



COVID-19 POLICY

2020/2021

Our COVID-19 policy is a fluid working document that is amended according to updated advice from the relevant Public Health authorities. All such advice is communicated to staff, students and parents promptly, and we amend our policy to reflect relevant response suggestions.

Induction Training:

All staff (teaching, non-teaching, SNA's, supervisors and cleaners) have undertaken the relevant induction training materials provided by the DES and will have completed their RTW's prior to their return to work.

COVID-19 Signage:

COVID-19-related signage is displayed prominently throughout the school and its environs, both internally and externally, reminding all of us of our responsibilities regarding hygiene practices and physical distancing protocols. The displaying and maintaining of signage is the responsibility of our elected LWR's.

Drop-off & Collection:

In so far as is feasible, we would strongly encourage our students to walk or cycle to school. We do understand that this is not possible for all students, particularly those who do not live within close proximity to the school and in times of inclement weather conditions.

We are currently revising whether or not we can use the 'Old Pres' entrance on Putland Road as an overflow area for drop-off and collection. We will advise you of developments as soon as is possible. In the meantime, we would ask if it is at all possible for you to avoid dropping off and collecting your son using the main school entrance and driveway. Exceptions will be made for students where it is not possible for them to walk to the end of the driveway. This will allow us to reduce traffic congestion in another congregation hotspot on the school campus.

Uniform:

All students will be expected to attend school in full school uniform, including appropriate footwear and school jacket.

Regular Hand Washing and Sanitising:

Students are strongly encouraged to wash and sanitise their hands regularly, especially after using the toilet and on returning to class after break times. Good hand hygiene practices as well as coughing and sneezing etiquette are strongly encouraged.

Wall mounted sanitiser dispensers will be located at entry and exit points to the school, as well as inside each classroom and throughout school corridors and other commonly used areas.

Students may bring their own personal hand sanitiser if they wish.

Masks/ Face Coverings:

Masks/Face Coverings must be worn at all times where social distancing of 2 metres cannot be observed, including within all classrooms. Each student and teacher are obliged to have his own mask every day and it is recommended that these masks are washed regularly. Therefore, a supply of back-up masks is recommended for each student and teacher.

If a student or teacher misplaces his/her mask over the course of the school day, a single-use mask can be provided by the school for use on that day only.

Exceptions will be made for students with breathing difficulties, high anxiety levels, skin allergies, and any diagnosis where a face covering is not recommended.

Lockers, Books & Materials:

As we are minimising the movement of students during the school-day, and as the locker areas are congregation hotspots, students will not have access to lockers for the upcoming school year.

1st – 4th Years will be based in base classrooms with an assigned desk. To that end, students will be able to store their materials at their desk.

5th and 6th Years will rotate between a specific number of classrooms, all zoned within one corridor.

Students may not share books and materials. To that end, it is very important that your son has his own materials (pens, pencils etc.).

In order to minimise the number of books being brought to and from school every day, teachers may use the facility of e-books and Google Classroom for assigning homework. Further clarity will be provided on this following consultation with staff in due course.

Lost & Found:

Students will no longer be able to come to Lost & Found for lost items as has been routine practice to date. Any items brought to Lost & Found, will have to be isolated for a period of time before being returned to the student. Please ensure that all clothes and belongings are clearly labelled with your son's name and class.

Toilet Visits:

In order to curtail non-essential visits to the toilet, students will be asked to refrain from using school water fountains and are only permitted to bring a small sized bottle of water each day.

Numbers in toilets and frequency of toilet visits will be restricted throughout the course of the day. Students will be permitted to use the following toilets only:

- 1st Years: Toilets in Rice Building
- 2nd – 4th Years: Toilets on Top Corridor
- 5th & 6th Years: Toilets on Bottom Corridor

When the Sports hall is in use, students will have access to the toilets in the Sports Hall.

All bathrooms will be cleaned frequently throughout the school-day.

Lunch/ Canteen:

We encourage students to bring their own packed lunch.

The canteen will be available to students at the big lunchbreak, where students will join socially distanced queues.

If students wish to purchase food from the canteen for their small break, they will have to pre-order in advance. Further details will be revealed in due course. One student per class will be nominated to collect pre-ordered food and bring it back to the base classroom for consumption.

All students must remain on school grounds for the duration of their lunchbreak. Any student who regularly goes home for lunchtime must have this confirmed in writing by a parent as early as possible on our return to school. Groups of students are not permitted to congregate in one household during lunchtime.

Cleaning of School Buildings:

Extra cleaning personnel and extended cleaning hours will be in operation throughout the school day and beyond. This will facilitate a deeper and more intense cleaning of the entire school.

The buildings will be routinely cleaned throughout the day and will be intensely and deeply cleaned (including fogging of classrooms) after 4pm each day once students have vacated the building.

After School Study:

To facilitate this extended and more enhanced cleaning, we regret that After School Study will be postponed for the foreseeable future. We apologise unreservedly for this decision; however, the health and safety of all must be our priority at this time. More intense cleaning requires the corridors and classrooms to be completely vacated after 4pm.

In due course, we hope to bring students back to After School Study on a staggered basis throughout the year. This will depend on the progress of the virus.

As an immediate alternative, we can, from early September, offer Saturday Study to 6th Years only to begin with. Saturday Study will consist of 2 sessions depending on student demand. Session 1 will run from 9am-12pm and session 2 will run from 1pm-4pm. This is to allow for cleaning between the two sessions. Students may apply for both sessions. There will be a minimal charge for this service in light of current circumstances. Further details will follow on our return to school.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Given the current circumstances, we will confine our extra-curricular activities to our own school community for the foreseeable future. We will review this situation on a regular basis, and we will keep you informed of any changes as they arise.

We are currently awaiting DES guidelines and advise on how best to manage all extra-curricular activities within a school setting.

Visitors to the School:

We would please ask parents/guardians not to visit the school over the course of the day unless it is for an essential appointment. You can still meet with a member of staff in an appropriate socially distanced way when the need arises, but please make an appointment in advance through the school office. Those parents/guardians that do visit the school will be required to sign in and out at the reception desk. A contact log is maintained in the secretary's office. In the interests of health and wellbeing for all in the school community, all non-essential visits to the school must be curtailed. We have created a COVID-19 Visitors Policy to further demonstrate our commitment to COVID-19 protocols. This is on display on the school website.

Travel abroad:

If your son has travelled abroad within 14 days of his return date school, it is critically important that this information is shared with the school. We cannot emphasise this point strongly enough as school management.

Your son will not be permitted to return to school until the recommended isolation period of 14 days has elapsed.

Staff/Students Displaying Symptoms:

For the safety of the entire school community, students must not come to school if they are displaying symptoms of:

- A fever (temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher)
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Cold, cough or viral infection
- Lost or changed sense of smell or taste

If your son/staff member is displaying any of the above symptoms, we strongly ask of you to please keep your son/staff member at home/out of school. We are attempting to minimise the introduction of the spread of infection in the school in the first instance. To that end, if your son has symptoms the night before or on the morning of a school day, please help us contain the risk of spread of infection by keeping him out of school. All staff are aware that they must contact senior management if they develop symptoms during the working day.

Dealing with a Suspected Case:

Any student who displays these symptoms during the school-day should immediately inform a member of staff where they will be promptly brought to the isolation area. Parents/Guardians will be contacted to collect their son immediately. All contact details provided for the students must be up to date before the school reopens. All students must have at least one contact available at all times. All staff are aware that they must contact senior management if they develop symptoms during the working day.

On entry to the school grounds, parents/guardians should ring the school office to notify of their arrival, where their son will be brought to them in the carpark.

We strongly advise parents/guardians at this point to contact their GP for further guidance and direction.

Sanctions/Code of Behaviour:

We are currently updating our Code of Behaviour to reflect the changes brought about in the school due to COVID-19 restrictions. Any non-compliance with our implemented protocols will be seen as a serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with accordingly. We please ask all parents/guardians and students to support the school's endeavours to providing a safe environment for us all. Frequent non-compliance or non-adherence to safety protocols may result in students being asked to remain at home pending a satisfactory conversational outcome between parents/guardians and school management.