**Reopening plans**

Dear Parents,

I am sure you were all relieved to hear last night’s announcement that all schools are to open fully as the new year commences. The relaxation of social distancing measures allows us to welcome all of our pupils back. Additional guidance is to be issued by the Department of Education next week which we will use to inform our planning for the new school year.

In the meantime, we will be working to ensure enhanced hygiene measures are in place as well as other key precautions to ensure compliance with Public Health protocols.

Our return to school timetable is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Class returning** | **Drop off and pick up times** | |
| Monday 24th August | Primary 7 only | This may be impacted by the guidance which follows from DE. A further update will be sent next week. next week. | *Half-day finish all this week* |
| Tuesday 25th August | Primary 7 only |
| Wednesday 26th August | Primary 7 only |
| Thursday 27th August | P2 – P7 |
| Friday 28th August | P2 – P7 |
| Monday 31st August | Bank Holiday | School closed | |
| Tuesday 1st September | Full return P2-P7 |  | |

New Primary 1 pupils will be sent their start dates in due course.

**COVID-19 considerations**

We are currently working on a range of issues connected to the precautions required to ensure we do our utmost to manage the spread of the virus. Once again, some of this will depend upon the guidance from DE next week but key considerations will include;

* Staggered drop off and pick up times
* Staggered breaktimes for ‘class bubbles’
* Schoolbags and stationery – the transfer of materials between settings is likely to be discouraged so each pupil will require a stationery set to remain in school.
* Homework – as a result of the above consideration, homework will have to change. Some excellent practice has been established in the use of online resources. We hope to build on our use of Google classroom and Seesaw to meet the demands of home-school consolidation.
* Lunches – it remains to be seen how we will deal with this challenge. Plastic lunch boxes and bottles may be the safest bet going forward as they can be thoroughly cleaned and reused.
* Uniforms – it would be our intention to ensure uniform is worn. We will look at some flexibnility around alternate use of full uniform and PE uniform.
* Cool Kids provision – The summer has been successful for this provision so we hope to continue but there restrictions may be required. This will depend upon DE guidance to be issued.

As I have stated, further details will follow as soon as we have been updated by DE. In the meantime, enjoy the collective sigh of relief of getting our children back to school and make the most of the last few weeks of summer.

Kindest regards,

Barry McMahon