



Wednesday, 18 March 2020

Dear parents/guardians and students,

I write to provide the following information in relation to the enforced closure and using ICT in learning & teaching. I repeat the advice from **Dr Tony Holohan**, Chief Medical Officer:

- 1. Reduce your social contacts – see only a handful of people in your network*
- 2. Distance yourself 2 metres from people in shops & supermarkets*
- 3. Stop shaking hands or hugging when you say hello*
- 4. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth*
- 5. Wash your hands regularly and practice cough and sneeze hygiene*
- 6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces*
- 7. Check on your vulnerable family members and neighbours*
- 8. Work from home where possible*

As we prepare to start fully into remote **Teaching and Learning** please note the following:

- This may be a long haul, beyond the 29th March. We are only at a beginning of something that is new and is occurring within the context of a national crisis situation.
- The school building is **closed to staff and students** until further notice. Our main way of communicating with families will be the Letters to Families section of our website. I shall issue such letters when updates become available. Accordingly, please keep a close eye on the School Website, Facebook and Twitter feeds in the coming weeks.
- The School email ([info@colaisteabbain.ie](mailto:info@colaisteabbain.ie)) will be managed from 9am - 4.30pm each working day during the closure period. This is the

**recommended way to communicate** with the school. Voicemail messages left on the answering machine will be replied to via Email, so please ensure an Email address is provided with voicemail message.

- Contact by email to students is the default, common platform which we are using. All students are equipped with a **Microsoft 365** account giving them access to a suite of cloud based software such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Teams. This also gives them their own personal Coláiste Abbáin email address. Other Applications like Teams, One Note and different platforms may evolve over the duration of this closure phase.
- We are a rural school community. There are variances of IT accessibility across students and their families and, indeed, teachers, in this new situation.

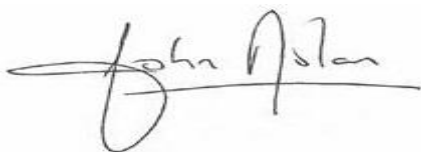
**\*Internet Access - Important to note\***

We understand that not every household has access to consistent reliable and unlimited internet access. However, please note that in order to utilise Microsoft One Drive, One Note/ Class Notebook & Teams, constant internet access is not mandatory. Files and resources can be accessed and downloaded when internet access is available and can be saved by the student for offline access.

- There is no expectation that 'Class' takes place at the normal Timetabled time each day. What we are seeking to do is the ensure work and learning materials are being issued out to all Year Groups with consistency across subjects and completed corrected work is returned and or feedback given.
- **We will continue to update you regarding guidance received from the DES and/or the State Examinations Commission regarding future planning for the Leaving and Junior Certificate Examinations.**

Together we will work through this and we will return to doing what we do best as a school community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Nolan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Principal