

October 6th 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you well. September is now behind us, we have gotten over that hump and the return to school has gone better than any of us could have expected. The children seem happy to be back and the support that we have received from parents has been tremendous. We would like to thank all the children and their parents for their ongoing efforts to keep the school a safe environment. It is only by the efforts that are made outside of the school that we can keep the virus out of the school. For this, all involved deserve huge thanks. I will again stress the need to keep children who are sick out of school. I realise that it can be an inconvenience, but it is something that will have to continue to be done. Of course, as the winter moves in we will all need to redouble our efforts in everything we do to fight the virus, but we have made a great start and, hopefully, that will be half the battle.

I am sure we all got something of a shock this week with the prospect of Level 5 restrictions being imposed. Hopefully the Government have taken the correct course of action and we will not have to move on from Level 3. I would echo the calls from Government to adhere to all public health guidance. Keeping the virus under control in our communities is the best way we have to ensure that our schools remain open. We all have a part to play in this and I would ask that not only do your part, but encourage others to do likewise.

As the winter approaches, the weather will begin to get colder. As advised by the HSE and the Department of Education, we will be opening classroom windows to allow for the circulation of air. This will be done with the health of all, students and staff, in mind and with the aim of creating an environment that is 'Covid unfriendly'. We will have the heating on, but we won't be able to escape the fact that it may be chilly at times. I wish I had some magic formula to get around this problem, but I just don't. I can simply ask that the children 'layer up' as the days get cooler. If they could wear a vest/t-shirt/UnderArmour-type top/tights under their uniform that should help matters greatly. We would prefer if children layered up underneath their uniform, rather than them having to put their coats on in class. Coats can be bulky and can make writing, drawing and general movement that bit more 'cumbersome'. We would ask for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

On Monday, with the Level 5 restrictions being mentioned, we had quite a number of calls from worried parents asking us if we would be remaining open. Honestly, schools do not have an 'inside line' to the Department of Education. We don't know any more than you do. If the schools do close at any stage, we will find out, via national media, at the same time that you do. In any case, we're hopeful that things won't get so bad that schools are forced to close.

I will finish with again thanking all parents and children for their ongoing efforts to keep our school safe. It is these efforts, above all else, that have made our reopening a success.

Yours sincerely,

John O' Donovan

Principal