



14th August, 2020.

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s) and Student(s),

These are challenging times for us all but we look forward to the reopening of Mercy Ballymahon. Guidance is changing as we plan to welcome back our staff and students into the building, so the information in this letter is subject to change. Here we map out some of the changes that we are making for everyone's safety. We expect your full co-operation. We will update you further on Friday 21st and outline more of the practicalities around the reopening of Mercy Ballymahon.

- **Uniform:**

Full uniform must be worn. As usual we advise that you have more than one shirt and change it every day. Regular washing of the whole uniform is advised.

- **Classrooms**

Each year group will be assigned a zone in the school and each class will be assigned a base classroom. Movement will be kept to a minimum but will take place for the optional and practical subjects.

- **Lunchtime**

All students will remain on the school campus for the entire school day for the foreseeable future.

- **Staggered break and lunchtimes**

To assist the social distance guidelines, there will be two break times and two lunchtimes, with different year groups in each one.

- **School canteen**

Get Fresh the company who run the school canteen have set up an online pre-ordering and payment system. This system will be used to avoid queues. The food will be delivered to classrooms. Details will be issued next week on how to join this system. Otherwise students are advised to bring in their lunches.

- **Hand Sanitisers**

We are placing hand sanitisers in every classroom, at all entrances and around the school.

- **Toilets**

The number of students using the toilets at any onetime will be restricted. Students may ask permission to go to the toilet during class using the Corridor Pass and sign-out and sign-in system.

- **iPads**

Since March 12th we have seen the benefits more than ever of digital technology in Learning and Teaching and how the use of the iPads enabled our online learning and teaching. To facilitate those who want to purchase an iPad, visit the Wriggle online store at www.wriggle.ie and select **order online**. Our personalised school store number is 36159216. The store for 1st, 2nd and 5th years is open at present while the store for 3rd, TY and 6th years will open early next week. Wriggle is operating a new Flexi-Fi payment plan to spread the cost. Details are available on their website. **In line with our Acceptable User Policy all iPads from 1st to TY inclusive must be managed by Wriggle.**

- **Homework**
 - Homework will be assigned and submitted through Google classroom for all year groups. Copies while they may be used during class cannot be collected by the teachers.
 - We ask all students with iPads **not** to bring text books to school as their eBooks are on their iPad.
 - As advised in the letter in June, A4 Hard copies are not required, use A4 soft cover copies instead.
- **Lockers**
Students will have no access to lockers at any time due to social distance guidelines.
- **PPE**
We are seeking further information on the wearing of face masks vs visors. We will let you know next week.

Timetable for the return to school

Date	Year Groups in School
Tuesday September 1	1 st Year
Wednesday September 2	1 st and 6 th Year
Thursday September 3	1 st , 6 th and 5 th Year
Friday September 4	3 rd , 5 th and 6 th Year
Monday September 7	1 st , 2 nd , 5 th , and 6 th Year
Tuesday September 8	TY and all Year groups

Timetable for the return to school of our Special ASD classes

Date	Year Groups in School
Tuesday September 1	1 st Year
Wednesday September 2	1 st , 2 nd , and 6 th Year
Thursday September 3	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , and 6 th Year
Friday September 4	All Year groups

We have scheduled the timetable in this way to allow us to have a general assembly with one new year group per day, in the Sports Hall, where we will explain to our students the new daily routine at Mercy Ballymahon. The school day will be different and there will be many new routines. However we hope that our strong sense of school community and our ethos of care for each other will help us through these challenging times during which we are dealing with a dangerous virus.

It will also give us time to reconnect with each other, to unpack our experiences and for students to reconnect with their teachers.

Stay safe.

Yours sincerely,



Josephine Donohue
Principal