There are no parking facilities on school grounds for parents / guardians and students. Parents/ guardians are expected to arrange appointments for students outside of school hours to minimise risk and disruption to our teaching and learning school day.

Collection of Students during the School Day

If an adult has to collect a student during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply

- When the adult arrives at the school, they should either phone the office or use the intercom at reception to alert the office that they have arrived. Only two people can be in the reception area at any one time, and they must wear masks. Please check the number of people in the reception area before entering.
- The student will be called from their class to the adult by a member of staff.
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to identify themselves to the secretary who will sign on their behalf.

No adult can enter the school building from the reception area/front door, unless invited to do so.

Bus Arrangements

The DES through Bus Eireann and local contractors has confirmed the provision of the full School Bus Service to and from school each day as was the case pre 12th March last.

This means that all students who have a confirmed place on a School Bus each day will have this service provided for them with effect from the start of the school year. The DES are requiring that all school buses are being fitted with hand sanitisation equipment and will be subject to enhanced daily cleaning by operators. Students travelling on buses will be pre-assigned seats and will be required to wear a mask while travelling unless a specific exemption has been granted.

Students Who Should Not Attend School

If your student is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school –

- Students who have been diagnosed with Covid-19.
- Students who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19.
- Students who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending.

- Students who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending.
- Students with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school.
- Students who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
- Students who are generally unwell.

Students with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school.

Parents should seek advice from their GP/consultant if they think their student is in a high risk group. If they are advised not to attend, then the parents should furnish the school with a letter containing words to this effect. The school will then support the student with his/her learning.

Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class

If the school is notified that a person in your student's class has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19

- The parents of all students in the class will be notified.
- Public health advice will be sought and followed.

Illness and Absences

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. If a student displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following are the procedures will be implemented:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately – please ensure all contact details are up to date and in use, and also provide the name and number of a contact who will be in a position to collect a student promptly.
- The student will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by a member of staff. The staff member will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic student and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic student at all times

A mask will be provided for the student presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.

- An assessment will be made as to whether the student who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents who can then call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
- The school will facilitate the student presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist them by calling their GP.
- The student presenting with symptoms will be advised to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided

- If the student is well enough to go home, the school will arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible, and advise them to inform their GP by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick student is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. They are:

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

We are not qualified to make a distinction between Covid 19 symptoms and symptoms of other illnesses. Be prepared. Make arrangements for your student to be collected in the event of a phone call.

All the above arrangements are subject to change. We will be carrying out risk assessment on a weekly basis.

FAQs

Can I send in a bottle of sanitiser with my student? Yes, but please remind your student it is for personal use and it may only be used with the permission of the teacher. There will be sufficient quantities of sanitiser throughout the school.

Must my child wear a facemask? Staff and students are required to wear face covering where a physical distance of 2 m cannot be maintained. In our school this will be for a significant part of the school day.

Will parent/teacher meetings be taking place? We are awaiting further guidance on this.

What if I need to speak with my student's teacher? Please contact the school office or your student's teacher via email. Do not write notes in the journal.

What happens if my student forgets their lunch or drinks or other items? We are not in a position to drop off items to the school for now. Please ensure your child has everything he/she needs for the next school day. Remember all lunches can be pre-ordered online and students who have PE timetabled on a specific day will wear their PE gear for the whole day.

My student has hay fever and sneezes quite a bit, will he/she be sent home? If your student has an underlying condition such as hay fever (as many of us have) please make sure the class teacher is aware.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. They are:

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

What if my student is sent home with a suspected case of Covid 19? We would advise that you contact your GP/HSE for further advice. If a student is unwell they should under no circumstances be sent back to school.

Are parents permitted in the school building? No, not unless collecting a student presenting with Covid 19 symptoms or have received prior permission and have been invited in from the reception area/front door.

My student is in a base class with some other students, can they still interact with their other friends at break time? Yes, absolutely, students can still chat with students in other classes or year groups as long as they keep the distance from other students.

How will physical distance work in classrooms? At the start of the school year we will be distancing students as much as possible, with approximately 1m between all students in classrooms. This will not eliminate students from interacting with each other or prevent talk and discussion.

What happens if my student is injured while at school? Our first aid policy will be followed, but staff are required to wear PPE to apply first aid.

Why can some of the classes not mix? They are playing soccer/GAA together anyway! That may be the case for some of the students, but our procedures are governed by Dept. of Education and Skills guidelines, which state that every effort must be made to limit the amount of contact between classes. We do not adhere to the guidelines of other sporting /social organisations.

Will teachers talk to the students about Covid 19? Yes, from day one we will be re-teaching cough etiquette, hand hygiene, reinforcing the idea of social distancing/reduced physical contact, and chatting about Covid 19. The aim will be on reassurance and promoting calmness and safety.

Will the students wear their uniform? Yes, it is business as normal in relation to uniform. There is no guidance from the Department of Education or HSPC to the contrary.

Will after school activities be taking place? This matter is still under review.

Will the school be cleaned each day? Yes, and commonly touched surfaces will be cleaned throughout the day. Both staff and students will be responsible for cleaning their own work area each time they move to a new location.

What will be the most difficult issue for schools and parents? When students display symptoms of Covid 19. We will have to ring you and you will have to come and collect your child immediately. Your child will have to be brought to the isolation area. These are the government guidelines. We are not qualified to make a distinction between Covid 19 symptoms and symptoms of other illnesses. Be prepared. Make arrangements for your student to be collected in the event of a phone call.

Will this document be updated? Almost definitely. It is an evolving situation and we will most likely have to change elements of it when we observe it in practice. We will be reviewing our procedures constantly. We will also be in contact with you closer to the return to school date with more information.

Yours sincerely,

John Nolan

Principal.