



St. Naul's N.S.

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Roll No: 15770K



18th August 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Re: Re-opening of St. Naul's 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 on 27th August, 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 been working on our plan for the safe reopening of the school for some weeks now and have published 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

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

As part of upgrading our procedures and routines within the school to ensure that there is as much physical distancing as is possible in our building, we will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

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. Within the bubbles, children will be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the bubble, or classroom.

Decreasing Interaction. This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. There will be marked routes for various bubbles to enter and exit the school and to access their classrooms. Bubbles will have different mid-morning and lunch-time access to the playground. We will 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, they should not be sent to school. Children who display such symptoms in school 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 the 14-day self-isolation period

Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: -

<https://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.

Drop-off and Collection Routines

St. Naul's N.S. appreciates your support as we try to safely reopen the school building. If at all possible we request you not to come onto the school grounds or into the school building unless it is essential. We appreciate that dropping off the Junior Infant pupils to their classroom is essential, but for the older pupils a drop off at the school gate is desirable. Working together we hope to be able to progress the reopening in as safe a manner as possible for all.

We would ask all parents to familiarise themselves with the following drop-off and collection routines for the safe delivery and collection of pupils from school. Please be patient as we endeavour to embed these necessary precautionary and protective practices at the beginning of the school year.

It is imperative that:

- adults do not come within 2m of each other
- parents do not try to have meetings with members of staff in the playground at drop-off and collection times – meetings between parents and teachers can only take place by prior arrangement. (This may have to be more restrictive depending on guidance - it is quite possible that the recommendation will be for remote meetings/telephonic communications.)
- all parents adhere to the drop-off and collection plans as outlined below
- Each teacher will have a dedicated email address which will be checked daily. If you have any queries or concerns, this can be used as a means of communication, including informing us if your child is absent.

Drop-off Plan

Children may be dropped off at the school between 9.20am and 9.40am. Please do not drop them off any earlier as they will not be allowed into the school. Children will be directed to enter their classroom via colour coded footprints marked on the ground. Each colour is the same as their classroom door, i.e Junior/Senior Infants will follow the green footprints (through the front door), 1st/2nd Classes will follow the blue footprints (through the front door), 3rd/4th Classes will follow the yellow footprints around the left hand side of the building, and enter via their classroom emergency exit door; and 5th/6th Classes will follow the red footprints, around the right hand side of the building, and enter through their classroom emergency exit door. Hand sanitiser will be accessible at all entry points to the school.

Collection Plan

For the first two weeks of school (from Thursday 27th August to Wednesday 9th September), the Junior Infants will finish at 12.30pm. After this date, they will finish at 2.00pm. The Senior Infants will finish school at 2.10pm daily. The pupils will be accompanied from their classroom to the gate by the classroom teacher. Parents are reminded that they should not congregate at the gate, and remain a 2m distance from the teacher and each other.

For the pupils from 1st-6th Classes, there will be two designated pick up times. Children with no other siblings from 1st-6th Classes should be collected at 3.00pm, and those children with siblings from 1st-6th Classes should be collected at 3.10pm. This is to ensure that our class bubbles are not mixing at the school gate. As each class group leaves, parents are asked to ensure that their child gets into the car promptly to ensure physical distancing.

We are satisfied that we have control measures in place to ensure that this will be a safe re-opening. 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.

We would like to thank you for your co-operation in making preparations to date and look forward to working with you as we assist the children adapt to the necessary changes. We are also conscious of the fact that our pupils have not been in school since March and that they are looking forward to coming back to school to meet their friends again. We are aware that our new pupils are beginning a school year at a challenging time and have made plans to ensure that their arrival will be as free from stress as possible. We are looking forward to seeing your children back with us soon at St. Naul’s N.S.

Le meas

Teresa Gallagher
Cathaoirleach, An Bhóird Bainistíochta

Rory O’Donnell
Príomhoide

The following websites provide further information on COVID-19 and on government advice and recommendations regarding the re-opening of schools: -

- <https://www.education.ie/en/covid-19/>
- <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
- <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/a128d-back-to-school/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/backtoschool/>