

25/08/2020

Dear Parents / Guardians,

I hope that you and your loved ones are all keeping safe and well and that you had an enjoyable summer.

As you know, we are planning to reopen the school on Tuesday, 1st September for all of our pupils. Junior Infants have also been invited to come in to meet their teachers over the course of three days during this week.

In drawing up this plan, the Board of Management and staff of St. Ita's N.S. have made every effort to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all members of our school community: children, parents and staff. Our first priority is to get the children back to school safely and we will take time to introduce the new routines to them in a child-friendly way so that they do not feel overwhelmed. Equally, their well-being is most important, so teachers will be allowing plenty of time for talk and discussion, play, mindfulness, and reconnecting with friends. We are looking forward to welcoming the children back to school and we want them to feel comfortable, relaxed and happy.

We will be following the guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills. All protocols around hygiene and class layouts are prepared, and the staff will have had training in best practice. We will increase the levels of separation in classrooms and will have less interaction between pupils throughout the school. We have installed extra sanitizer stations in classrooms and throughout the school. We have installed extra soap dispensers and ensured that hot water is available in all bathrooms. We will put in place a new cleaning system and will have a dedicated isolation area.

If your child's health is seriously compromised, you are advised to seek the advice of a Medical Consultant and provide a medical certificate to the school to that effect. Please contact the school if your child is in this category.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to eliminate the risk of Covid-19 infection. However, with the co-operation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread. As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented.

A key factor will be the vigilance of every parent in monitoring the health of their own child. A child must not come to school if you believe that they are unwell or showing signs and symptoms of sickness. The responsibility for taking a child's temperature before the child comes to school will rest with you.

With that in mind, I would ask you to know the signs and symptoms of Covid-19:

- High temperature
- Cough

- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19

Please find attached the school's Reopening Plan. The staff and I will be monitoring how the Reopening Plan and the staggered times, in particular, are working for the first few weeks. We want to make drop off and collection efficient for you and for the school so we will review this and all other logistical matters on a daily and weekly basis until we settle in. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding the Reopening Plan. We hope that by working together that we can provide a safe and successful return to school.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Coyle,
Principal.