



Redeemer Boys' National School
Ard Easmuinn
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Re: Reopening of the school August 2020

17th August 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

I am writing to confirm the reopening arrangements for our school at the end of August. We have carefully considered all the guidance received (DES, HSA, HPSC & CPSMA) and have used this as the basis to reopen school for all pupils on a full time basis after the summer holidays.

There are many changes that we have to introduce as we use a **'Social Bubble'** approach for each class. This means that each class will stay together throughout the school day and work, play and eat together. There may be discrete groups or **'Pods'** within the class bubbles, to the extent that this is practical. Contact with other classes and sharing of common facilities will be limited as much as possible and this approach along with increased social distancing where possible, and extensive hygiene and cleaning procedures allows us to accept all pupils back on site within the current guidance.

We are delighted to announce that we have received provisional sanction for a developing teacher post. This means that we can appoint an extra teacher until Halloween and this may be extended to the end of the year if we retain our current number of pupils up to the end of September. Considering the measures that we have identified within our Covid-19 Response Plan this is fantastic for the school and the pupils. The Board of Management have decided that this teacher will be utilized in the junior section of the school to allow for four straight classes as follows:

- **Junior Infants – Mrs A McDermott**
- **Senior Infants – Ms Bolger**
- **First Class – Mr N McArdle**
- **Second Class – *To be confirmed***

I know the Second Class boys and their parents were previously informed that they would be having Mr Mc Ardle but at the time we were unaware of the new post and were planning for three composite classes. This new post will make things much more manageable on a practical level in the junior section and it is a wonderful opportunity for the boys' learning to be enhanced as they will receive more individualised attention.

We will be reopening on Thursday 27th August for First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Class. Senior Infants will also return with these classes on Thursday 27th August, however, their next full day will be on Monday 31st August. This is due to the induction day that is taking place for Junior Infants and their parents on Friday 28th August and the fact that we need to restrict movement in the Infant area accordingly.

A letter is enclosed for parents of pupils who will be attending our Junior Infants Class detailing what time to attend on the Induction day on Friday 28th August.

We will be reopening on Monday 31st August for Orchard Class 1 and 2. School Transport Services operated by Bus Éireann on behalf of the Department will operate as normal from this date, in line with public health advice. School Transport Services are controlled environments and each service carries the same children on a daily basis to our school. It is a restricted group of transport users which will facilitate contact tracing if required.

It is important that pupils do not use school transport if they are displaying symptoms. Pupils must always sit in pre-arranged seating and next to a sibling or child from their class group (this should be the same child at all times). This seat will be communicated to parents and pupils on the first day back by the bus escort. Hand sanitiser must be used upon boarding the bus. Going forward, pupils will disembark the bus at the back gate and walk straight in the Orchard doors at the rear of the school. The class teachers will send home a photo of this entrance point as it is new to the boys. The back gate will also be used as an exit point for Class 1 and 2 in the afternoon.

As an extra precaution all pupils availing of School Transport will have their temperature taken each morning using a non-contact thermometer by the bus escort. To this end, I have attached a permission slip for parents to complete and send back via email to [redeemerboysschool@yahoo.com](mailto:redemerboysschool@yahoo.com)

In preparation for your son's return to school please adhere to the following procedures:



Drop Off / Pick Up Times

In order to limit interaction on arrival and departure as per advice from the Department we will be introducing some changes at these times. Parents are asked to avoid congregating at drop off/pick up times.

Entry to the school building for pupils will be via the side door and the two back doors. No pupil will be permitted entry through the front door as the foyer will be cordoned off with partitions and a protective screen for our school secretary, Audrey. No parents will be allowed past the foyer unless they have made a prior appointment with the school office so we would ask that parents drop off and collect their children in a prompt fashion. If you have business with the school office, e.g. paying book rental or handing in paperwork, please press the buzzer for attention at drop off time (mornings). Parents will only gain access to the school foyer if it is absolutely necessary. Audrey will only be available from 9am – 12 noon via the intercom at the front doors or by telephone.

To minimise risks, and to help us maintain social distancing, pupils may not come onto the school grounds before 8.50am.

Please note: 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.

All pupils will go directly to their classes upon arrival. From 8.50am onwards there will be a member of staff within each classroom to receive pupils. Pupils are asked to keep to the right as they walk through the main front gates and make their way to the side of the school. There will be a staff member to the right of the rainbow mural to guide the pupils toward their entry point (side door for Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class and back door for Second, Third/Fourth and Fifth/Sixth Class). There will be arrows marking the route for each group and staff members standing at various points to ensure pupils reach their class bubble safely. Staff will guide pupils to their classes from the back gate also. Please note that RBNS pupils should not enter via the RGNS gate on the Resource Centre path. **Special arrangements will be put in place for Junior Infants for the first week of the school year (31st Aug – 4th Sept).**

We encourage pupils to walk or cycle to school where it is safe and reasonable to do so.

Parents travelling with pupils by car are asked to 'drop and go' after 8.50am. The car park may be divided into separate sections for staff parking, parent/visitor parking and pedestrians etc. who are waiting to enter via the front/church gate. As you know the car park is utilised by both Redeemer Schools and final arrangements will be communicated to you when they are fully confirmed. Please ensure that a 2m physical distance is maintained from other parents, guardians and school staff at all times.



In the afternoon, there will be procedures in place to minimise contact and preserve the 'bubbles'.

The class teacher will bring **Junior Infants** to the front doors at 1.40pm. Parents are asked to stand in one of the coloured footprints that are painted in this area. The teacher will release pupils one at a time to the waiting adult. The child should walk straight to the spot where the adult is standing and the adult should escort them from the grounds immediately.



The same procedure will be in place for **Senior Infants** at the side door at 1.40pm.

First and Second Class will be dismissed at the slightly earlier time of 2.30pm. First Class will be brought to the side door and Second Class to the front door and the same procedures as outlined above will apply.

Third/Fourth Class will be escorted to the front gates by the class teacher at 2.40pm. **Fifth/Sixth Class** will be escorted to the front gates at the slightly later time of 2.45pm. We have signed permission slips on file for most of the boys in these classes to walk/cycle home. We ask that the parents of those pupils without permission to leave school independently arrive on time so the area is cleared promptly for pupils and staff. Staff members will facilitate pupils with permission slips on file to exit via the back gate if it is easier for them to walk/cycle home from there. The class teachers will make these arrangements with the boys on the first day back.

Book Rental

The cost of the Book Rental Scheme for 2020/21 academic year is as follows:

- First child or only child: €50
- Second child: €40
- Third child and after: €30

Our school is delighted to announce that we are rolling out the **Aladdin ePayment System** to parents/guardians of children in our school. Details to follow.

Audrey will be updating Aladdin when we return. To ensure we have up to date contact information for all families, please complete the enclosed personal data collection sheet and send in with your child on the first day back.

School Uniform

School uniforms must be worn, however, there is no reference in public-health guidance to daily washing of school uniforms or any clothes.

School-Bags

School-bags will not be necessary for the month of September. We ask that pupils come to school in full uniform with weather appropriate outerwear (coat, hat, gloves, scarf) and that they refrain from bringing any other items (e.g. toys, footballs) from home until further notice.

Stationary

Pupils will not be allowed to share stationary to limit cross contamination, therefore we will be giving out labelled ziplock bags to each pupil on their first day. These bags will contain pencils, rubbers, sharpeners, chubby crayons, colouring pencils, markers, scissors, glue sticks and a ruler as appropriate to the class level. This stationary bag will stay in school.

School Lunches

School lunches will continue to be provided by Glanmore Foods. **There will be a selection of snacks and lunches available at both small and big break for all new pupils** up to Friday 4th September until we get the boys' choices updated with our provider.

Face Coverings

Parents are asked to explain to their child that members staff (teachers, SNAs, secretary, caretaker) will be wearing a face covering where a distance of 2m cannot be maintained from pupils and other staff members. This may be a face-mask or visor. Some staff may wear PPE for the duration of the school day. For the younger boys, you could dress teddies and favourite toys in masks at home.



Preparing Children for a Post Lockdown Return to School

- Get back into the school routine now, with regular sleep timings (bedtime and morning wake time).
- Make sure your child understands Covid, in child friendly language, to reduce fear of the unknown.
- Role play going into the classroom and playtimes with social distancing.
- Help your child to come up with a non-contact greeting they can use with their friends and teachers.
- **Teach your child about the importance of hand hygiene either by hand-washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).** When school reopens pupils will be expected to perform hand hygiene:
 - On arrival at school;
 - Before eating or drinking;
 - After using the toilet;
 - After playing outdoors;
 - When their hands are physically dirty;
 - When they cough or sneeze.

Suspected Illness

We would ask parents to be especially vigilant and if their child or anyone in their household is displaying any of the Covid-19 symptoms such as a high temperature or continuous cough to please keep their child at home. A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building. This area is behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils.

Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to ensure that their child is in a position to return to school at the beginning of the school year. You should be aware of the regulations governing self-isolation when returning from foreign countries and act accordingly.

We are looking forward to welcoming back all our boys as best we can in these challenging and unique circumstances and it is only with parental backing and cooperation that we can make this work.

Thank you for your continued support,

M.Murray