

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you are all safe and well. A huge part of the re-opening of our school in a safe and socially distanced manner will involve how all the children enter and exit the campus and school. For this we require all involved parties co-operation.

Both the boys' and girls' schools have discussed this at length and we have endeavoured to incorporate routines that will ensure the health and safety of all but also allow families in both schools to arrive and leave at the same time. The new procedures for St. Columba's BNS are as follows.

School supervision will begin as normal at 8.40am. The top yard nearest the road will be utilised so the children can line up. There are markings on the yard to ensure that the children are socially distanced. The children and parents will not be permitted to congregate in the school sheltered area to ensure the safety of all.

We are asking where possible, that families stagger their arrival to school. We are asking families with the surnames A-L to be in school for 8.45am and the surnames M-Z arrive and be in school for 8.55am

The school doors will open at 8.45 and the children will be directed in their designated door by the SET teachers and onto to their classroom where their teacher will greet them.

The SET teachers will remain at the doors until 8.55 to allow the entry of the boys from families M-Z.

We are utilising 6 main doors and 3 classroom doors (Cairdeas), to maximise social distancing on entry to the school. Due to the availability of external classroom doors and to facilitate the school transport system, the morning and evening routine will be the same as last year for the Cairdeas classes. The only change is the utilisation of the external classroom doors instead of the main doors for Cairdeas 1-3.

The exit of school at the end of the school day will mirror this. The junior infants will leave via the same doors they entered at 12: 30 until 11<sup>th</sup> of September and 1.20 (A-L) and 1.30(M-Z) thereafter.

Senior Infants will leave at 1.20 ( A-L) and 1.30 (M-Z) .

The rest of the school will exit via the doors they entered (in the morning) at either 2.20 or 2.30. A-L will be brought to their exit points at 2.20 by the SET teacher and surnames M-Z will be guided to their exit point by the class teacher at 2.30 .

Please ensure your child(ren) has adequate raingear as they will be lining up in the yard and NOT in the sheltered area near the front door. We would also ask that parents model social distancing while on campus with their children and where possible, not to enter school grounds.

We will be doing videos of the morning routine/routes for the children and will send them in the coming days also. These should help clarify all of the above. Also, in the

videos will be information on how the school will look and operate from August 27<sup>th</sup> onwards. It hopefully will help clarify bubbles and pods for all.

A quick note on uniforms for the resumption of school. Both schools are going to implement a “Wear your own clothes Wednesday” for the resumption of school. We would ask that on the guidance of the class teacher in conjunction with your child’s P.E days that you alternate the school uniform and tracksuit on Monday and Tuesday and then again on Thursday and Friday. (On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>, please wear school uniform 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes). We hope that this system allows families the ability to send your child(ren) to school each day with clean clothes without having to do any washing during the week. Also, we are hoping that the Wednesdays can be a source of colour, brightness and comfort in what may be an anxious time for some.

For the infant classes who just wear tracksuits, we ask you to do your best to have a clean set of clothes for each school day.

We are extremely conscious that all of the above has implications for all our school community. The Board of Management have sanctioned a Covid-19 Sub- Committee to review all school Covid related procedures on a regular basis. On this Committee will be the School Principal/Deputy, a member of the teaching staff, a member of the non-teaching staff and we are asking for 2 parent representatives also.

The committee will meet on a regular basis in term 1 to review how the school is operating with respect to Covid-19 procedures. If you feel your expertise would be of benefit to the school please send an email to the school office. In the event that more than two people volunteer their services, the election of said members will be put to a vote.

Lastly, I would just like to thank you all for your continued patience. The return to school for all the children is what’s most important right now. It is also very important that we oversee this re-opening of our schools with a health and safety and **common-sense approach**.

Kindest Regards

Dan O’ Connor