



Knockanes National School, Headford, Killarney, Co. Kerry, V93HX80.

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24th August 2020

Dear Parents,

We look forward to a safe and much awaited return to school on Friday next, 28th August. The B.O.M. and staff have been working hard to ensure a safe return to school for all and have now finalised our plans for routines and procedures that will take effect from Friday next. All information that we have in relation to re-opening our schools safely is on the Department of Education website. All guidelines and procedures that are put in place are recommended and have come from the Department of Education's Covid-19 Response Plan. All schools make their own local arrangements regarding certain aspects such as dropping pupils in the morning and collection at home time.

Here are some reminders and updates that we would appreciate your cooperation with over the coming weeks.

1. Drop off and Collection Routines:

Drop offs (doors open at 9:10am)

Children are to be brought to the school gate in the morning where teachers will be available to direct them to the door they will be using. Parents do not need to accompany their child to the door of the school.

Collections (2:00pm / 3:00pm)

Children will exit the school in their class groupings (Infants -2nd) and in their Pods (3rd – 6th). Infants collected at 2:00pm will exit through the main front door. From 3:00pm, Infants attending 2-3 Club will exit the building first, followed by Ms. Fogarty's Room (1st-3rd Classes) and then Ms Fenton's Room (4th-6th Classes).

Entry and Exit Doors:

- **Main front door: Junior & Senior Infants/ 4th, 5th & 6th Classes**
 - **Side door (near shed) : 1st, 2nd, 3rd Classes**

It is imperative that

- **Children are not dropped off before 9.10am (we cannot have lines/ groups of children congregating outside of the school building)**
- **Pupils are collected at 2:00/3:00 pm sharp and go directly to their cars once they exit through school gate.**
- **Adults do not come within 2m of each other**
- **Parents do not try to come into the school in the morning, appointments must be made for a meeting with a teacher and a contact tracing log must be filled out.**
- **All parents adhere to the drop-off and collection plans as outlined.**

2. Break Times for Pupils:

We will stagger our break times during the school day which will allow for less numbers on the yard at this time.

Children will be playing with their own class groups or 'Bubble' in designated areas. The rota for the playgrounds will be explained to the pupils on the first day back.

3. Classrooms:

Children from Junior Infants to Second Class WILL NOT BE IN PODS in the classroom as social distancing for this age group is not required, as set out in Department guidelines. Each class group or 'Bubble' as it is referred to in the guidelines will not mix with each other at school.

Children from Third to Sixth Class will be in Pods within the classroom group or 'Bubble'. The Pods will mainly be in groups of four but this may vary depending on the numbers in the class. The idea is that the Pods would stay more or less the same each day so that children are not sitting next to different children every day. Shared materials e.g. iPads, toys, art utensils etc. will not be shared outside of each Pod and will be thoroughly wiped down & sanitised after use. Again, children from each classroom group or Bubble would not mix with each other at school.

It will be both safe and useful for all pupils to have a fully stocked pencil case and a lunch box and drink's bottle that are easy for your child to use. Please have fruit pre-peeled and avoid any tricky wrappers/ packaging. This will enable pupils to look after their own belongings without help from an adult.

4. Hand Washing and Using Hand Sanitiser:

Proper hand washing, use of hand sanitiser and good cough/sneeze etiquette are still key elements of keeping safe. Please go over this again with your children prior to re-opening. Teachers will also focus on this in school. Hand sanitiser, paper towels and hand driers for drying hands are installed in all classrooms. Pedal bins have been placed in each classroom for waste paper. Children will be asked to wash their hands on entering the school in the morning. They will be encouraged to sanitise their hands during the day. There are hand sanitiser dispensers at all entrance/exit doors. Children will also wash their hands before eating and after entering the school after yard time.

5. Cleaning:

Extra cleaning resources have been put in place in the school. Classrooms, tables, chairs, door handles, shared learning equipment and toys etc. will be cleaned and sanitised each evening after school.

6. Parent Contact:

It is vital that parents do not send children to school if they are showing any Covid-19 related symptoms whatsoever. The school will have to send any child who is sick home immediately as outlined in Covid-19 Guidelines. For this reason it is imperative that parents/guardians are contactable at all times throughout the school day in case of children becoming ill. Your full co-operation is needed on this.

Working together we hope to be able to move to reopening in as safe a manner as possible for all. We really appreciate your full co-operation, support and patience with these matters as we endeavour to begin a new school year and establish safe and protective practices for all within the school community. We look forward to welcoming back all our pupils on Friday next.

Kind regards,

Lucy O Sullivan

Principal