

Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020



## Physical Distancing and Safe School Attendance

Dear Parent / Guardian,

### Social Distance in School:

We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

**Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -**

**Increasing Separation.** This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Each class will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles. Within the bubbles, children will be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children (*normally 4 - 6*) who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the bubble, or classroom.

**Decreasing Interaction.** This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. Each bubble will enter and exit the school through their own block to access their classrooms. Bubbles will arrive and leave the school at different times. They will also have different mid-morning and lunchtime breaks on the playground. Each bubble will also have its own separate area on the playground where they can play. Therefore, for example, when the three 5<sup>th</sup> classes are out on the yard on their break they will have their own yard. There will be no other classes on that yard. Furthermore, on that yard the three classes will have their own separate area to play on. Pupils will only play with other pupils in their bubble – not with any other pupils in the other 5<sup>th</sup> classes. We will make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times. Social distancing will also be observed when lining up and walking in from the yard.

### Displaying Colds, Coughs or Flu Like Symptoms

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 collect them from the school.

### Return home from holidays

**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>

Teachers will make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. We would be grateful if you could also emphasise safe behaviour in this regard to your children at home as part of the preparation for returning to school. It would be great if pupils also had their own packet of tissues and sanitiser.

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.

Regards

Eimear Berry

Chairperson, Board of Management.

Jim Ryan

Principal