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A Summary of our Plan for the Safe Reopening of Junior Infants – Second Class on Monday 22nd February 2021

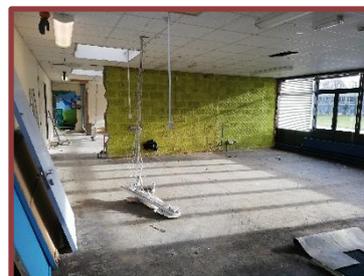
A phased reopening of our school began this week with the two ASD classes returning. This initial phase was very successful, and we are now looking forward to welcoming back Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First Class and Second/Third Class on Monday 1st March. Remote teaching and learning will continue for Fourth Class and Fifth/Sixth Class up to Friday 12th March with face-to-face teaching resuming on Monday 15th March.

For this continued reopening to be successful we must work together to decrease the chance of Covid-19 coming into the school. Unfortunately, if we have a confirmed positive case, a class may have to close for 14 days.

When school reopens it will be very important that parents do not congregate around the school (front doors, gates, car park). We have been given specific instructions to communicate this message to parents by Public Health.

ALL PARENTS MUST WEAR MASKS WHEN DROPPING AND COLLECTING CHILDREN TO AND FROM SCHOOL.

The school received some fantastic news before Christmas that **renovations** had been approved by the DES and would begin in the new year. There will be new windows and doors fitted in the Senior section and the front of the school, to include the smaller Special Education classrooms and offices, will be getting a full makeover. We also hope to create some inviting spaces for the boys, for example, a library area and a safe-space. I've included some photos below to give you a flavour of what's happening.



This ongoing project will obviously impact upon some procedures that had been established in Term 1.

Please see below for an outline of the reopening of the classes (Junior Infants to Third Class) and a description of the school day.

Return to Work/ Return to School Form

Before returning to school, staff members will be asked to fill in the Return to Work form. The form has been sent to all staff members and should be completed and submitted to the principal before Monday 22nd February.

Parents are asked to fill in a return to school form for their son/s. A link to an online form has been sent to parents and should be submitted before a child returns to school on Monday 1st March.

- We ask that parents check their son's temperature before he leaves to go to school each morning.
- If possible, each child should have two sets of school clothes that can be worn on alternate days. Similarly, staff should have specific work clothes that can be washed immediately after going home from school.

Arriving at School

To help with reducing the amount of traffic around the school gates, children are asked to walk/cycle/scoot to school if it is at all possible.

Unfortunately, it will still not be possible for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before school. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, the children may not come onto the school grounds before the school gates open at 8.50a.m.

The school gate will remain closed until 8.50am and access to the grounds and building will only be granted to staff before this time.

Pupils from all classes may arrive from 8.50am – 9.10am.

As mentioned previously, parents have been asked to avoid congregating at drop off/pick up times and to maintain a 2m physical distance from each other and school staff at all times.

No children will be able to enter the building through the side door due to the building works.

Entry to the school building for pupils will be via the front door and the back door.

As was the case before Christmas, all pupils will go directly to their classroom/bubble upon arrival. From 8.50am onwards there will be a member of staff within each classroom to receive pupils. Parents should say goodbye in the car park and pupils are asked to keep to the right as they walk through the main front gates and make their way to the front or back of the school. The pupils will be guided toward their entry point (front door for Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class and back door for Second/Third Class). Please note that RBNS pupils may also enter via the back gate (Dunnes) but should not enter via the RGNS gate on the Resource Centre path.

No parents will be allowed past the foyer unless they have made a prior appointment with the school office. Staff engagement should be requested through the school office and will be provided by telephone or online.

If parents have face-to-face business with the school office, e.g. paying book rental or handing in paperwork, they should press the buzzer for attention. Parents will only gain access to the school foyer if it is absolutely necessary. Audrey will be available from 9am – 1.30pm via the intercom at the front doors or by telephone.

Classes/Bubbles

We have four mainstream classes returning on Monday 1st March. **Each class will operate as a distinct bubble.** We aim to have limited crossover of staff or pupils from one bubble to another.

The Orchard staff will utilise the kitchen in that wing of the school for breaks and all other staff who are present next week will use the Parents' Room (old staffroom) for breaks until the senior classes return on Monday 15th March.

Homework

There will be no homework assigned during week 1 (1st-5th March) and the boys will not need to bring a schoolbag to school. From Monday 8th March onwards, Reading and Words Their Way spelling homework may be assigned at the discretion of individual teachers.

Pupils Feeling (or presenting as) Unwell

It is extremely important that children should not be sent to school if they are in any way unwell. It is also important to note that if others in your household are unwell it would be best to keep your child at home until you are sure Covid-19 is not the cause of illness in your home. Dr Tony Holohan has stated that any flu-like symptoms are more likely than not to be Covid-19 at this time.

Live by the mantra: 'If in doubt, keep them out!' This is to keep the rest of the school safe and to avoid the need to close one, or more of our classes if there is an outbreak.

During the school day, any child with a temperature of 37.7 degrees or above will be brought to the Isolation Room. After a period of 10 minutes his temperature will be taken again and if it is still high parents will be called to collect their child.

Absences and Protocol before Returning to School

If your child is absent due to illness please inform school and fill in a Return to School Form prior to your child returning to school.

Outer Wear and Extra Layers of Clothing

All boys should have a heavy, warm coat, along with a hat, scarf and gloves to wear outside each day. Weather permitting, it is our intention to have the boys going out as often as possible for regular fresh air and social/movement breaks as they will be more confined in their bubbles and seats than they have been used to. Teachers will make use of our nature-abundant grounds/environs to teach lessons from other areas of the curriculum.

Playing and learning outside in the fresh air is very beneficial to children's mental health, something which we are all very conscious of after the turbulent year the boys have had. We are also safer outside and it affords us a chance to properly ventilate the room throughout the day.

On ventilation, windows are to be partially opened during the day according to public health guidelines so it would be a good idea to send a fleece in with your child that he could wear indoors, if need be. An alternative could be a thermal top underneath the school uniform. Windows will be opened as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times and also at the end of each school day.

Breaks/Lunchtimes

Junior and Senior Infants will rotate the daily use of the playground at breaktimes. The equipment will be cleaned before and after use. Whichever Infant Class is not assigned to the playground will use a zoned area at the front of the school (a safe distance away from the building works). First Class will use the area in front of the Parents' Room and Second/Third Class will play in their usual yard.

Glenmore Foods will resume delivery of daily school lunches from Monday.

Pupils in Fourth-Sixth Class will continue to receive a weekly food pack each Thursday until they return on Monday 15th March.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Staff will be wearing medical grade disposable face masks, and these will be changed regularly throughout the day. Medical grade EN14683 masks, FFP2 masks and visors will be available as required for all staff.

For intimate care needs staff will also wear disposable plastic aprons, visors over masks and disposable gloves.

Staff may wear a visor over their mask, but the visor cannot be substituted for a mask. With regard to the medical grade masks, staff members may wish to 'double mask' and wear a visor over their masks for extra protection.

Disposable gloves may be worn when children are being brought for a walk, but hands must be sanitised before using gloves and washed immediately after gloves have been safely disposed of.

Hand Washing and Sanitising

Since September hand washing and sanitising have become a normal part of the school day. This will continue for children and staff throughout the day: on entering the classroom; before eating; after using toilet; and coming in from outside.

Staff and pupils should always wash their hands or use hand sanitiser:

- When entering and exiting vehicles
- When entering and exiting the school building

End of the School Day

As mentioned previously it will be very important that parents do not congregate at the front door, gates or car park of the school. Coupled with the ongoing building works around the side door the decision has been made to **stagger pick-ups from the front door.** The following times will be in place until further notice:

- **Junior Infants – 1.30pm**
- **Senior Infants – 1.40pm**
- **First Class – 2.30pm**
- **Second/Third Class – 2.40pm**

Suspected Case in School

If possible, a child displaying symptoms will be brought to the isolation room and our isolation room procedures will be followed. If the child cannot be moved safely to the Isolation Room, the child will be brought to an isolation area in the classroom that is set at least 2 metres from all other children. Isolation Procedures will be followed as per the school's Covid-19 Response Plan (an updated version of this will be uploaded to the school website shortly).

Suspected Case at Home

If a pupil, a parent, or any family member in your household is deemed as a close contact, especially over a weekend period, please contact the principal immediately at [redeemerboysschool@yahoo.com](mailto:redemerboysschool@yahoo.com) and self-isolate. Do not send your child to school on the days following on from this development. Sometimes the tracking of close contacts is a little delayed and the Board of Management want everyone to err on the side of caution.

Other Information

If a teacher or SNA is unable to attend work for any reason, we will try to get substitute cover for that person/those persons. We may, however, have to close a class if it cannot be staffed appropriately and we would return to remote learning in this instance. Every effort will be made to avoid this eventuality and we did not have to do this at any point in Term 1, but it is important that you are all aware that this is a possibility.

This summary of our plan is a working document that may be amended.

Our Covid-19 Policy Statement and Response Plan is still in place and details the practices necessary for our school to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol' and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

Thank you for your continued support,

Michelle Murray