



14th August 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

The Board of the College has finalised the plan for the reopening the school in line with national policy. The schedule of opening requires time for significant training and planning by the teaching staff. This will take place before the students make a full return to St Michael's College.

This year on August 28th all first years and sixth years will commence the year at 8.45am and finish at 1.40pm. On Monday the 31st August, First, Sixth, Fifth and Third years will commence at 8.45am and finish at 1.40pm. On Tuesday 1st September there will be school for all years finishing at 1.40pm.

Due to the fact that large gatherings are prohibited this year, a scheduled Zoom meeting will be held for parents of all years once the year commences. As well as the academic and pastoral care content of such meetings, other emerging issues in the respective year groups will be addressed. Clarity surrounding parent/teacher meetings and social events and other communal events, will be outlined at these meetings. The times and dates of the meeting will be conveyed to you nearer to the date.

Efforts to maintain our school as a safe environment is a collaborative process. Should your son present with what may seem like COVID-19 symptoms please do not send him to school. If your son has been abroad and there is a fourteen-day quarantine requirement on his return, please ensure that he does not attend school during that fourteen-day requirement.

There have been significant changes made to the school organisation to deal with the present challenges posed by COVID -19. The action that we have taken is subject to on-going Board review and appraisal but all actions to date are based on the COVID -19 Response Plan for the safe reopening of St Michaels College. (see website news page)

In line with national policy all staff and students will be required to wear a face covering. The Board will provide a face visor to all students on their first day in the school. The maintenance and replacement of this piece of PPE will be the responsibility of each individual student. Alternatively, should a student prefer to wear a facemask they may do so. No student will be allowed to attend school without a face covering.

In order to comply with the requirement for social distancing we have maximised the use of the larger rooms in the school. In an effort to reduce student movements, we have reverted to classroom-based teaching. In essence

the teachers will now move to the respective classes as opposed to the students moving regularly around the school.

Students will be strictly supervised and encouraged to avoid congregating in hallways, corridors, the canteen or assembly areas. The issue of whether the provision of lockers to students can be facilitated, even with the mandatory face covering, is still under review by the Board. This issue will be clarified next week and communicated to you.

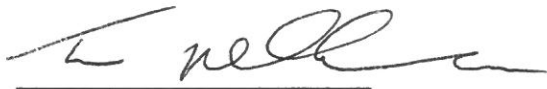
The College has significantly invested in measures to render the school as safe as possible for all staff and students.

- Additional teaching staff and Special Needs Assistants have been hired to help supervise students and to facilitate smaller teaching groups.
- The College has reconfigured the larger spaces in the school to facilitate social distancing. The lower and upper study, sixth year common room, library and Concert Hall are now all teaching or study areas.
- We have amended the timetable to facilitate staggered lunch breaks in order to reduce students congregating.
- St Michael's House has provided a second staff room and an isolation room in the event a student or teacher presents with symptoms.
- A variety of protective shields have been provided in offices, classrooms and the staffrooms to help prevent the spread of the virus.
- All toilet areas have been upgraded with facilities that comply with the Department of Education protocols for hand hygiene
- The shower facilities have been upgraded to comply with best practice.
- An enhanced cleaning regime has been put in place through out the day where surfaces are constantly being sanitised and cleaned.
- Over 100 electronically controlled sanitizing units have been purchased for use in all our classrooms and corridors.
- New protocols have been adopted whereby only staff and students are to enter the school building.
- All visitors to the school will have to enter via the administration office and only enter when admitted by a staff member. They must comply with the school contact tracing protocols and must fill in the contact tracing log on admittance.
- Induction will be undertaken by all students in essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements

- Bottled drinking water will be provided in the canteen, as all drinking fountains will be decommissioned for the foreseeable future.
- A bank of mobile laptops has been provided in the Shanahan Pavilion. This is to facilitate the retention of students in the pavilion who previously had to move in order to access the computer room in the main school building.
- Provision will be made for at risk students

The Board of Management is aware that the situation is subject to change and any change or updates will be communicated to you promptly. I look forward to see all the boys return at the commencement of the school year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Kelleher', written over a horizontal line.

T Kelleher
Principal