



Email to Students 16-3-20

Dear Students

Firstly, I want to thank you all sincerely for the way you responded to staff on Thursday; and helped each other to leave school safely. It was an emotional afternoon for many of you, as you face uncertainty about when you will get to see your school friends again; particularly those who board and live far away from each other. We are a close-knit school community and that was so evident on Thursday; so I hope you keep those connections going with each other over the next few weeks through social media. It will form an important part of your wellbeing, especially as we all have to practise social distancing.

The purpose of this national mandated school closure was to halt the spread of Covid-19 in order to give the vulnerable people in our community a chance to avoid being infected. It is really important that we realise what this means, as we all have friends and relatives that are elderly or have an underlying health condition. Young people are known as vectors which means they can unknowingly carry the virus, without getting ill, but pass it on to others. I would like you to consider the following during the next few weeks:

Stay Home – please avoid shopping for non-essential items or meeting at shopping centres, cinemas, fast food restaurants or friends' houses.

Stay Informed - The constant stream of social media updates and news reports about coronavirus could cause you to feel worried. Sometimes it can be difficult to separate facts from rumours; please use trustworthy and reliable sources to get your news such as RTE and national newspapers. However please consider limiting how much time you spend on social media. If you find the coverage on coronavirus is too intense, talk it through with someone close or get support.

Stay Focussed – Your teachers have been preparing you for e-learning so you can continue your studies at home. During times like this, it's best if you can keep some structure in your day. Therefore, create a daily schedule of not just assignments but slot in meal-times, snacks, exercise, study, talking to your friends, revision, just like you would at school. As this is an unscheduled closure planned learning needs to continue, especially for exam prep.

Stay Healthy – keep your hands clean and away from your face; cover your mouth and nose if coughing and sneezing; and get plenty of sleep. Drink water during the day to stay hydrated, as you are indoors so much.

Stay Fit – Whether you live in a house or apartment, have a large or small garden there are plenty of things we can do to stay fit. We will be publishing some tips from our sports coaches on staying fit at home.

Stay Connected – this is an anxious time and you may be feeling overwhelmed with all the negative news, disappointment over cancelled activities and events, along with missing friends. Reach out online to friends and schoolmates; perhaps an online study group or watch curriculum-based movies and discuss after. You could set an exercise plan that you all do at the same time. As many of your older relatives may not be receiving visitors consider setting up online chat apps for them, so you can check in frequently.

Stay Considerate – Research suggests that teenagers feel better when they turn their attention to helping others; so it may be good to help out more at home.

I will be in touch with you again on Wednesday, in the interim, I wish all the best for you and your family and look forward to welcoming you all back to school.

Yours

Mr Ronan