



8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021

Good afternoon Parents / Guardians,

Schools received notification today that the gradual phased reopening of schools can proceed as planned. The next phase of return is on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> March for all primary school children in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.

We have been informed that Public health has reviewed the measures put in place to ensure safe operation of schools and is satisfied that these infection prevention and control measures, **if rigorously adhered to**, will keep the school community safe during this period. **They emphasise that all measures must be followed carefully by pupils, staff and parents.**

**Information for Parents:** There is a wide range of information materials available for parents and pupils that re-inforce public health messaging. These include video messages from public health doctors on the safety of schools, posters and digital animations and videos. You can access these materials here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2d3af-advice-during-covid-19-back-to-school-advice-for-parents/>

All families are asked to view these materials in advance of returning to school.

**Return to School Declaration Form:** The return to school declaration form, which all parents must complete prior to their daughter returning to school will be available on Aladdin Connect **from 3pm on Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> March**. The return to school declaration form is a health declaration that the child / household has no Covid-19 symptoms. All parents of 3<sup>rd</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> Class pupils are asked to complete this in advance of Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> March. Any parent requiring a hard copy of this form can download it from here:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/az/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/childcareguidance/Return%20to%20Educational%20Facility%20declaration%20form.pdf>

**Covid-19 Response plan:** The school's updated Covid-19 Response Plan available to view on the school website. These documents contain updated/additional safety measures which are necessary to ensure the safety of your children and our staff. It is important that you read and are familiar with these measures.

**Illness: If your child or anyone in your household displays any symptoms of Covid-19 do not send them to school.** Always err on the side of caution. Remember also, that if a child displays symptoms in school, they will be isolated immediately and you will need to collect them and arrange a Covid test. **If in doubt, keep your child at home until they are better.**

**Hygiene & Social Distancing:** Remind and practise with your child correct hand washing / hygiene techniques and talk about social distancing as appropriate to your child's age.

**New/updated guidelines:**

- **Unwell Siblings / Households:** A change to the protocol around children / siblings attending schools: Students must now **not** attend school if anyone in the household is displaying symptoms of Covid-19 or is awaiting the results of a Covid test.
- **Travel:** Children who have travelled outside of Ireland may **not** attend school; in such instances parents are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.  
<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/coronavirus/general-Covid-19-travel-advisory/>



- **Congregating:** There must be **strictly no congregating** of parents/guardians at drop-off or collection times. Parents should continue to wear masks in the vicinity of the school. A 2m social distance must be maintained at drop-off and collection times.
- **Communication:** Under no circumstance is a parent/guardian permitted to approach a member of staff. A quick word/chat with a teacher at the start or end of the school day cannot be facilitated. Staff are contactable by email or through the office phone only.
- **Ventilation:** Schools have been advised that ventilation is key to ensuring reduced transmission of the virus indoors. New guidelines and updates around ventilation will be implemented so an extra hoody/fleece for children is advised – a hoody/fleece is preferable to leaving a coat on all day. The heating will of course be on, but windows must remain open.

**3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Class Pupils-What should my child bring on 15<sup>th</sup> March?** We are returning for the usual school day with the same times as pre-Christmas so a snack, lunch and water are needed. Your child should bring back all their books. For any family who borrowed a school iPad for the period of remote learning, this should be returned also. Children will not receive homework for the first week of their return to school.

**Entry and Exit:** Children will use the same gates and routes into / from school as before Christmas. Start and finish times are the same as before Christmas.

**Remote Learning:** Only children who have been medically certified as being 'very high risk' will continue to be supported remotely. While some parents may wish to continue to keep their child at home, public health deems it safe for their return to school if the family follow Level 5 restrictions. The guidance then for schools is to mark children who are not in school as absent. Parents who keep their child at home when schools are open must make a formal application for home-school provision to Tusla. The school cannot provide 'dual' tuition to students at home when the class has returned.

We very much look forward to welcoming the children from 3<sup>rd</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> Class back on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> March.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Fiona O'Callaghan