



Friday, 14th August, 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian, Staff Member,

RE: Drop-off and Collection Routines

The Board of Management has been working to ensure a safe return to school for all pupils and staff in two weeks' time. We have now finalised our plans for drop-off and collection of the children every day.

We appreciate your support as we try to safely reopen the school building. If at all possible we request you not to walk down the steps to the school grounds or the school entrance. We appreciate that the dropping off for some Junior & Senior Infant pupils, in particular, may require flexibility, in the early days. But for the older pupils a quick drop off at the school gate is now required. 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, or gather near the gate
- drivers must vacate parking spaces as safely as possible without delay
- parents do not take the opportunity to approach members of staff while they are on gate duties
- all parents/drivers adhere to the drop-off and collection plans as outlined below

Drop-off and Collection Plan.

You will receive a Google Form, via email next Monday. This form will give you the opportunity to choose one of two options to drop off and collect your children. This is particularly important for families who have a tight schedule.

The two options for drop off and collection are:

Robin Families: 8:30am to 8:40 am

2:25pm to 2.35pm

Blackbird Families: 8:45am to 8:55am

2.40pm to 2.50pm

Please Note: Access to and from school will be closed to both Robins and Blackbirds from 8:40-8:45am and from 2:35pm-2:40pm.

All children will proceed to their classrooms directly from the gate, in the morning. Unfortunately, there can be no gathering, playing or 'lines' in the yard in the morning, as we have enjoyed throughout the years. There will be three entrances and these will be communicated to you and our pupils later this month. However, all entrances to the school will be via the main gate. Turnstiles, at the main gate, will not be accessible. The main gate will be opened by staff members at opening times via flags, at which time drivers can accompany their children along the pathway towards the main gate, keeping a safe distance from others and driving away, as soon as possible. Staff members will supervise pupils' arrivals at the designated times, so you have no need to worry about entrances to the building.

We have 120 families in total. Therefore there will be a cap on each group: **60 Robin Families** and **60 Blackbird Families**. There are families who are flexible and not constrained by tight morning or afternoon schedules. Therefore, you may not need to book a Robin or Blackbird slot, as this will ensure that other families, who need a particular option can be accommodated. All families will be notified of their Robin or Blackbird time-slot next Tuesday 18th, August.

Reminder for Junior Infants Parents: Our new VIPs, robins and blackbirds, will have their special 'first day' on Thursday 26th from 9am to 11am. All Junior Infants can be collected at 12pm from Friday 27th of August to Friday 11th September.

1.30pm Collection time for Junior Infants will start on Monday 14th September

Senior Infant Parents: 1.30pm collection time for all Senior Infants, robins and blackbirds, will continue as normal

After school arrangements for Junior and Senior Infants will be forwarded separately, by the provider, in due course.

RE: Uniforms

We are cognisant of the conflicting information regarding uniforms. This is the BoM's logical, safe and environmentally friendly solution :

All Classes will wear the following:

- **Monday:** School uniform as normal (pinafore/trs/skirt/shirt/tie/jumper/cardigan and well fitting footwear)
- **Tuesday:** PE Uniform (tracksuit and white polo shirt, well fitting shoes)
- **Wednesday:** Casual (everyday, comfortable clothes and footwear)
- **Thursday:** School Uniform as above (No need to wash in advance)
- **Friday:** PE Uniform (No need to wash in advance)

RE: Pencil Cases and hand sanitizers

We ask that you provide a hand sanitizer that best suits your child, while at her/his desk during the school day. We have installed 11 wall sanitizers at main entrances and corridors. They dispense a sensory-friendly light foam and are not 'wet' in texture. However your child's personal hand sanitizer will also be in use throughout the day and will remain (labelled) on the desk. There will be no homework for the first few weeks. Teachers will hold your child's books and copies in school. However, we ask that you purchase two pencil cases: one to be kept at home and another to be kept on your child's desk. **Please limit the amount of equipment in your child's school/desk pencil case.** A few markers/crayolas, a simple sharpener and eraser, must all fit in one desk pencil case. Please refer to your class booklist and please limit equipment accordingly.

RE: Outdoor Clothes

Recommendations from the DoES, NPHE and WHO encourage outdoor activities/breaks and ventilation in classrooms and toilets for health and safety reasons, not to mention social and general well being. *You must ensure that every child will arrive with coats and footwear that can endure all weathers, every day.*

RE: Staffing:

The Board of Management is striving to achieve a safe return for all our pupils and staff. The Board has agreed that First, Second and Third Classes cannot be combined safely as originally planned pre-COVID_19. Therefore, each class will be accommodated in separate 'Bubbles'. This means that each class will have their own classroom and class teacher. This decision was made in response to current Social Distancing guidelines which we are compelled to fulfil during this pandemic. Therefore, all eight classes/bubbles, will be taught by eight mainstream teachers in eight separate classrooms.

The Board of Management has ratified our recent appointments for the coming academic year. You will be notified of our recent appointments, as we expect official approval from St.Senan's Education Office, early next week.

We will continue to keep in close contact with you all. In the mean-time, please take care and stay well as we all look forward to the safe reopening of Caherleaheen National School.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Vivian Nolan

Chairperson, BoM.

Mary Connolly

Principal and Secretary to BoM.