

St. Colman's Primary School

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Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope this letter finds you safe and that you and your family are keeping well.

Over the last number of days and weeks there has been a lot of speculation and media coverage around the reopening of schools and I would like to take the opportunity to address some of these issues with you.

Firstly, I would like to state that it is our main priority to get our children back to school, this is where they should and need to be. We understand that this period of closure has been extremely difficult for them; they have lost out on so much and we want nothing more than to get them back to their safe and happy classrooms, where they can catch up on their learning and have their social and emotional needs nurtured back to health.

We have worked hard to ensure that our online provision for the children over the last few months has allowed learning to continue, however we recognise that it is no substitute for face to face teaching and cannot replace the school environment, which is about much more than academia. Our children are craving social interaction with their peers, the routine of school and indeed the relationships with staff and classmates which is so vital for their development.

However, I feel the coverage by the media of schools reopening has caused anxiety and confusion for parents and staff alike and understandably, raised questions on how our own school will function and operate as we move into the new academic year. I would love to be able to give you all the answers to these questions and clarify how we intend to reopen after the summer break, unfortunately it is with regret that I am unable to do so at this time.

We have been informed that P7 pupils are to return to school on 24th August and that other children will return in September with a 1m social distancing rule in place. However, as you can imagine this will still present difficulties in getting every child back on a fulltime basis.

All I can confirm for you at the moment is that guidelines for schools are to be published at some stage today and once we have that information we will be able to plan how our own setting will restart. That will take time and will certainly not happen overnight, however it is my intention to keep you informed of any decisions or information you will require at the earliest opportunity. I would like to reassure you that at the core of any plans will be the safety and wellbeing of our children, families and staff.

I appreciate how supportive you have been throughout this period and apologise that I cannot provide you with any further clarification regarding this. I ask for your continued patience and understanding as we navigate our way through the coming weeks and months, planning for reopening and ultimately welcoming our children back where they belong in the new term.

I will write to you again next week with an end of year message and provide you with any further updates as and when they become available.

Yours sincerely

Ms M Savage
Principal