



Dear Parents/Guardians

Welcome to the eighth bulletin for the 2020/2021 school year. Through the bulletins we hope to keep you up to date and answer any questions that you have submitted to us.

Three weeks into the new term and all going well to date with all class groups settling back into the normal routine of the school day.

A big thank you to you the parents and guardians for all your continued support in ensuring that any student with symptoms does not attend school and that all students know and understand the procedures in place in school and in our local community that must be followed.

We are currently organising end of year graduations, award ceremonies etc. in keeping with all current government restrictions. Details of end of year assessments are included in this newsletter.

Pauline Moran

Dates for your Diary

Monday May 3rd	Bank Holiday Monday—School closed
Tuesday May 4th	JC training for staff—school closed
Please visit our website www.sanctamaria.ie or our Facebook pages for regular updates	

End of school year 2021

As per department guidelines all students will have finished school by Friday May 28th.

Non exam classes will have end of term assessments before this date.

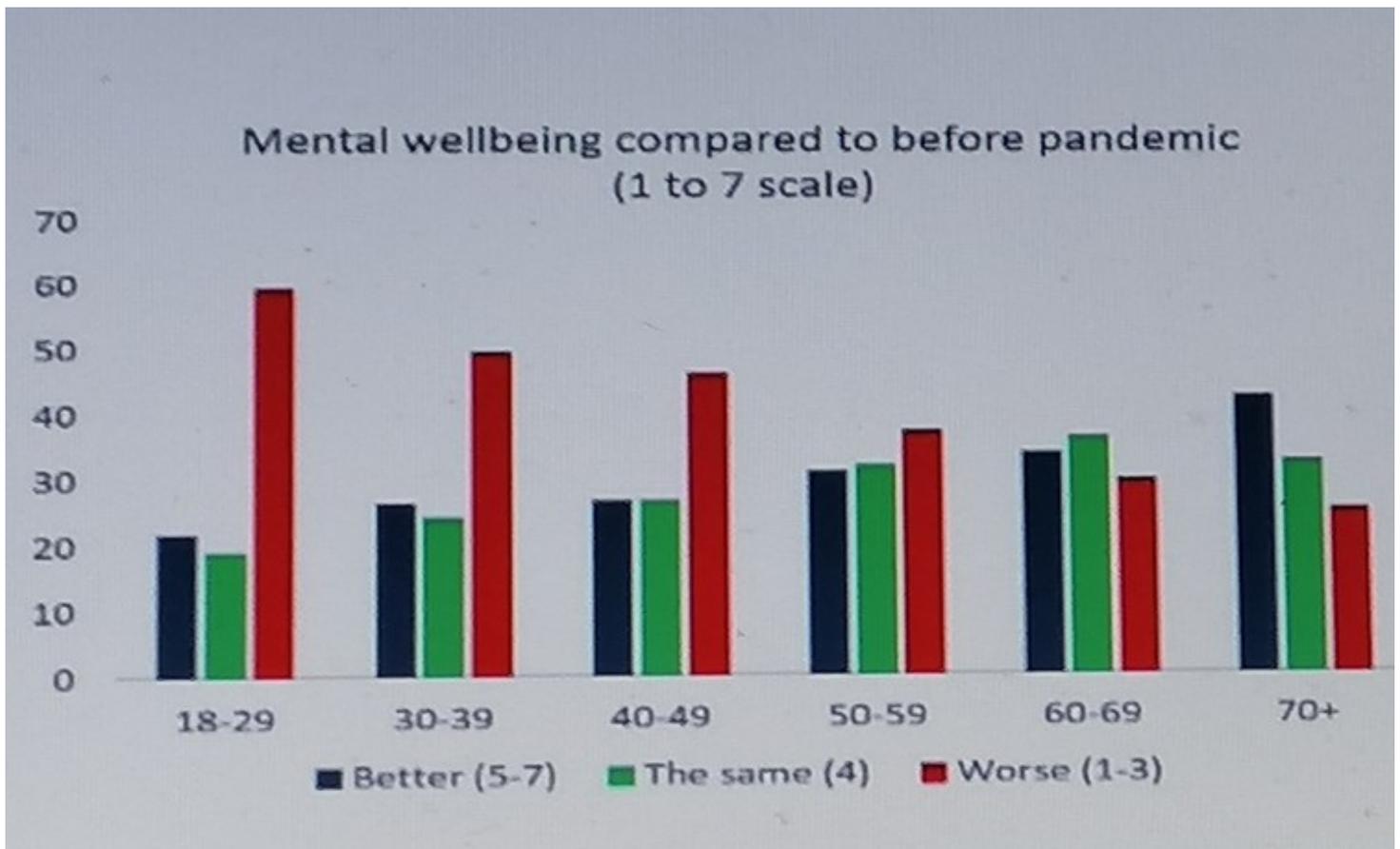
Exam classes guidelines - see page 4.

Teenage Anxiety

We are aware that many students are a little anxious about being back at school- maybe not up to date with their work, fearful of assessments, new daily routines after a period of uncertainty and general worries about Covid19 and its implications for themselves and their families etc.

All recent studies carried out nationally are finding increased anxiety levels and mental health issues in general but in particular with young people.

A recent ESRI report on mental wellbeing of all age groups from 18 upwards clearly shows this trend. While teenagers were not surveyed they suggest the results for teenagers are similar to the 18-29 age group or if patterns continue results maybe even more pronounced.



ESRI April 2021

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANXIETY AND STRESS IN TEENAGERS?

Anxiety is very common in the teenage years. Feeling anxious is part of the normal range of emotions, just like feeling angry or embarrassed. For most teenagers, anxiety doesn't last and goes away on its own. But for some teenagers it doesn't go away or is so intense that it stops them from doing everyday things. Anxiety becomes an increasing concern when anxious feelings are very intense, go on for weeks, months or even longer, and/or get in the way of a teenager's ability to learn, engage in home/school/work environments, and enjoy daily life.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS/SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY IN TEENSAGERS

Symptoms can include worries, feeling irritable/nervous, feeling restless, wound-up, on edge, being easily fatigued, difficulty concentrating, and/or mind going blank, as well as physical symptoms such as sleep problems, muscle tension, headaches, stomachaches and pain.

AS A PARENT, WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

- Acknowledge your child's fear – don't dismiss or ignore it. It's important for your child to feel that you take them seriously and that you believe they can overcome their fears. Your child also needs to know that you'll be there to support them.
- Gently encourage your child to do the things they're anxious about. But don't push your child to face situations they don't want to face.
- Help your child set small goals for things that they feel a little anxious about. Encourage your child to meet the goals, but don't step in too early or take control.
- Try not to make a fuss if your child avoids a situation because of anxiety. Tell your child that you believe they'll be able to manage their feelings in the future by taking things step by step. Try to acknowledge all the steps that your child takes, no matter how small those steps are.
- Remind them that others are anxious too. Let them know that it's normal to feel anxious sometimes.
- Make time to talk to your child every day without distractions.
- Encourage healthy diet, physical activities and good sleep habits.
- Strong parent-teenager relationships are good for young people's mental health.
- If you need to seek more help, contact your family GP for additional advice/support .
- School counsellors and the pastoral team can also be of help. Contact pastoralcare@sanctamaria.ie

Junior Cycle 2021

In 2021, Junior Cycle students' progress and learning achievements will be recognised in two specific ways designed to meet the current exceptional circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. For each student certification will involve two elements

- A State Certificate of Completion of the Junior Cycle from the Department of Education. This certificate will state that the student has completed the Junior Cycle programme of study. For each student the certificate will include the list of subjects, short courses and/or priority learning units studied by him/her during their Junior Cycle programme.
- A School Report detailing the learning achievements of the student during their Junior Cycle programme. Students should receive a written report on the broad range of learning that they have achieved in each subject, short course and/or priority learning unit at the end of Junior Cycle.
- This assessment of their learning will be provided by their teachers as follows:
 - 20 % Based on previous grades Specific detail and criteria will be shared with the students to support their efforts.
 - 20% Project before Easter
 - 60 % End of Year Assessment - Students were to be informed as to the layout/topics for testing etc. of the End of Year assessment before Easter. Some subjects may opt for class tests or a combination of testing and classwork. Practical subjects may differ slightly.

Department guidelines suggest that schools may set subject assessments for Junior Cycle up to 21 May 2021.

Leaving Cert 2021

Leaving Certificate 2021 results will be awarded on the basis of **the better of** either

- Students' performance in Leaving Certificate examinations in any subject taken by them, including, where appropriate, their performance in the completion of additional components (coursework, orals, etc.)

or

- SEC Accredited Grades awarded to students in each subject based on schools' estimates of students' likely performance in the 2021 examination and a national standardisation process.
- **Assessments/Evidence for accredited grades will be completed by May 14th.**
- Leaving Cert Exams commence on June 9th (timetables available on examinations.ie).

COVID19

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Do not send your child to school if any of the following apply:

Your child has:

- a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- any other common symptoms of COVID-19 - a new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, shortness of breath or an existing breathing condition that has recently become worse
- been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
- been living with someone who is unwell and may have COVID-19
- other uncommon symptoms of COVID-19, such as sore throat or headaches
- diarrhoea
- returned from another country in the last 14 days

The school will ask you to sign a form to say that your child is well enough to attend. This form must be completed for each child on their return to school after any absence as advised by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) This form is available to on our website (Return to school declaration form).

IF YOUR CHILD IS DEEMED A CLOSE CONTACT BUT TESTS NEGATIVE

If your child, who is a **close contact** with no symptoms of COVID-19, receives a negative test result (COVID-19 virus not detected), they still need to restrict their movements:

- for 14 days from their last contact with the person who tested positive, or
- until the date you were told by contact tracing.

Change of Details

If there are any changes to your contact details (address, phone numbers etc.) please let us know for our system– thank you

Contact us at 098 66342 or info@sanctamaria.ie