

Dear parent/guardian,

I hope you and your family are well and enjoying the summer break. We are currently working to put procedures in place so we can safely welcome back our students and teachers as planned from the end of this month. We would like to update you on some recent developments concerning the reopening of our school.

The Roadmap for the full return to school was published on 27th July 2020 by the Minister of Education and Skills, Norma Foley.

The school is currently considering the documents provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and has already begun working on implementing the DES recommendations. We are also consulting with our Patron body, Tipperary ETB, to ensure that the school will be able to provide a safe teaching and learning environment for all our students and staff. Our key priority is to ensure that safe systems and procedures are in place to support the best possible learning outcomes. Please see links below:

➤ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/b264b-roadmap-for-the-full-return-to-school/>

➤ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7a8d5-planning-and-preparing-for-return-to-school-covid-19-response-plan-for-safe-re-opening-of-primary-schools/>

The link below is to Government guidelines that can help with managing wellbeing at this time: ➤ <https://www.education.ie/covid19/wellbeing/>

The following information may be of help as we begin planning for our return to school. Further detailed updates will follow.

Base Rooms:

This year, as instructed by the guidelines, all of our students will be assigned a base class of approximately 20 students. This will help manage social distancing and contact tracing.

PPE:

While the school will provide increased facilities for washing and sanitizing all students are asked to bring their own Face Mask with them to school. **No Face Mask No School!**

At the start of the school year we will provide each student with

- A small hand sanitiser bottle
- A Packet of tissues
- A Packet of alcohol wipes

Before School:

Bus transport will run but students will be required to sit in the same seat (beside a sibling or a designated person from the students' class) and wear a mask. On arrival at school students will go to their base rooms and sit in assigned seats. Roll call will be in base rooms at 9am. Please note that the school will be **locked down from 9.00. Entrance to the school after 9.00 will be by appointment only.**

Entering school in the morning:

All students will enter the building through the two doors at the bottom of the school. Students will only be able to exit the building through the doors in the assembly area.

The school is looking at options for car drop off points. Parents will not be permitted to enter the school grounds during drop off in the morning and collection in the evening. Parents could drop and collect their child at the primary school or preferably the church car park. Parents should make every effort not to block the roadway or lane for buses and other local traffic. Cycling and walking to and from school are recommended where possible.

Timetable:

All classes this year will be 58 minutes. This will reduce movement in school and the interaction of various groups.

Lockers:

Students will not have access to lockers as social distancing cannot be maintained in these spaces. 58-minute classes will reduce the weight of the bag and ways of reducing materials for class further will be explored. Social Distancing/hand hygiene/Cough etiquette are still the basic tools to fight Covid 19. Thus, all students will be expected to co-operate fully with these and all guidelines for the running of the school in a safe

manner in this difficult time. The code of behaviour will be amended to reflect the seriousness of cooperation in this regard.

ICT:

In the event that the school returns to blended learning ICT will play an important role. Some form of tablet/laptop/Ipad may be necessary for each student in this scenario. Last year we introduced Chromebooks into our school. This year parents will have an option to rent or purchase a chromebook at very reasonable prices from the school. We are also including them as part of our annual book rental scheme. If this is something that you would be interested in and you would like to reserve one please contact the school. We will be rolling them out to our incoming first years and then working up through the year groups.

Chrome book rental from €70 - €90 depending on warranty chosen

Chromebook purchase from €200 - €240 depending on the warranty chosen.

Breaktimes:

Students will have to go to designated areas for breaktimes and spend as much time outdoors as possible.

School Movement:

Movement between classes will be by means of a one-way system. Students/staff will have to circulate externally so a warm rain jacket next year will be a must.

Uniform:

Full uniform to be worn. School Tracksuit can be worn on day of PE, games and other designated activities. School Tracksuit is available on line at <https://www.kieranberginsports.com/scoil-ruain/>

The School Fitting is on Thursday the 13th of August from 10am – 12pm or please call into the shop located at 11/12 Carrigeen Business Park, Clonmel in order to get the best fit possible. Delivery can be expected approximately by the 18th of September.

Symptoms:

The guidelines are clear that students/staff self-isolate at home if they or any member of their family show any of the symptoms of Covid 19 are experienced. Ultimately the success of schools staying open is down to low community spread and good practices in school. HSE guidelines will be followed.

Restricted Access:

Public Health guidelines state that schools must restrict access to building outside of students and staff. Thus, next year I ask that only in very exceptional circumstance should students be collected from school during

the day. Parents should ring the office if their child is late or is to be collected. Parents are not to arrive at the school entrance. Please try to make all appointments outside of school time.

Students in high Risk category:

Please inform us if your son/daughter will not be returning to school at this time. Email jwilliams@tipperaryetb.ie

Return Dates:

There may be some changes to our return dates as all year groups will require full training and induction in relation to our policies and procedures for Covid 19. Online meeting or meeting in school for parents/guardians of each year group will also take place.

Return Date	Year Group
Friday 28 th August	1 st Year (9am – 1.20pm)
Monday 31 st August	6 th Year & 1 st Year (Full Day)
Tuesday 1 st September	6 th Year & 3 rd Year (Full Day)
Wednesday 2 nd September	6 th Year & 5 th Year (Full Day)
Thursday 3 rd September	6 th Year & TY & LCA ½ (Full Day)
Friday 4 th September	6 th Year & 2 nd Year (9am – 1.20pm)
Monday 7 th September	All Students including International Students (Full Day)*

****Note: any student who travels abroad to a country not on the green list must self -isolate for 14 days before returning to school.***

Books:

Will be issued to students when they return to school. **Please make sure payment in full by 26th August.**

Books will be issued to students who have paid.

Stationary & Copies

We ask as part of your planning for the return to school that students have plenty of all their own stationary (pens pencils etc.) Sharing will not be an option. Advice for now also is one standard copy for all subjects and please do not purchase any hardback copies unless instructed to do so by individual teachers.

I know many of us are anxious about what lies ahead but with everyone's co-operation and support we will work towards getting all students safely back to school. Please rest assured we will be working hard to make the school as safe as possible and we will do everything in our power to keep things as normal as we can.

Over the next month we will endeavour to keep you informed and update you on our progress at regular intervals through the school website. If other more urgent updates are required, you will be notified by text to access the school website.

I wish you and your families well for the coming weeks. I hope you continue to stay safe and well as your children enjoy their break and prepare for the start of term.

James Williams
Principal

Siobhan Landers
Deputy Principal