



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

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

Friday, 15 January 2021

Dear parents/guardians and students,

As we come to the end of our first week of remote teaching and learning (RTL) in the current school closure, I wish to advise you of the following points:

- Great credit is due to staff and students for very high levels of adherence to the normal school timetable during the week. This adds a high degree of structure to everyone's working day. However, RTL places heavy demands on everyone and, for this reason, it is entirely appropriate for both students and staff to pace themselves with regard to homework, varying teaching styles, mixing live and recorded classes. It is essential that any difficulties with RTL be discussed honestly and respectfully by students and teachers as they arise.
- Teachers are keeping records of attendance at each class. Students should inform teachers of absences as a matter of courtesy. Ms. O' Reilly (Deputy Principal) and Year Heads will contact home in a spirit of pastoral care in the event of repeated absence from class.
- All students who requested the loan of a school device for the period of school closure have been facilitated in full. I thank Mr. McGinnity (Deputy Principal) and Ms. Curran (I.T. Co-ordinator) for their great work in this regard. Any future queries regarding access to Loreto email accounts or the borrowing of school equipment should be emailed to deputymcginnity@loretowexford.com
- Detailed work has begun on the planning of the timetable and curriculum for the next school year. To this end, I have emailed all 1st and 4th year students this week with the

arrangements for selecting their subject choices for next year. Students have been asked to bring this information to the attention of parents/guardians.

- The following is the current situation regarding mock examinations:
 - Examination papers have been ordered for all 3rd and 6th year students in every subject.
 - The timing and format for conducting these examinations cannot be finalised until there is more clarity around the re-opening of schools.
 - We continue to look at various options e.g. proceeding with examinations upon re-opening, allowing papers to be sat at home on the basis of trust, sitting some papers in school and others at home, conducting some examinations during the mid-term break, postponing exams until after the mid-term, cancelling mock examinations. We will consult with stakeholders before arriving at a final decision.
 - Whilst the school sees very solid educational advantage in sitting these mock examinations, we are also mindful of the considerable stress and anxiety that exist among some students. Accordingly, the sitting of these examinations will not be compulsory. Each student will have the option of deciding what is best for her within the overall context of the current Covid-19 situation. The school will be very willing to give all available support and guidance in this regard.
 - No payments will be sought in respect of mock examinations until the situation has become clear.

- We will be organising a meeting for incoming 1st year students (September 2021) and their parents/guardians by means of Teams on Tuesday, 26 January. Full details will be issued next week.

- I shall issue a letter to families each Friday during the period of school closure to keep you aware of developments.

- Please feel free to email me with any query/comment – principal@loretowexford.com

I sincerely hope that all Loreto families stay safe and well during these dark times. For that to happen, let us all play our full part in this national effort by complying with public health advice.

Kind regards,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal.