



Tullow Community School

The Mullawn, Tullow, Co Carlow. R93 DT20. Phone 0599151473. www.tullowcommunityschool.ie.

Monday 17th August 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that this message finds you all well. We fully understand that the last few months have been very different to what we have been used to in our lives and in our schools.

We hope our students are looking forward to returning to school and meeting up with friends, teachers and other school staff. Many will feel excited, relieved and happy. Some may feel a little anxious about coming back. That is to be expected and it is a normal response at this time of transition and change. Our students will settle in over time, as they reconnect with their friends and get used to our new school safety routines. We are working very hard to make sure the school building and outdoor spaces will be safe for all students, and staff. Students will begin to return during the week commencing 31st August. Dates and arrangements for return of individual year groups are available on the school website.

To support student wellbeing, where possible, students are encouraged to walk or cycle to school. We would also value the support of families in ensuring that where practicable and safe, students living locally go home, to their own homes, for lunch. All students are asked to bring a packed lunch and break time snack as the normal canteen service will be reduced until further notice

Our priority is to minimise the risk of the introduction of Covid -19 to the school and if introduced, to manage the risk of spread. In the event of a student showing any symptoms, the student will be removed from class

and brought to our newly designated isolation room. Parents will be contacted immediately and asked to bring their son / daughter home and you are advised to make immediate phone contact with your GP.

Our school is open to essential visitors only. Parents can only come to school once an appointment has been made and only adults can attend the scheduled meeting.

NO STUDENT SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL IF THEY OR ANY MEMBER OF THEIR FAMILY HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID 19.

As of today, Monday 17th August, our plans include:

- School uniforms are to be worn by all students every day. In line with public health guidelines, we would ask you to wash the school uniform frequently. To support you in this we will permit students to come to school in clean, plain PE gear on their timetabled PE day.
- We are reconfiguring all our classroom furniture to ensure that students are one metre apart.
- We are advising all our students to bring face masks with them to school. Further guidance in relation to the wearing of the mask will be issued closer to our re-opening.
- We are asking all students to bring in their own materials such as biros, rulers and calculators. The sharing of materials is not advised.
- Lockers will only be available to students at strict designated times. The lockers system is being adapted to reduce year groups gathering and encourage social distancing.
- We have dispensers placed at each entrance to our school and a dispenser is placed near each classroom
- All our existing toilets have been upgraded including hot water and soap being available.

- Our Book Grant Scheme will continue to operate for all students.

The HSE COVID-19 Interim Guidance on the use of face-coverings in childcare and educational settings now recommends that teachers, staff and students attending secondary schools wear a face-covering when a physical distance of 2 meters from other staff or students cannot be maintained. We are therefore recommending that all pupils, staff and visitors to our school wear a face covering similar to those that are currently mandatory in other indoor settings. Provision will be made for pupils and members of staff for whom this safety measure presents a

difficulty. We also suggest that parents purchase an additional face mask to facilitate the recommended regular washing routine. The guidance is designed to ensure the safe operation of the School and to protect all members of our community, particularly those who are vulnerable. These precautions take account of the nature of our school buildings and our large pupil and staff population. Face coverings will not need to be worn when the pupils are exercising, eating or drinking or outside.

We will all need to continue to work together as a school community to minimise the impact of Covid 19. With this in mind we remind you that students returning from a country which is not on the Government's Green List must self-isolate for 14 days before returning to school – please stay informed of any changes/updates to this list should they arise.

There is no doubt that we will face many challenges. We are however very confident in our ability to overcome these challenges with your help and with your support.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Thornton.

Principal.