



**Loreto Secondary School,  
Pembroke Hill,  
Ballynagee,  
Wexford.**

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**Office hours: 7.45 a.m. to 4.15 p.m., Monday to Friday**

Friday, 28 August 2020

Dear parents/guardians and students,

The scene is now almost set for the re-opening of our school next week.

I want to provide the following information at this stage.

#### **Guidelines for students and parents**

Guidelines for students have been sent to their Loreto email accounts today. They may also be viewed on the school website and [here](#). The guidelines will be explained to students at their introduction meetings next week. I will be very happy to take any questions from students when we meet.

Guidelines for parents have been placed on the school website and can also be viewed [here](#). Please feel free to email me with any questions – [principal@loretowexford.com](mailto:principal@loretowexford.com)

#### **Introduction Meetings**

You have already been notified of the times and dates for the information meetings.

These meetings will take place in the Sports Hall, GP Area and the 3 interlinked Teresa Ball classrooms. Social distancing of 1.5 to 2 metres will apply in all venues and they will be well-ventilated. As an additional safety measure, students are required to wear face coverings. The maximum attendance in a venue will be 50 students. There will be many hand sanitising stations on the way to and from each venue. Each meeting will conclude after 90 minutes.

Please contact me if you have any concern about these arrangements.

## Summary of key safety measures

I wish to list the measures taken to enhance the safety of all students and staff as we return to school.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> year students have been divided into 6 groups of 25 students each as opposed to the usual 5 groups of 30. This will have the effect of creating extra social distancing in classrooms, as well as promoting an enhanced learning experience for students.
2. Where possible, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year base classes have been timetabled for larger classrooms, again to maximise the scope for social distancing.
3. We have replaced 400 single desks with smaller ones to ensure the required minimum distance of 1 metre between students in every classroom.
4. Each student will be a minimum of 2 metres from every teacher.
5. A perspex sneeze guard has been placed around each teacher's desk.
6. Perspex screens have been placed between students in certain specialist rooms. They have also been positioned in all offices.
7. 145 hand sanitising units have been placed around the building.
8. We now have 20 outdoor garden benches to allow students use the courtyard when weather conditions are favourable.
9. Seating for 64 students has been provided in the polytunnels to allow students extra venues outside of the building at break and lunch times.
10. Morning break and lunch times have been staggered to reduce the interaction between students on a daily basis.
11. Appropriate signage and information posters have been placed throughout the school. These posters may also be viewed on the school website.
12. All areas have been thoroughly cleaned in recent weeks and a high level of cleaning has been promised by our Facilities Management Company throughout the year with additional hours provided for this purpose.
13. Enhanced safety measures have been introduced by Oven Door catering to allow for a safe service at break and lunch times e.g. perspex screen, individually wrapped items, additional cleaning.
14. Additional supervision has been arranged for break and lunch times each day.
15. Students will only be allowed access their locker when they can observe a 1 metre social distancing. They are required to have a pack of disinfectant wipes in their locker with which they will clean it once a day. Face coverings must be worn when at lockers.

16. At the change of class, all members of the school community will move on the left hand side of corridors, in single file and wearing face coverings.

### **Ongoing review**

The Board of Management will keep all measures under close scrutiny as the year progresses.

Guidelines that have been issued to students, staff and parents will be reviewed and updated as required.

The school's Health and Safety Manager, Derek Madden, will visit the school twice in the next 10 days to observe how all measures are working. He will also visit on a regular basis throughout the year.

The school will seek the views and feedback of the Students' and Parents' Councils on safety measures on an ongoing basis.

I will have weekly meetings with the staff's Lead Worker Representatives (LWRs) - Mark Mullen and Glenda McKiernan - as, together, we monitor our safety measures.

### **Contingency procedures**

Should a case of Covid-19 arise in the school setting, we will adhere in full to the instructions of the HSE and Public Health bodies that will be issued at the time. Let us all do everything in our power to prevent such a case occurring.

### **Communications**

We have a well-rehearsed system of communications that will be used throughout the year, summarised as follows:

- When required, a letter to families will be posted to our website – [www.loretoexford.com](http://www.loretoexford.com). You will receive a text alert to inform you that such a letter has been issued.
- Each student has her own Loreto email account. I shall use this to keep students up-to-date on developments. Any student experiencing difficulties in accessing her Office 365 account should contact Mr. McGinnity (Deputy Principal) at [deputymcginnity@loretoexford.com](mailto:deputymcginnity@loretoexford.com)
- We are ready to use MS Teams once again if necessary.
- Please keep a close eye on the school website throughout the year for all school news.
- Another very useful website is [www.gov.ie/backtoschool](http://www.gov.ie/backtoschool). It is full of resources and information on all matters relating to school re-opening.

In the coming weeks, we will be launching an updated Loreto, Wexford App – more detail to follow shortly.

**And finally.....**

I think it is fair to say that we all share a sense of anxiety as we come together as a school community.

My strong hope is that, by doing all that is asked of us individually and collectively, we will grow accustomed to working in the school in a different, but safe, fashion and that it won't be long before we can once again see and hear noise, laughter, song, music, dance, sport and a 900 strong school community busily going about its daily business.

That is the vision behind all the detailed planning of the past few months. That is what is worth striving for! Let's do it, but safely.

I shall write to you again next Friday with further updates.

Kind regards,

Billy O' Shea,  
Principal.