



## BACK TO SCHOOL ROADMAP

Dear parents/Guardians

Welcome to the first bulletin for the new school year 2020/2021. This bulletin will discuss the planned reopening of our school later this month. A second bulletin will issue closer to our return and will attempt to answer any questions you may have—please contact us with any queries at [info@sanctamaria.ie](mailto:info@sanctamaria.ie) **Please note that all information is current and subject to change at any time on the advice of the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).**

At Sancta Maria College we are following the measures as set out in the Public Health Advice “aimed at risk minimisation of COVID-19, for young people, teachers, other staff, their families and the wider community, recognising the importance of education for health and well-being”.

It is acknowledged that there is no “risk free” reopening of schools and the acting chief medical officer Ronan Glynn today acknowledged that it is “virtually inevitable” that Covid-19 clusters will occur in schools when they re-open. However clear guidance has been provided to all schools so that each school can work to ensure the safest possible return to school for all students, staff and the wider school community.

A covid-19 committee has been set up at Sancta Maria College representing parents, staff, auxiliary staff and management. The committee have met and are working on procedures and protocols that must be in place for students to return. A safety consultant assessed the building and advised on safety procedures/protocols and risk assessments. A covid –19 aide has been appointed to assist with preparatory work and two Lead Worker Representatives have been elected for the ongoing checking of safety procedures for all.

The guidance for safe school operation through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19 in schools is predicated on two general recommendations:

1. Minimising the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into the school community
2. Managing the risk of spread if introduced through:

Regular hand hygiene

Application of respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette

Maintaining physical distancing;

Environmental hygiene

## CONTROL MEASURES PREVENTION

### 1. Minimising the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into the school community

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school.

If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student - student, teacher - teacher and teacher- student, and must be managed in all settings.

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID -19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, students, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school.

The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis. It is critical that staff, students, parents and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

#### **How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into schools:**

- **It is of critical importance for all that staff and students that have symptoms do not attend school**, the advice is to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation. This also applies if or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- **It is of critical importance for all that staff and students do not attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as contact for a person with COVID-19** and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement
- Staff and students that develop symptoms at school must bring this to the attention of a staff member immediately All staff and students will be made aware of the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school . All staff must avail of training on this protocol before returning to school.
- Two isolation rooms have been set up and will be equipped with all necessary PPE etc.
- Everyone entering the school building must perform hand hygiene. Hand sanitizers have been set up at all entrances and outside all classrooms etc. Respiratory etiquette must be maintained by all.
- Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement only and physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.
- Students will be required to comply with all safety procedures in place. Any student failing to comply or intentionally putting themselves/other students/staff/families and the wider community at risk will be sanctioned as per code of behaviour.

The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions;

student - student

teacher - teacher

teacher- student

Student/teacher—families and wider community

## CONTROL MEASURES PREVENTION

### 2. Minimising the risk of spread of COVID-19 into the school community through physical distancing

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

#### Increasing separation

#### Decreasing interaction

- Following guidelines we are implementing a suite of available measures to be implemented at Sancta Maria College to the greatest possible extent. A common-sense approach is advised recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between students.
- All rooms have been reconfigured to maximise class spaces to enable physical distancing of minimum 1m. We are utilising and reconfiguring all available space in the school. Each class group will be assigned their own base room this year, teachers will move to the students rather than the other way around as is at present. Students should head straight to their designated learning space/classroom on arrival.
- To reduce interaction it is advised that no locker areas will be available at this time. Students can use their base room to store their books etc. No other classes will use their room at any time. All classes of a particular year group are located together in a set section of the school with separate entry/exit points and toilet facilities where possible. Movement outside of their section will be minimised.
- Students will only need to move out of their classroom when the specialist rooms are needed for PE/practical/lab work etc. Where students have a choice of subject they will move quickly into the new class and would be seated with members of their class cohort, observing as much physical distance as possible. Hand washing and/or sanitising would be required when moving between classes by teachers and students. Cleaning and sanitising protocols for all specialist rooms will be implemented.
- Timetables; have been reconfigured to maximise doubles/treble classes as advised where appropriate and possible to. Break times are staggered to help reduce interaction where possible.
- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) is discouraged. Staff and students should avoid sharing of personal items.
- Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets/shared equipment, the contact surface of the device/equipment will be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged.
- Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school grounds is encouraged. 3  
Walking/cycling to school should be encouraged as much as possible.

## **CLEANING**

Enhanced cleaning regimes will be implemented to manage the risk of introduction and spread of COVID-19

The current advice is that each school setting should be cleaned at least once per day.

Additional cleaning will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

If students are moving between classrooms consideration will be given to appropriate cleaning products being provided to enable them to wipe down their desk, chair and surface before leaving the room/entering a room.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building. Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices/classrooms and other areas within the school facility.

Changing rooms/Shower facilities shall not be available for use by staff or students due to the increased risk associated with communal facilities and areas. This shall be reviewed in line with government guidance.

**UNIFORM** All students must attend in full school uniform. On the day students have PE class they can replace the uniform with a grey tracksuit bottoms, polo tee shirt and black runners. They will still be required to wear the school jumper for classes other than PE on that day. As per recent changes to guidelines students and staff are required to wear face coverings. Appropriate face coverings are recommended that are reusable and washed once every day as is consistent with the recommendation to wear face coverings in other contexts such as on public transport, in shops and indoors where a 2m physical distance cannot be maintained. Students are required to bring two face masks, hand sanitizer and a zip lock bag for storage each day.

**BREAK TIMES** We advise students to bring a packed lunch and water. Water refilling facilities are not available at the present time. Students can remain in their classrooms or avail of outdoor areas in the school during break times. Further advice on this will be issued closer to return.

While we all want schools to operate as normally as possible this year it is recognised by all that it will be a different environment to how schools operated in March of this year.

We understand that some students may be fearful or nervous on return so there will be a specific emphasis on the well being of the school community and supports available. Reopening our school is not just a matter of achieving physical distancing but also reengaging students fully with learning, socialising, examinations, school life and physical learning environments in general.

We sincerely thank you for all your support to date and we hope to work with you in supporting our students as we navigate through the readjusting and reopening process.

A second bulletin on this topic will be issued before student return to school - if you have any questions please email to [info@sanctamaria.ie](mailto:info@sanctamaria.ie) and we will address them in the next issue.

**Thank you**

<b>RETURN TO SCHOOL DATES</b>	
Thursday August 27th	Staff Covid Training day
Friday August 28th	First year Induction
Monday August 31st	Staff training day
Tuesday September 1st	First years
Wednesday September 2nd	Leaving certs Induction
Thursday September 3rd	Third years Induction
Friday September 4th	Fifth years Induction
Monday September 7th	Second years Induction
Tuesday September 8th	Transition years (All students)

Each Year group will have an induction session on their first day back where protocols/ procedures etc. will be explained. Following their induction day they are back full time and following their normal timetable.