



12th August, 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian,

RE: Drop-off and Collection Routines, Physical Distancing, Safe School Attendance and more

The BoM and the School Leadership Team have been working hard to ensure a safe return to school for all pupils and staff in two weeks' time. We have now finalised our plans for the re-opening of the school including all arrangements regarding drop-off and collection of the children every day, physical distancing and safe school attendance. All information is available in the attached document: **'St. Mary's NS's Plan for Re-opening the School'**. **All parents need to familiarise themselves with this document.** Please be patient as we endeavour to embed these necessary precautionary and protective practices at the beginning of the school year. We will need your help and co-operation to ensure a safe return to school for all. I thank you all in advance.

Important Reminders:

- 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 promptly 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>
- All parents are again reminded to keep an eye on Aladdin Connect for updates. It is a good idea to turn on notifications on the app. Please check that we have your correct contact details on Aladdin Connect. Let us know if you have moved house, changed phone number or email address. Please also check that your emergency contact details are correct.

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 only be achieved by all of us working together towards this common goal.

There is no doubt that school will be different this year, especially at the beginning, but children will get used to it very quickly. You can play your part in helping them to re-adjust by:

- Explaining to your child that things will be a bit different.
- Talking often to your child about the changes ahead. Children may not talk about how they feel, but that does not mean they are not thinking about it.
- Asking what your child is looking forward to, what information they don't have and what concerns they have.
- Listening carefully.
- Giving your child simple information, at their level of understanding, about their concerns and questions.
- Not letting them know that you are overly worried as children pick up on your stress.
- Being positive and calm when talking about school.
- Returning where appropriate to usual activities that involve separation from parents/guardians will also support them.
- Finally, remembering that it is important for parents/ guardians to say hopeful and positive things about the changes to school this year and to expect all to work out well.

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We very much look forward to welcoming all our wonderful pupils back to St. Mary's. Further communication and information regarding re-opening will be sent to all families via Aladdin Connect next week.

Wishing you all a good week.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Fiona O'Callaghan

Príomhoide

Attachment:

- St. Mary's NS's Plan for Re-opening the School'