



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Since our last communication with you we have been working hard to adapt our school environment to meet the challenges presented by reopening under Covid-19 guidelines. In anticipation of your daughter's return next week we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of, and update you, on some of the many changes that will be in effect within the school.

Resources and supports

Your daughter has missed several months of life at school and it is totally understandable that it will take some time for her to adjust to returning to school life in the new reality in which we find ourselves. There will be significant emphasis on supporting your daughter and the wellbeing of the whole school community as we re-open our doors. We have enhanced guidance and chaplaincy provision, tightly structured pastoral systems and specially prepared classes to deal with questions and anxieties. You, as parents/guardians can help with this adjustment by starting to encourage changes in routines and habits. An excellent range of supports can be found at <https://loveparenting.ie/back-to-school-resources/>. The Department of Education has also produced some useful advice for both parents and students on its website. We would ask that all parents watch this [video on return to school](#) for students. Another [video](#) has already been sent to your daughter via her school email. Additional advice on how to prepare your child for returning to school and how to protect your daughter from coronavirus can be [found here](#).

Protocol if feeling unwell

Students should not come to school if they are unwell or any members of their household are unwell with [symptoms consistent with Covid-19](#). Please let the school know if this is the case.

Travel

Students who have visited a location not on the [Covid-19 green list](#) should not come to school until they have completed the restricted movement protocols. Please let the school office know if this applies to your daughter.

Changed routines and practice

Students will receive Covid-19 training over their first few days in school.

They will be expected to practise respiratory and hand hygiene, physical distancing and all school directives relating to management of Covid-19. Our school [Code of Behaviour](#) has been modified to reflect the importance of such compliance and how seriously we view breaches of the new protocols.

Students should arrive to school each day with all necessary equipment for lessons, e.g., pens, calculators, refill pads, etc. Sharing or borrowing of such equipment will not be permitted. As per our previous email there will be no lockers and students will be advised on what to bring to school by their teachers. They will also advise them on how we plan to manage school textbooks.

There will be no school canteen. We would ask that parents/guardians encourage their daughters to prepare a healthy lunch each morning or evening for the day ahead.

To limit interactions between different classes/year groups, years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be based in specific classrooms, in particular areas, during the day other than for specialist subjects. As your daughter will have to wear a face covering during her time at school we understand that this can become uncomfortable for them and are working on opportunities for mask fatigue breaks, within HSE guidelines. There will be no extra-curricular activities or after school study. This will be reviewed at the end of September.

New school finish times will operate as follows for the first few weeks and will be reviewed at the end of September

- 1st and 4th years: 15.50 (13.10 on Wednesday)
- 2nd and 3rd Years: 15.55 (13.15 on Wednesday)
- 5th and 6th Years: 16.00 (13.20 on Wednesday)

Visitors (including parents/guardians) to the school are by appointment only. Contact the school office via phone or email to arrange such appointments.

There is no access to the school via the back gate as it has been closed off. This situation is out of our control. All students will have to enter the school via the main entrance at Brick Lane beside Super-Valu car park. It is extremely important that students practise social distancing and follow health guidelines when travelling to and from school and walking into the grounds.

We would ask that students arrive in school with a small pack of tissues, a small bottle of hand sanitiser and a face mask at all times. (We ask that students have their own hand sanitiser to help deal with possible queues outside classrooms).

Hygiene and cleaning

Hand sanitisers have been installed outside every classroom and specialist rooms and along corridors within the school and multiple sanitisers have been placed in those areas where students may be sharing practical equipment/devices. Cleaning equipment has also been abundantly supplied to all such areas and students will be expected to carefully follow all teacher instructions regarding sanitisation of equipment. School toilets have been equipped with additional soap dispensers.

Enhanced cleaning procedures for the whole school have been put in place for the coming year. We would ask that you encourage your daughter to respect the cleaners in their work and support them by using all bins and facilities as required.

Incoming First Years

The last week is upon us before your daughter commences her second level education, after an abruptly ended 6th class and we hope she is looking forward to the new challenge. We are aware that her year head has been in touch by post to welcome her and support and help with any queries. In line with new guidelines, congregation at the school gates is not permitted. If you intend bringing your daughter to school, we ask you to drop her a couple of minutes walking distance from the school. If you are not fully confident that she is familiar with the school neighbourhood, you may wish to take the opportunity this week to do a trial run and accompany your daughter on the short walk. On her first day she will be welcomed at the school gates on Brick Lane beside the Super-valu car park. Staff will guide her to her first meeting place for registration, after which she will commence her induction into Loreto. We wish her all the best on this exciting new journey and look forward to meeting her. Click here <https://stepup.ie/you-the-student/> for a useful online resource which all helps as she prepares to join us next week.

We are very much looking forward to reopening our fantastic school and returning to the classroom. The school staff, including teachers, administrative staff, maintenance and cleaning staff are working tremendously hard in preparations for commencing the 20/21 school year and ensuring a safe and continued reopening of our school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all and to

thank you for your continued and ongoing support in these challenging times for all.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Marie Mc Donough