

Dear Parents

RE: Re-opening of Lisronagh National School

I hope you and your families are keeping well.

As you are aware, our school has now been closed since 12th March due to the COVID-19 situation. We are now hoping to re-open our school safely, in line with current guidance and recommendations.

Re-opening the school safely will require the co-operation of all members of our School Community - BoM, School Leadership, Staff, Parents and Pupils. We will all be called on to play our part in ensuring that re-opening of the school is done in a safe manner which prevents the spread of the virus and allows the vital work of Teaching and Learning to proceed with as little disruption as possible.

We have published our COVID-19 Policy Statement on the school website.

We have also been working on our plan for the safe reopening of the school for some weeks now and will shortly be publishing the DES COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of Primary and Special Schools on our school website.

The Response Plan gives details of

- Physical preparation, signage, hand sanitiser stations,
- Advice, procedures and training for the safe return to working in the school for all school staff and pupils
- General and specific advice on how all pupils, staff, parents and visitors will prevent the spread of the virus

It will take some time for all of us to get used to the "new circumstances" as we become familiar with the new routines and procedures designed to keep everyone safe and to prevent the spread of the virus. There will, undoubtedly, be some unforeseen challenges and we will deal with these as they arise.

As per Department guidelines, pupils in 3rd - 6th class are expected to maintain a physical distance where possible. It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain a physical distance indoors so there is no requirement for children from Junior infants to second class to maintain a physical distance within their class bubble.

Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -

Increasing Separation. This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Each class will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles.

Decreasing Interaction. This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. There will be routes for various bubbles to enter and exit the school and to access their classrooms. Bubbles will have different areas on the school yard. We will endeavour to make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times.

While all children will be welcome back to school, we would remind parents that where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms in school, they will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school.

Children who have travelled from countries not on the Green List should not attend school during their 14-day self-isolation period.

Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: -
<http://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

Teachers will make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. We would be grateful if you could also emphasise safe behaviour in this regard to your children at home as part of the preparation for returning to school.

Our aim remains to re-open the school in an orderly safe manner, while reassuring the children and making them feel comfortable, safe and relaxed with their friends in the new school environment. This will be achieved by all of us working towards this common goal.

Sincerely,

Angela McGrath, Principal.