



HM Letter to Parents on Reopening School – 14/08/20

Dear Parent and Guardian

Our shared responsibility for the reopening of school is to ensure that students and staff can look forward to a safe return to school, make school life as productive and enjoyable as possible to minimise their anxiety, while working away in the background mitigating risk of infection and providing contingencies if the pandemic landscape changes.

Welcoming our new School Doctors

We are delighted to welcome Drs Karol Laffan and Niall Clancy to our school community. They have assumed their post as joint school doctors from the beginning of August. They will combine this with their roles as Medical Officers at Stewarts Care. Dr Laffan is also a GP in Addiction Services in Dr Steeven's Hospital and Dr Clancy a GP in Leixlip. We are very fortunate to benefit from their experience of residential care, particularly at this time.

Staggered Return Dates

It is necessary to amend the return to school dates to reflect the need for student induction and for student cohorts to become accustomed to the new layouts, as well as health and safety protocols. More details of the times for the school day in the first week, including the start of the extra-curricular program will be provided later.

Friday 28 th August	Form 1 Induction for day & boarding students (no parents permitted to enter) 9.30am – 11.30am - no uniform required.
Sunday 30 th August	All Form 4 and Form 1 Boarders return - includes boarding induction - time TBC
Monday 31 st August	Form 1 begin lessons Form 4 Induction All Form 6 Boarders return - includes boarding induction - time TBC
Tuesday 1 st September	Form 1 and 4 lessons Form 6 Induction All Form 3 Boarders return – includes boarding induction - time TBC
Wednesday 2 nd September	Form 1, 4 and 6 lessons Form 3 Induction All Form 5 Boarders return - includes boarding induction - time TBC
Thursday 3 rd September	Form 1, 4, 6 and 3 lessons Form 5 Induction All Form 2 Boarders return - includes boarding induction - time TBC
Friday 4 th September	Form 1, 4, 6, 3 and 5 lessons Form 2 Induction





Teaching and Learning – Head of Academics [Síobhan Daly](#)

- All staff will receive Covid-19 health and safety training in the week preceding the return to school in addition to the academic staff meetings that normally take place.
- We await subject-specific and year group-specific information from the DES, which will inform lesson plans, CBA's, and guide the exams years, if there are changes.
- From the start of term, students will receive homework via google classroom so they become familiar with the format.
- A review of our Summer Term online learning timetable, in addition to our digital technologies strategy, is taking place to provide ready-to-go contingencies in the event of another forced school closure.
- Two new staff positions of student-tutor liaison have been created to enhance our capacity for cover due to staff absence and to directly support any students that will be absent due to a Covid-related medical issue.

Boarding Information

More detailed information will be emailed early next week on boarding-specific protocols, including what to bring for start of term. Parents will not be allowed to enter the school buildings with students when they return. Housepeople will make contact with you directly to introduce themselves, so you will be able to email them directly with any questions.

Wearing of Masks

It will be now be mandatory for students to wear a mask during the school day and we wish to make the transition to this as straightforward as possible. We will provide a reusable KH branded mask in Navy for all students at their induction. This will form part of our uniform code and there will be some extra stock available at reception for €3. The student will also receive a school lanyard to hang their mask on when not in use, to avoid leaving it on surfaces or getting mixed up with other students. As with other elements of school uniform, only a comparable plain mask in black or navy will be acceptable.

Transition Year (TY) - TY Co-ordinator [Noel Cunningham](#)

Our annual TY trip to Killary is postponed for September but we intend to run it later, when students have had time to adjust to new protocols. Killary held residential summer camps this year so we will perform a risk assessment incorporating their experiences, and public health guidelines, that align with our own boarding protocols.

Students will not leave the campus on TY trips for the first half of term but we will deliver the on-campus part of the programme, with guest speakers following all return to work protocols.

The remainder of the programme will be risk-assessed in line with all public health protocols in place at that time.





Covid-19 Response Plan

Under the headings below, which form the basis of the Covid-19 DES Response Plan, you can see the actions being taken under the current guidance. As the month progresses, we will keep you updated if there are any changes.

- **School COVID-19 Policy**
 - To go to BoM for approval 18-08-20.
 - Will be sent to parents and published on school website.
- **Planning and Preparing for Return to School**
 - A Covid-19 Response Team has been in place all summer.
 - Team meets regularly to assess DES/HSE guidelines, and to implement and communicate them to the wider school community.
- **Induction Training**
 - All Staff will receive induction training before classes begin.
 - All Students will receive induction training along with instructional videos on health and safety protocols required for daily school life, residential life, sporting and extra-curricular activities.
- **Procedure for Returning to Work/School**
 - All staff and students (through parents) will be asked to fill out a return to work/school questionnaire before school starts.
- **Lead Worker Representative (LWR)**
 - The LWR will work in collaboration with the school to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the school.
 - KH will have 2 LWRs – 1 Teaching Staff and 1 Support Staff member.
- **Display signage**
 - Covid-19 awareness and safety signage is being placed throughout the school on floors, walls and doors.
- **Making changes to school layout**
 - A one way student traffic management system will be in place
 - All classrooms now have single seated desks to allow for physical distancing.
 - Due to our class sizes students can be seated 1m apart in the classroom, laboratories, and in areas for dining and extra-curricular activities.
 - Locker areas have been expanded and relocated, in some instances, to provide for physical distancing.
 - Meal times will be staggered with both the Dining and Wilson Wright Hall being used.
 - Lunch option will be reduced to hot lunch only. There will be no snack bar available during the first term. Students are welcome to bring a packed lunch.



- **Update Safety and Risk Assessment**
 - Risk assessments have been carried out for all changes to the school layout and informed remedial work actioned during the summer months.
 - Safety assessments have been conducted by the Facilities team in conjunction with school leaders and the Medical team.
- **Access to the School and Contact Log**
 - Visitors to the school will be limited going forward and access determined by and approved for essential business only.
 - Visitors can attend by appointment only and must fill out a visitors' questionnaire in advance, with all contact information logged.
 - Visitors can only enter at reception where a barrier will be in place to segregate them from students and staff passing through the area.
 - A visitor must be accompanied in the school at all times.
- **Control Measures – To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**
 - Parents are asked to check their children before school for signs of infection and to keep them home if they are presenting with symptoms. (A daily checklist aide will be provided by our Medical Team)
 - Parents are asked to inform the school immediately if their children have been at risk of infection outside the school.
 - Our Medical Team will have a set of protocols, including isolation spaces if a child presents to school with symptoms or becomes ill during the school day.
 - Our boarding students will have a symptom check each morning and evening, which includes infra-red temperature check.
 - The Sports Department is following guidelines provided by official sporting bodies in addition to the HSE, some of which have been in operation throughout the summer.
- **Know the Symptoms of COVID-19**
 - Temperature in excess of 38 Degrees Celsius
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Loss or change to sense of smell or taste
 - [Flu-like symptoms](#)
- **Respiratory & Hand Hygiene**
 - An amendment to the Code of Behaviour is expected from the DES to reflect the need for specific Covid-Safety Protocols.
 - Students will be reminded frequently through announcements and signage to follow guidelines. This should be reinforced at home.
 - Frequently placed hand sanitisers are in place throughout the school and in bathrooms.
 - Pedal bins only.
 - Tissues available in classrooms.



- Students will be required to wear a Face Mask as per DES guidelines. This will need to form part of our uniform code, for the students benefit.
- **Physical Distancing**
 - We will apply physical distancing in a sensible and appropriate approach where the focus is to minimise risk of infection while creating a supportive environment for our students and staff.
- **Use of PPE in Schools**
 - PPE is a requirement for our Medical Team and will be available for staff as requested.
 - Students are now mandated to wear face coverings.
- **Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities**
 - We are currently planning to run a full schedule of sporting and extra-curricular activities from the 2nd week of school. See schedule [here](#).
 - Further guidance will be provided on some extra-curricular activities, for example choir and group music lessons.
 - Continuity of schedule will depend on DES/HSE guidelines as the term progresses.
 - Day students will be unable to congregate in changing rooms after sporting activities to shower and change so must do this at home.
 - We are considering the possibility of students coming to school in their PE uniform on PE day but will be reviewing in the context of after school sport as well.
 - Boarding students will change and shower in their ensuite bathroom.
- **Hygiene and Cleaning in School**
 - Ionised water-based products being used daily for all contact areas.
 - Enhanced cleaning schedule in place with a twice-daily wipe down of all contact surfaces.
 - Students will be asked to wipe down their desks and chair before and after use for each class, with anti-bacterial wipes provided.
 - Personal responsibility from students to keep dorms, social spaces, locker areas and classrooms clear for cleaning.
- **Dealing with a suspected case**
 - Our medical team are working on a number of scenarios to include all members of the school community that will inform the update of our medical plan, which has been in place since February.
 - In addition to the creation of isolation rooms on the Medical Corridor, a newly renovated property on campus will also be available as an isolation space, if the need arises.



I am aware that there is additional information you would normally receive at this time of year regarding the return to school, that is specific to a school community like ours. We will be in contact over the next week with updates as we finalise processes. You will be given details of your child's houseperson, daily timetable, what to pack for boarding, extra-curricular activities, hot lunch sign-up, within the context of the Covid-19 Response Plan.

Please do not hesitate to email my PA [Lorraine Walker](#) with any questions or concerns that you may have and she will redirect it to the appropriate staff member.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Ronan

Headmaster / Principal

