

Dear Parents/Guardians – we hope you are all well as we look forward to welcoming your children back to school after a very long and difficult period for us all. We are delighted to be getting back but obviously we have had to make some changes some of which are outlined below and we hope you will understand that these measures are very necessary to allow all the children to get back to school safely. We want to assure you all that we have made every effort to ensure your child's safety and social distancing and sanitising measures have been put in place in the school setting and we will be asking for your help in advising your children to follow the guidelines. Some of the changes we have been forced to make are outlined below-

- The drop off area in front of the school is no longer open to traffic as St. John's are using it for an assembly area to ensure social distancing guidelines are followed.
- Parents will no longer be able to enter the school grounds without having phoned the office and arranged an appointment at which point the secretary will explain the procedure to be followed.
- School starting times, break times and finishing times have had to be changed.  
3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> classes will start school at 9.00 AM and finish at 2.40 PM  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Classes will start school at 9.15 AM and finish school at 2.55 PM.  
As you are already aware only 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class children are to be in School next Monday at 9.15.  
3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Class children only will be at school on next Tuesday -4<sup>th</sup> class starting at 9.00. The new 3<sup>rd</sup> classes will receive a text telling you the time your child's class will be coming to school at on Tuesday. Each 3<sup>rd</sup> class will receive a time so that we will be able to meet the children and take them to their new classes.
- Please do not allow your child to attend school until near the start time as it would be unsafe for him/her to be in the school yard for a long time. We suggest children should not enter the school grounds a maximum of 15 minutes before the start of school though it would be preferable if it was less than this for safety reasons.
- Children once on the school grounds should follow the arrows to direct them to the school yard. We will go through this in greater detail with your child once we are back at school next week.
- Your child can bring in equipment (pens,pencils,rulers etc) and a lunch in their bag. No books will be sent home in the initial stages as we have decided that no written homework will be given for the first month to allow a transition back to school. Sharing of books and/or equipment is strictly forbidden and we would be grateful if you would ensure your child has all that they need for school and also if you would explain to them about not sharing equipment or books. Coats and bags will be hung on the back of the child's chair – please make sure your child has a name written on their coats/tops etc.
- Unfortunately, we will not be in a position to store mobile phones in the office as we did before and consequently, we will not be allowing the children to have mobile phones in school. Should you wish your child to have a phone for emergency reasons we are asking you to contact the office in advance or the teacher on class Dojo so we can accommodate this but please note this will only be in exceptional circumstances.
- If you wish to pay book money, please do not call to the school without phoning but if you wish you can put money in an envelope with your child's name on it and it will be collected from your child's class.
- If your child has symptoms of COVID please do not send him/her to school and consult your GP for advice. ( **See attachment**)
- If your child has travelled from a non-green list **you must ensure** that he/she self isolates before returning to school for 14 days.

- We will be keeping the children in class bubbles in as far as possible – this means that in general your child will only interact with children in his/her class, the classroom teacher, support teacher and SNA. This will also apply to break time where children will be asked to stay in an area with his/her classmates. We are doing this for your child's safety.
- The breakfast club will not operate for breakfast for the first two weeks of school. Unfortunately, parents will no longer be able to come to the breakfast club due to social distancing measures. Children will not queue as previously but will be seated two at a table with children from their own class. Please send in money in advance with your child where this is possible.

€5 per week covers cost of little break and lunch

€4 per week covers the cost of lunch only.

€1 per week covers cost of little break only.

(80c for lunch/ 20c for little lunch per day).

We thank you in advance for your help and understanding on these changes but we really are trying to make it as safe as possible for all our children to return to school full time. We feel we have made huge efforts to make all the necessary changes to the school to allow this to happen. Sanitisers are in place at the entrance and exits to the building in addition to the corridors and in every class. The teachers will talk to all the children in greater detail next week about the protocols that are in place. We look forward to a return to school and will make every effort to make it a smooth transition for your child back to school after such a long time.

Yours sincerely, Mary Stephenson.