



Monday 29 March 2021

Education Restart Guidance – Schools in Northern Ireland 4th Edition

Dear Parent & Pupil

The Department of Education has confirmed that pupils in **Year 8 - Year 11** will return on Monday 12 April for face-to-face teaching. Pupils break for the Easter Holiday from Monday 29 March – Friday 9 April.

Both, I and the wider staff are looking forward to a full return. The senior school returned on Monday 22 March... it was great to observe pupil movement, interaction, chatter and face-to-face learning. I have no doubt that pupils in Years 8 – 11 will return to their physical learning environment with the same enthusiasm.

My message to all... use the week beginning Monday 12 April (week 1), as a platform to engage, re-connect and establish the grounding as we enter the summer term. Departments and Staff are working hard to ensure positivity, building on, and strengthening resources in preparation.

In the interim, take some time with your son/daughter to read through the updated restart guidance. There are some important changes, it is vital that we continue to adhere to, and respect the guidelines both, individually and collectively, as a college community.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a restful Easter Break.

Take Care and Stay Safe!

Yours sincerely

Niall Oliver

Principal



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Please do not send your child to school should he/she display any of the symptoms listed below:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature), or;
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), or;
- a loss of or change in sense of smell or taste.

Parents/Carers

- We request that parents and carers choose not to congregate at the school entrance.
- Parents/carers should maintain a safe social distance of 2m from others not in their household when dropping off or collecting children at school gates.
- Parents/Carers should remain in their vehicles until pupils are released to you.

Arrival to school

- Upon arrival, pupils will follow the same routine and remain within their learning zones. With the introduction of Lateral Flow Devices in Year 12 – Year 14, temperature sensing will be phased out over the week.
- The main school building will not be open to pupils until 8.30am.
 - a. Main entrance – Year 8, Year 13, Year 14.
 - b. Double Gates – Year 9 to the annexe, Year 10 to their mobiles, Year 11 to their dedicated rooms & Year 12 to the Belfort Suite.

Departure from school

- Pupils who travel on the Ballykeel 1/2, the Lettercreeve or the Kells & Conor bus will be released from class @ 3.00pm to get their bus at 3.05pm.
- Pupils who require a connection bus to the station will be released @ 3.10pm for 3.15pm.

Face coverings play an important role in reducing the risk across our communities.

- **Face Coverings:** Face coverings are compulsory for pupils/young people in post-primary schools in classrooms and when moving about the school in corridors and confined communal areas (including toilets) where physical distancing is a particularly difficult to maintain unless they have a [reasonable excuse](#) not to.
- **Public Transport:** it is mandatory for all pupils of post-primary age to wear a face covering on public transport or school transport unless they have a [reasonable excuse](#) not to.



- It is compulsory for post-primary pupils to wear face coverings in school and at drop off pick up areas unless an exemption applies.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to wear face coverings in school grounds and when waiting to collect their children.
- Should a pupil be exempt from wearing a face covering, they are required to notify their son/daughter's Head of Year or Principal in writing giving full details of the reason for the exemption, this may include a doctor's note.
- Those pupils exempt from wearing face coverings will, upon receipt of a letter, be provided with a small lapel pin for their blazer. This will support pupils, supervision and teaching staff and avoid any unnecessary conversations.

Face Coverings:

- MUST cover both nose and mouth;
 - MUST be changed when they become moist or damaged;
 - MUST be worn once and then discarded – hands must be cleaned after disposal;
 - MUST NOT be allowed to dangle around the neck; and
 - MUST not be shared.
- Re-usable face coverings should be washed for each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water. A used re-usable face covering should be stored in plastic bag that can be taken home safely for washing.
 - Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically. They should be placed in one of the many general waste bins located around the school.
 - Where pupil behaviour contravenes the measures in place to control spread of infection, the school's behaviour policy Covid-19 will be applied.

Social Distancing

- The corridors and classrooms in use are marked out for social distancing, and we ask all students to strictly follow these arrangements. Movement around school will be limited each day, and a one-way traffic system will be in place. When moving around the school, pupils must follow the one-way system.
- Public Health guidance with respect to social distancing of 2 metres (2m) remains in place between adults and as far as possible between adults and pupils. This must be strictly adhered to.
- Pupils & Year Groups have been designated their individual break and lunch routines. Social distancing should be respected during these allocations.
- Pupils must remain within their learning zones throughout the school day.
- Classroom seating plans must be adhered to, hygiene protocol should be respected upon entry and departure of the room. Room layout has been considered to maximise space for all.
- Windows and doors will be opened to encourage natural ventilation.
- Emergency procedures and school evacuation will respect social distancing measures.



- Where pupil behaviour contravenes social distancing measures, sanctions under the school's behaviour policy Covid-19 will be applied.

Toileting arrangements

- Pupils in Year 8 continue to use facilities opposite the Nurse's Station.
- Pupils in Year 9 continue to use facilities in the Annexe.
- Pupils in Year 10 continue to use facilities in Mobiles 25a & 27a.
- Pupils in Year 11 continue to use facilities on the first floor at the back staircase.
- Pupils in Year 12 continue to use facilities in the Bellfort Suite.
- Pupils in Year 13 & 14 continue to use ground floor toilets at the back staircase.

Hygiene

- Pupils are asked as a matter of routine to wash their hands thoroughly and more frequently than usual, and to use the many hand sanitisers which are placed throughout the school. This is one of the best ways to avoid the virus. If we always wash our hands before touching our faces and before eating, we will avoid contracting the virus.
- Outdoor sinks are provided to support regular handwashing.
- Building Supervisors and the school's cleaning team will sanitise regular touch points and hard surfaces throughout the school day and each afternoon including zone misting.
- Pupils should bring only the required items: School Bag, books, stationery, lunch box and coat.
- Pupils will be responsible for keeping their working area clean throughout the day. Staff will provide materials to support.
- Pupils are advised to carry their own sanitiser and or anti-bacterial wipes.
- Practical resources that are shared are sanitised prior to use by another class, practical zones are misted each afternoon.
- Workstations, keyboard, mouse and desk are wiped at the end of each session.
- Pupils & Year Groups have been designated their individual break and lunch routines. Both canteens are cleaned and sanitised after each sitting.

Canteen – school meals

- Pupils will be able to avail of canteen services during Break and Lunch.
- Breakfast club will be available from Monday 12 April.
- Pupils will be required to wear face coverings in the canteen and should only be removed when consuming food.

Curriculum Delivery

- Pupil timetables will ensure lessons are delivered in class groupings (Junior School), learning zones or practical areas.
- On the relevant day pupils should wear their PE uniform.
- Should pupils need to self-isolate materials will be available, to follow, online through google classroom.
- In the event of local or wider closures we will revert to remote learning.
- Mobile devices may be used to support pupil learning, at the teacher's discretion. Misuse of devices, the school's behaviour policy will be applied.



- Where appropriate, work should be submitted electronically.
- Extra-Curricular activities will be arranged following agreement with Senior Staff.

Uniform

- Pupils should wear their full school uniform each day. On the relevant day pupils should wear their PE uniform.

Attendance

- Attendance is mandatory for pupils in Y8-Y14 from Monday 12 April 2021.
- Attendance codes will be recorded as per DE Circular 2020/08
- Where a pupil has a health condition or live with others who have health conditions, following provision of evidence to support an underlying condition (clinically vulnerable), through discussion, it may be possible for that pupil to work from home.
- Pupils who are anxious about their return, parents/carers must make contact with their child's Head of Year to put an appropriate return plan into place. This is time-bound and short-term supported by a blended approach.
- Where evidence is not provided or work is not being completed attendance will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Pupils who become symptomatic onsite

- The school will continue to follow Department of Education Advice.
- Pupils displaying COVID-19 symptoms must not attend school.
- Should a member of the school community test positive, the Senior Leadership will contact the Education Authority and the PHA.
- Anyone who has tested positive must not enter the school grounds or building.
- Individuals living with anyone who displays signs of coronavirus, they must self-isolate and follow the test and trace procedures.
- Pupils or staff who display symptoms will be sent home – the school nurse will make contact and liaise with parents/carers.
- Where a parent/carer can't be contacted the pupil will remain in a designated location (triage room) until they can be collected. If this is not possible the pupil will be moved to a location that is a least 2 metres away from others.
- Where staff cannot maintain a distance of 2 metres PPE will be worn.
- Areas used by the pupil will be sanitised by the Building Supervisor as soon as possible.
- If a pupil tests positive close contacts will be identified, contact will be made with the parent/carer to collect their son/daughter.
- If an individual tests positive, he/she will be required to self-isolate in line with PHA advice.



- If an individual is identified as a close contact to a confirmed case of Covid-19 from 2 days before the person was symptomatic to 10 days after the onset of symptoms to include the following as set out in the restart guidance:
 - A. Lives in the same household
 - B. has travelled in a car with the case OR
 - C. has been within 2 metres of a case for more than 15 minutes or
 - D. has been within 1 metre of a case for any length of time and had face-to-face contact including:
 - i. being coughed on
 - ii. having a face-to-face conversation
 - iii. having skin-to-skin physical contact
- A record of the Track and Trace and close contacts will be retained in school.
- Parents will be informed of a confirmed case. The name of the positive case will not be shared.
- Should there be a cluster of confirmed cases the school will work with external agencies.

Mental Health, Well-being & Safeguarding

- Pupils will have opportunity to reconnect with their staff and discuss their experiences during the pandemic.
- Funding has been secured to resource additional counselling.
- Opportunities will be created to support the reconnection of friendships.
- Pastoral staff will continue to liaise with parents/carers of children who are deemed more vulnerable.
- To support well-being, the school will:
 - A. Allow pupils to share their experience of school closure and express their feelings, ideas, concerns and positive experiences;
 - B. Rebuild, re-establish and reconnect relationships and friendships;
 - C. Reassure the children & young people that any gaps in their skills and knowledge are understood by teachers and we will support those individuals or groups to re-engage with learning;
 - D. Understand how to engage with learning and how to learn; and
 - E. Build their confidence as learners.
- The school has a Designated Teacher and two Deputy Designated Teachers to support children where there is a specific need.

This information will be kept under review and will be updated should new information be released by the Department of Education/Education Authority/Public Health Agency. I appreciate your support on these matters to ensure a smooth outworking for the days and weeks ahead.