

Re: Re-opening of St John the Baptist BNS Letter 2



Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope this finds you well and that your family are enjoying the last few weeks of the summer holidays.

The preparation work to get our school ready to re-open and welcome back our boys & staff is going well. There are many challenges to overcome, but with the goodwill and co-operation of everyone, we will open successfully & safely in September. Work on the upgrade of the Life Safety (Fire Alarm) System will be completed next week and the building will then undergo a deep clean.

RE: Physical Distancing and Safe School Attendance

We are currently working on 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 based around the maxim “Maximise Distance-Minimise Contact”.

Increasing Separation (Maximise Distance) - This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. As much as is possible, loose furniture, presses, trolleys etc will be removed and put into storage. We are currently trying to source a storage area for this furniture. 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 *may* be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children (maximum 6) who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the bubble (classroom). The creation of pods within class bubbles is an additional measure rather than an absolute requirement & we will look at each class circumstance individually.

Decreasing Interaction (Minimise Contact) - 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 an assigned area in the playground and mid-morning and lunch-time breaks will be staggered. 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 pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. Children who display such symptoms in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school.

Please be reminded that children who have travelled from countries not on the contemporaneous 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>

On return to school, 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.

RE: Uniforms and Book Lists

Uniforms: According to health advice provided by the HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre there is no health issue regarding the wearing of school uniforms. Therefore our existing school policy will apply.

Pupils in **Infants, First Class and Second Class** will wear school tracksuit on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and will wear grey uniform on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Pupils in **Third Class, Fourth Class, Fifth Class and Sixth Class** will wear grey uniform on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and will wear tracksuit on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Masks: Pupils in primary school are not required to wear face coverings. As of last Thursday's announcement by the Minister of Education, staff are recommended to wear face coverings while in contact with the children & other staff where a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

Booklists: Pupils will require the books and stationary listed on the booklists sent out in June. Booklists on website, accessible by clicking [here](#).

Our aim remains to re-open the school in September in an orderly & safe manner, while reassuring the boys 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.

We will keep you informed as our planning progresses and will issue a further letter next week with updates. Please continue to stay safe.

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Will Ryan

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