



Coláiste Abbáin



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Adamstown, Enniscorthy. Co. Wexford

# Returning to school September 2020

# Welcome to Coláiste Abbáin everybody!

A special word of welcome to you our new first year students

Last March, the government took the unprecedented step of closing schools to slow the spread of Covid 19. This sudden change to how we teach and learn was difficult but we are so proud of how students managed this new way of learning. Your ability to face this huge challenge and adapt to remote learning was outstanding. Even though there were no doubt difficult times for our students, you have developed new skills in motivation, discipline, independent learning, IT and developed your resilience. Well done!

As we now return to school we have to change some of our procedures so that we, as a school community, can continue to keep Covid out of our schools, homes and communities.

# Taking personal responsibility

- At this time, we must always be mindful of the need to be physically distant. Students must maintain at least a 1 metre distance from other students and 2 metres from staff members. This includes when you are walking to and from school.
- We know that you will be very happy to see your friends again but it is very important that you remember to keep a physical distance. This means that you cannot make any physical contact with anybody – no hugging, hand shaking, high fives, claps on the back etc.
- Students must sanitise their hands on entry to the school building and on entry to every class. Frequent handwashing throughout the day should also be practised.

# Handwashing

Please watch the following short video

A handwashing poster with an orange background. At the top, the text reads "Protect yourself and others from getting sick". Below this, a dark red banner contains the text "Wash your hands". To the left, there is an illustration of a blue faucet with water flowing into a pair of hands being washed with soap suds. To the right of the hands, a list of seven bullet points provides instructions on when to wash hands. At the bottom left is the "RESIST" logo, at the bottom center is the website "www.hse.ie/handhygiene", and at the bottom right are the HSE and HSPC logos.

Protect yourself and others  
from getting sick

**Wash your hands**

- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for the sick
- before and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty
- after touching cuts, blisters or any open sores
- you can use alcohol hand rub, if hands are not visibly dirty

**RESIST**

[www.hse.ie/handhygiene](http://www.hse.ie/handhygiene)

HSE HSPC

# Taking personal responsibility

- Every student should have their own supply of face masks, sanitiser, tissues, gloves etc
- Respiratory etiquette:
  - Always cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow
  - Dispose of the tissue in a bin
  - Turn your face away from others as you cough or sneeze
  - Wash your hands thoroughly afterwards

**IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID, YOU MUST STAY AT HOME.**

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS HAD A CONFIRMED COVID DIAGNOSIS, YOU SHOULD NOT COME TO SCHOOL FOR TWO WEEKS.**

**FOLLOW CURRENT HSE GUIDANCE AT ALL TIMES.**

When you cough or sneeze  
cover your nose and mouth  
with a tissue



or

Cough or sneeze into your elbow,  
not your hands.

# Face coverings

- All students must wear a mask or visor when physical distancing cannot be guaranteed.
- This means that you must wear a *mask or visor* (visors only if you have a medical condition) while in the school building – classrooms, corridors and toilets.
- Face masks and visors should be washed every evening.
- You may remove the mask when in your outside space, but only if you can maintain a physical distance of at least 1 metre.
- Scarves, snoods, bandanas etc are not acceptable as face coverings.
- **You must not enter the school building without a face covering.**
- If you have forgotten a face covering, wait at the front door of the school and Mr Nolan/Ms Simmons will assist you.

# New school procedures

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, we return this year to a very different type of school environment. It has necessitated several new procedures to be implemented in our school. You may find some of these changes difficult but please remember that everything we are doing is to keep you and your loved ones safe.

**We must do everything we can  
to keep Covid 19 out of our school.**



# First Year

- Every tutor class has a base location in the Sports Hall. All core subjects will take place in these groupings. Mostly, students will be together for English, Maths, Irish, History, PE, SPHE, CSPE, Science & Wellbeing.
- Toilets to be used are located beside the PE Office and the Junior Student Toilets.  
No other toilets should be used.
- Entry to the school is through the main door at the front of the building.

# Overflow rooms

- In order to comply with physical distancing requirements, it may be necessary occasionally to ask students to leave their class for another supervised classroom.
- Students will be assigned to this room on a rotational basis.

# Seating plans

- Seating plans in the Sports Hall are devised by alphabetical order.
- Seating plans in Classrooms are devised by the class teacher.
- Option subjects: your teacher will create the seating plan. You will be seated alongside students from your tutor class.
- Seating plans are to keep you safe.
- They are not negotiable.
- **Anyone found in an incorrect seat or challenging a teacher on the seating plan will be removed from class.**

**THIS IS A HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUE**

# Classroom procedures

- Sanitise your hands on entry to the classroom.
- Enter the classroom in single file
- Maintain a 1 metre distance while entering.
- Walk directly to your assigned desk.
- Wipe down your desk and chair.
- Leave the wipe in the Designated Bins for Wipes.

# Lockers

- Until we all get used to attending school while maintaining a physical distance from others, there can be no access to lockers.
- Lockers will be rolled out on a phased basis to each year group.
- Students should discuss with their teachers which books can be kept at home for homework purposes.
- All books needed in school should be kept in a bag or box under your desk. To help with organisation, you may wish to consider the use of mesh book bags.

# Break & Lunchtime procedures

- Morning Break will be taken at your desk in the Sports Hall.
- Morning Break will be from 11.00 to 11.15am. Students should bring a snack and drink.
- Access to the Canteen is not permitted.
- Lunchtime will be taken at your desk in the Sports Hall. Orders will be taken online and Lunch will be delivered to students by Canteen Staff. More information will follow on this.
- Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds at lunchtime.

# Corridors

- A one-way-system is in operation.
- Walk on the left hand side of the corridor.
- Walk in single file.
- You must leave at least 1 metre distance between you and the person in front of you on the corridor.
- There can be no stopping to chat to friends either from your own class or from the other class.

**WE MUST AVOID POTENTIAL INFECTION  
SPREADING BETWEEN CLASS GROUPS**

# What to do if you suddenly feel sick during the school day

- Tell a teacher/Tutor/ or your Year Head immediately.
- If you have symptoms of Covid 19 – temperature, shortness of breath, loss of taste - you will be brought to an isolation room no 5.
- Your parents or guardians will be contacted and asked to bring you home immediately.
- If your parents have changed phone number since you joined our school, you must ensure that you have given the updated number to the office.



# Your emotions as you return to school

- You may be feeling anxious or worried as you return to school, especially after such a long break from school. These are perfectly natural feelings.
- Try not to focus on the worries – instead focus on the positives. Focus on our collective efforts to work together to keep everyone safe. We are a team.
- Should you need to speak to someone in confidence, we have our counsellor available: Mr Tynan
- Talk to your tutor, a teacher, year head or friends. Everyone will help to support you.

# Finally

We know that these changes will be restricting and that it may take some time to adjust to them. At times, you may find it difficult and frustrating but please remember that this is the Coláiste Abbáin effort to keep everyone in this school safe and by doing that, we keep our families, loved ones and communities safe too.

Since schools shut in March, you have proven your ability to adapt, developed your resilience and shown strength of character. We know that you will continue to demonstrate this spirit as we re-open our school.

Thank you