



Coláiste Pobail Naomh Eoin Bosco, Cill an Dísirt St. John Bosco Community College, Kildysart

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Reopening January 2022

05/01/22

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope you had a nice Christmas break and may I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very happy new year in 2022.

Our students, staff and parents / guardians have been extremely considerate in how careful and respectful each and every one has been with minimising risk of infection and looking after one another in our community. I would like to thank everyone for their valued support in 2021.

The Minister for Education Norma Foley TD has confirmed that schools will fully reopen on Thursday 6 January 2022.

We are all aware that there has been a significant recent deterioration in all of the key disease indicators (case numbers, hospital admissions, etc.) arising from the impact of Omicron - the latest variant of the virus which is far more infectious than the previous variants.

We know from the experience of other sectors over the last two weeks (Health, An Garda Síochána, retail and commercial) that there is pressure to maintain normal service due to higher numbers of staff testing Covid positive, deemed as Close Contacts or requiring to self-isolate. Education and schools are not immune to this either, and there may be days when the school will only be able to open for certain year-groups if there is not enough staff on-site to comply with Health and Safety requirements.

Contingency Measures in the event of Staff Absence

While we are fortunate to have access to a panel of substitute teachers, this panel will also become exhausted from time to time and there may be no alternative but to limit the number of year-groups who can attend.

We will only know if the school has adequate staffing from day to day, and we would appreciate your understanding in this regard.

You will receive a text message from the school on the evening before (where possible) if your child's year-group is required to stay at home. In some cases we may need to send this text at short notice on the morning when your child's year-group is required to stay at home but we will do our best to avoid such short notice. In the event that students are required to stay at home, class material and assignments will be available through our well developed and intuitive Learning Management System, Google Classroom.

We are required to prioritise exam classes in the event of the need arising to ask a year-group to remain at home. Please note how we intend to decide, as the need arises, which year-group to leave at home.

Priority given to the following year-groups for face to face tuition:

6th Years

3rd Years

5th Years

Year-groups who may be asked to stay at home and engage with Google Classroom

Transition Year

2nd Years

1st Years

****It is our intention to alternate between the above three year-groups to minimise the impact on individual students.***

Contingency Measures in the event of Student Absence

All previous protocol remains in place for recording student absence. In the event that your child is absent due to Covid related reasons, please inform the school by email or phone call, informing us of their due return date.

Teachers will post all relative class material and assignments on Google Classroom for absent students to access.

Contingency Measures in the event of Partial School Closures

We appreciate how challenging the Covid-19 crisis has been for families, and particularly students. Please rest assured that we are working hard to support all students and parents/guardians in our school community as the pandemic evolves.

We learned considerably from your feedback, that of our staff and our interactions with students when schools were forced to close in March 2020 and in January 2021. Our patron, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has also supported us very well since the pandemic struck, and we have weekly meetings of the region's Principals and Deputy Principals to share best-practice and strategies that can support teaching and learning and student care. The last period of school closure presented many challenges, but the resolve of our students, staff and parents/guardians to engage in every effort to upskill and adapt to Remote Teaching and Learning was truly inspirational. Everyone in our school community is fully prepared for Remote Learning in an effort to fulfil a continuity of learning in the coming days.

Our staff meetings and staff Professional Development days have focused on upskilling everyone to be more proficient and comfortable with the school's excellent Learning Management System (LMS) - G Suite for Education (Google Classroom).

Our students are very familiar with Google Classroom and all students have been made familiar with uploading classwork to the platform.

An online timetable has been developed, consisting of 6 class periods of 45 mins from Mon –Thurs and 4 class periods of 45mins on Fri. There is a 15 min break between each class.

All year-groups will receive this online timetable through Google Classroom, **in the event of a school closure.**

Students in Sixth Year and Third Year

We are especially mindful of the disruption to students in Sixth Year and Third Year regarding the Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate examinations.

Our school is represented at national level at the Stakeholder Group meetings with the Department of Education by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, and we will ensure that challenges that arise will be addressed by the group.

The State Examinations Commission has been requested to look at all of the timelines and elements of the practical examinations, submission of project work and the oral examinations. You will get more information about this in time via its website and we will communicate any updates to students and yourself as we are apprised of same: www.examinations.ie.

The Department of Education and the State Examinations Commission are making every effort to support all students through this challenging time.

Students facing examinations are asked to keep focused and to keep working in preparation for the exams. More details will be forthcoming in the near future regarding the Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate examinations and we will bring this information to your attention without delay.

Wellbeing including physical activity

NEPS, the Department's National Educational Psychological Service, has developed advice and resources for keeping Children and Young People well during Covid-19. These resources aim to support children and young people's learning and wellbeing at this time.

In the context of wellbeing, NEPS has included a reference in its advice for young people and for parents of young children for the need for physical activity as part of everyone's daily routine while schools are closed.

There is an excellent range of supports available on www.loveparenting.ie specifically for parents to help with this. These resources have been created specifically for parents to use with their children and cover these areas;

- Having the chats
- Routines
- Managing your child's anxiety
- Parent Self-Care
- Maintaining Routines

Supporting Students with Additional Education Needs

The National Council for Special Education has developed resources for parents of children with additional needs who may benefit from specific advice during the period of school closure. All resources are available on the NCSE website and publicised through education partners and Twitter. The NCSE visiting teacher service continues to provide direct telephone/skype support to families and students. The NCSE resources can be accessed at: www.ncse.ie/online-resources and include;

- Resources for parents and teachers such as class\age level activities
- Practical advice on how to take care of Assistive Technology in the Home and a suite of Occupational Therapy and
- Speech and Language Therapy resources (including a social story animation on attending a Covid-19 test Centre prepared by the HSE).

Contacting the School

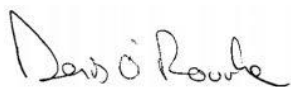
Please do not hesitate to contact us at the school by phone or via this email address kildysartcc@lccetb.ie and we will do all we can to address your query as soon as possible.

Additional Information

A considerable number of announcements regarding schools will all be available on www.gov.ie as well as regular updates from us in the school.

Thank you for your continued support of our school and we look forward to being in contact with you soon again.

Yours Sincerely,



Denis O'Rourke

PRINCIPAL