



**Return to St.
Louis
Community
School
Guidance
Document**



St. Louis Community School
Return to School 2020 Guidance Document

Please note that all the following information is current and subject to change at any time on the advice of the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE)

Dear Parents/Guardians/Students,

I hope you are all continuing to keep well in these exceptional and unprecedented times. We are finally ready to reopen, and while we are very much looking forward to welcoming back our students, we are naturally a bit nervous. Rest assured we have done our best to ensure a safe return to school for all. I encourage you as parents to read through this document with your son / daughter and explain fully the importance of following the school rules to avoid Covid-19 getting into our school.

It is acknowledged that there is no “risk-free” re-opening of schools but we have implemented all the guidelines as set out by the Department of Education and Skills. We have used the Governments roadmap to prepare for the new term. This is the first update; more detailed communications will follow in the coming weeks via the school app.

Upon return to school all students will receive a full and detailed briefing on the measures to minimise the Covid-19 risk.

Arriving at School

Students must sanitise their hands and put on their face mask before they enter the school building. If students wish to avail of the free breakfast they should make their way to the new Louis Bautain hall on the 1st floor of the new extension. No more than 50 students will be permitted in this large hall at any one time.





After breakfast students should proceed directly to their first classroom with their masks on. Students must avoid congregating, particularly with other year groups. General classrooms will be open from 8.50am.

Corridors.

We are now operating a one way system around our school and all the floors and stairs have appropriate signage displayed on them. This new system will be explained to students when they return. Supervisors will be on duty every morning, at break, at lunch and as students exit the school. All the double doors on the corridors will be opened every morning and left open all day, they will be closed again before the building is locked up at night.

Classrooms.

All of our classrooms have been reconfigured to accommodate the social distancing guidelines. Excess furniture has been removed from all the rooms and every classroom in the school has been deep cleaned. All floors have been marked to ensure tables and chairs are not moved too close together. Students will be required to wear masks in class, which I appreciate is not going to be easy but it is a necessary measure to protect all in our school community. Students will be asked to sanitise their hands as they enter the classroom and also as they exit the room. Students have been assigned base classrooms where possible, this is to avoid too much movement of students between classes. As we operate a one hour timetable our movements are already reduced. Classrooms will be well ventilated by opening the windows and doors when possible.

Face Masks/Visors

We have purchased one reusable mask and one face visor for every student, they will be distributed during the first week back. We also need you to purchase additional re-usable plain masks to ensure your child has a clean mask every day.

All students will be required to wear plain face masks from once they step onto school grounds. They will have to be worn in class, in between classes and during break times. In some of our much larger classrooms where the students are 2 metres apart, students may be given the option to remove their mask and wear their visor instead, this will only be possible in large, open plan, well ventilated rooms.





If your child has a medical issue e.g, asthma, that will prevent them from wearing masks, they may wear a visor. If your child has medical issues, I would recommend that they change their mask two to three times per day. We have also purchased high quality face shields for our Science students as face masks and visors are not suitable for practical classes where the students may be using gas or flammable liquids.

Cleaning Routines

Sanitising dispensers have been mounted in all classrooms, at every entrance and exit and at various other points throughout the school. Appropriate cleaning products have been provided in each classroom. Teachers will be required to wipe down their own desk and chair at the start of each lesson and before they leave the room. Students will also be required to wipe down their desk and chair at the start of each lesson and before they leave the room. There is an ample supply of non-perfumed sanitising products in each classroom to sanitise the tables and chairs. We also have a stock of non-alcohol sanitiser for any of our students who have skin allergies. Non-alcohol sanitiser will also be provided in the Science labs where students will be working with flammable liquids. Students should also bring their own small bottle of hand sanitiser which they can keep in their pencil case.

The school is in the process of hiring additional cleaners and supervisors to help ensure a safe environment for all of our school community. Gannon Healthcare will be providing appropriate training for our cleaning staff. Our cleaners will be sanitising our school at regular intervals throughout the day and our regular cleaners will continue to clean the school every evening.

Practical Classes.

Please see PDF re guidelines for practical classes.

Break and Lunch Time.

We will be continuing to offer our canteen facilities to our students this year and social distancing measures will be adhered to. The Cill Aodain Court Hotel will be the school caterers when we return to school. All students must remain on the school premises during break time. Students will be expected to wear their masks while queuing in the school canteen and after they have eaten. Students will be seated one metre apart and no more than fifty students will





be allowed in the canteen at any one time. Students always have the option of bringing their own packed lunch to school. Our Senior students (TY, 5th and 6th) are still allowed down town for their lunch, they will be encouraged to act responsibly and stay apart. All classrooms will be open from 1.40pm and all students will be required to go straight to their classroom after they return from lunch. We have decided to **shorten our lunch time by ten minutes each day**. I did not give parents or students a voice on this matter as I feel our students are safer with a shorter lunch time as they will have less time to congregate after they have eaten their lunch. School will finish at **3.50 pm** Monday to Thursday, school buses have been notified. If the earlier finishing time creates a difficulty for parents, students are welcome to stay in school until 4pm and they will be supervised.

Covid Signage

A Covid information board has been mounted on every floor of the school. Reminders to sanitise and posters displaying the symptoms of Covid-19 have also been mounted on the doors of all of our classrooms. Our internal TV screens will be used to remind students of the importance of regular sanitising and social distancing. Posters highlighting the importance of proper and regular hand washing have also been mounted above sinks in the toilet areas.

Lockers

We have spent a lot of time considering the pros and cons of not allowing the students to access their lockers. We feel it is very difficult for students to manage all their books and belongings without the facility of lockers so we are allowing students to have lockers, however, we will be emphasising the requirement not to congregate around them. Students will also be required to sanitise their hands before they touch the lock on their locker. In so far as is possible we will be dispersing our lockers to various areas around the school and we will be putting as few of them together as possible. We will be monitoring the locker situation throughout the year.

Uniform

Full school uniform must be worn at all times. Face masks are now part of our school uniform. Whoever thought we would see the day!





Health and Safety Measures

2.1: Knowing the Symptoms of COVID-19

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. Those symptoms are as follows:

- high temperature
- cough
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

If your child/children complain of any of these symptoms, **please keep your child/children at home and call your GP without delay**. In the event that you have more than one child attending St. Louis Community School, if any of your children display symptoms, we are requesting that all siblings remain at home pending the outcome of consultation with your GP and/or COVID-19 testing.

- If a student or staff member has been abroad prior to returning to school (i.e. within 14 days), we are asking that they ensure they remain in isolation for 14 consecutive days prior to returning to school.
- Students will be encouraged and expected to follow the health advice regarding hand sanitation, respiratory etiquette, etc. Requirements in this regard will be clearly communicated to all students from the beginning of the year.
- An Isolation room will be available in the school should a member of the School Community present with possible symptoms of Covid-19. It is vital that all Parents/Guardians have registered the correct contact details and medical records with the school. If in doubt, contact the school office immediately on 094-93 81228 or email rena.conroy@stlouiscs.com As usual, parents will be contacted immediately if your child is unwell.
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All staff will have completed [infection control management](#) training provided by the Department of Education and Skills. In St. Louis we have a Covid Response team and all of our subject departments will be preparing a risk assessment for their subject area. We are also very fortunate to have a lot of teachers trained in First Aid and medical emergencies. Please





rest assured if your child presents with any type of illness we will contact home and the relevant medical services (if necessary) immediately.

State Examinations

We have received the latest guidance on changes to the state examinations, this information has been emailed to all 6th year and 3rd year students.

Water fountains

Unfortunately neither staff nor students will have access to water fountains this year. (DES advice)

High Risk Category

Any parent who has concerns for their child and feel they may fall into a high-risk category and have not yet contacted me, please do so immediately.

Walking or Cycling to School

All schools are encouraging students to walk or cycle to school if they can do so. We are delighted to be receiving three bicycle stands from the Kiltimagh Community Futures group, they will be installed very soon. Sincere thanks to all involved in this initiative.

Non-Essential Travel.

Students and staff will not be permitted to leave the school to go on any non-essential trips. While it this is disappointing, it is another measure to ensure our students and staff remain safe and well. This measure will be reviewed in line with public health advice.

There is one exception to the above, and that is the four TY day trips that parents have already been told about.

Code of Behaviour

All parents and students must sign the Code of Positive Behaviour (COB) in the student diary. These are exceptional times, and on occasion, they require extraordinary measures. Our COB will be amended to reflect the changes outlined above and/or other public health advice issued





in the coming weeks and months. Any breach of the health and safety systems will be dealt with in a robust manner to protect all stakeholders, and the communities the school serves.

Exiting the School.

Students will be asked to leave the school building via the nearest school exit, while adhering to our one way system. We will be opening an additional exit at the front of the school, just in time for the return of our students.

Student Journal

The Student Journal has proven to be an invaluable communication tool between home and school. The school journal has been reduced in size making it lighter for students to carry. The Journal is intended as an aid to students to support them in their studies. Pages are also set aside for communication between parents and teachers. Please sign your child's journal every night, as a general rule of thumb 'no news is good news' when it comes to the journal.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

Further advice is due from the Department of Education and Skills in relation to Parent-Teacher Meetings. We will update parents once we receive this guidance. If you need to have a telephone conversation with any of our teachers, please contact the school office.

Return to School Dates

I am including the return to school dates that were issued in June.

Sept 1st – 1st years only

Sept 2nd - TY

Sept 3rd – 3rd, 6th and LCA

Sept 4th – 2nd and 5th years

Once students return to school, they remain in school.





School Parking

The school car park is for staff use **only**. Post-primary students are strictly prohibited from parking on the school grounds. Students who drive to school by car must make their own arrangements for parking. Parents are asked not to enter the school car park at the start of end of the school day due to the volume of students entering and exiting our school.

Visiting the School / Appointments

School personnel will not be in a position to meet parents on a one to one basis during this academic year unless it is essential and by prior appointment. All such requests and appointments must be made through the school office 094 93 81228 or email rena.conroy@stlouiscs.com

All visitors to the school will be asked to wear face coverings and they will be required complete the contact tracing log at the main office.

School Planning Day Closure

Once the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) have updated their modified subject specifications (syllabus or programme of learning), the school will be required to close for one day to support a professional development event for our staff to upskill on these updates. The Department of Education and Skills asked the NCCA to take into account last year's closure and adjust each subject's programme of learning to afford greater fairness to our students. We will advise in future correspondence when this day will occur.

Curriculum

All 6th years students will have one extra hour of English added to their timetable. As per last year we will be offering all of our students free access to IXL (online Maths) and we are currently trying to arrange access to Study Clix for our exam students. There is not enough flexibility on the 6th year timetable for me to add in any extra tuition time. I did try to give





additional hours to the 3rd year exam subjects but unfortunately I didn't have the additional personnel required. Some project time has been incorporated into the 2nd and 3rd year timetable.

New Building

I am delighted to inform you that the extension is finished and has formally been handed over to St. Louis Community School. It is absolutely beautiful, the Louis Bautain hall is the icing on the cake! We are looking forward to occupying this lovely new building later this week.

Evening Study

We will be offering the facility of Evening Study again this year. We will be adhering to guidelines around room capacity and social distancing so we will be offering fewer places this year. Students who attended Evening Study last term will be refunded in the coming weeks.

Homework Club

The Homework club will continue to operate as normal, if you wish to enroll your child in the homework club please contact the school office.

Year Heads.

Please find below the names of the Year Heads for this academic year. If you have concerns about your child please contact the relevant Year Head.

1st Year – Ms. Ruth McNamara.

2nd Year – Mr. Andrew Finn

3rd Year – Ms. Aideen Ueno

TY – Mr. Murt Dunleavy

5th Year – Ms. Lynn Anderson

6th Year – Ms. Nuala Whelan

LCA 1 & 2 – Ms. Geraldine Molloy.

New Deputy Principal.

Congratulations to Mr. Grahame Cleary who has been appointed as the permanent Deputy Principal of St. Louis Community School, I am looking forward to working with Grahame and





I hope he will be very happy in St. Louis. We will be appointing another Deputy Principal in the coming weeks.

New Staff.

I would like to welcome

- Mr. John Prasifca who will be covering Ms. Kelly's maternity leave
- Ms. Laura McKiernan who will be covering Ms. Patricia Murtagh's maternity leave
- Ms. Sarah Forde who will be covering Ms. Niamh Callaghan's maternity leave.

Ms. Callaghan gave birth to a beautiful baby girl and we are eagerly awaiting Ms. Kelly and Ms. Murtagh's good news.

I would also like to welcome Ms. Mary Dunne and Ms. Chloe Regan, both English teachers.

I would like to welcome back Mr. Finnian Cawley and Ms. Maura McNamara. I look forward to working with all of them.

Prefects and BBBS

We greatly appreciate the important role that our many student groups play in our school. To assist with the First year induction, Prefects are asked to come into school on Monday August 31st at 3pm and again on Tuesday 1st September at 8.30am to assist with the 1st year induction. BBBS students are asked to come into school on Wednesday 2nd September from 2.30pm to 3.45pm and again on Thursday 3rd September from 9 to 10am.

PLC Courses.

We are offering three PLC courses this year, Business level 5, Administration level 6 and Childcare level 6. Please note these courses are full time, four days in school and the fifth day is assigned for work experience. Places are filling fast so if interested please contact Ms. Andrea Maloney by emailing plc@stlouiscs.com. We will also be offering evening classes in a few weeks time.

We *expect revisions and updates* to this document. Further details regarding the return to school will be communicated to parents via the school app. If you have difficulties downloading the app please contact the office on 094-93 81228. Every effort has been made to





provide all the necessary requirements as laid out by the Department of Education and Skills, but **individual responsibility** is the key to inculcating it into our new school culture and its long-term success. The work carried out has been a team effort and it could not have happened without the hard work and dedication of our staff. I am extremely grateful for all the help and advice I have received.

In anticipation of your full support,

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Regina Anderson

Principal