



VIRGIN MARY GIRLS' NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Roll No. 19303W

17th August, 2020.

Re. Returning to school 27th August 2020 Senior Infants to 6th Class

Dear Parents/Guardians

First of all, can we just say how absolutely delighted we are to be welcoming your children back to Virgin Mary GNS next week (Thursday 27th August). We have missed the children so much and are looking forward to the year ahead.

There are obviously a few changes to the normal run of things but most things will actually stay the same!

There has been a lot of talk about bubbles and pods so let's start by explaining those.

A bubble is a class e.g. all of 6th class is a bubble. Each class is a bubble. Easy!

A pod is a group in the class. Your children have been actually been sitting in 'pods' for most of their school life! A pod usually consists of 5 or 6 children.

School will begin at 8.50 am as normal. Class teachers will be on the yard from 8.40am. Ms. Nolan and I will direct children to their line from the gate. We are operating a strict '**Drop and Go**' policy. We kindly ask that **NO PARENTS enter school grounds in the morning**. We also ask that you do not arrive early to avoid large gatherings at the gate. Children may **ONLY** come to school through the **top gate at senior yard**. The side gate will **not** be open.

Any parent who wishes to see me, a class teacher, or Sarah for **ANY** reason e.g. buying tracksuits, paying book money, will have to **make an appointment** by calling the office on **01 8421614**. This is the only number to call for appointments. We realise that this is really different but we are sure that you will co-operate as it is in the best interests and safety of your daughter. Any person visiting the school for longer than **15 minutes** will have to fill out a **contact tracing form**.

For children in **Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First Class and Second Class**, it will be business as usual in the classroom. The Department of Education realises that these children are too young to observe social distancing.

Children in **Senior Classes** will be split into groups (pods). In the classroom, children will be working only with the children in their pods. The pods are socially distanced within the classroom in so far as possible. They will also be asked to play in the yard with the children in their pod.

We have **21 hand sanitisation stations** throughout the school. Your daughter will be asked to sanitise her hands upon arrival and at regular intervals throughout the day. We have plenty of hand sanitiser here but feel free to send some with your daughter if you want to.

All staff will be wearing **face coverings** where a 2 metre social distance can't be observed. Children under 13 are NOT required to wear masks but if you want to send a covering, again feel free to do so.

Any adult who enters the building MUST wear a face covering. Please bring your own if you are coming into the school building.

During the month of September, the children will **not** be getting any **homework**. We will be focusing on reading and maths in school. We will also be prioritising your child's wellbeing in terms of adjusting back to school life. We will review this decision at the end of the month, and all going well, homework will start again in October.

As a result, your child does not have to bring much at all to school in September. We ask that you please only send **a pencil case** filled with whatever writing materials your child may need **that can be left in school** from the first day, and **a selection of copies**. This eliminates the need to bring things backwards and forwards from school.

Children can only play with children from their own class (bubble) on the **yard**. We ask you to remind your child of this please. The yard will be sectioned off and children will be expected to stay in their section and not cross into another section during yard time.

PE will take place outside if the weather allows for it. You will be told which day is for PE when the children return to school. We ask that your child wears her school tracksuit on PE day with appropriate footwear.

Your child is expected to wear her **school uniform/school tracksuit** on every other day. We ask that your daughter only wears her school uniform/school tracksuit to school. Please change out of it as soon as she gets home.

Arrangements for Home time:

Senior Infants: Parents please collect your child from the main door at the big yard at **1.30pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building

First Class: Parents please collect your child from the side door which faces Centra (Shangan Road side) at **2.20pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building.

Second Class: Parents please collect your child from the side door which faces Centra (Shangan Road side) at **2.30pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building.

Third Class: Parents please collect your child from the side door which faces the Aisling Project at **2.20pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building.

Fourth Class: Parents please collect your child from the side door which faces the Aisling Project at **2.30pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building.

Fifth Class: Parents please collect your child from the main door at the big yard at **2.20pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building

Sixth Class: Parents please collect your child from the main door at the big yard at **2.30pm**. Please wait outside the door. Do not enter the building

Parents- Please do not gather at the door. Please observe social distancing at all times and allow space for children to leave the building.

We will be outside to direct you all for the first few days so please don't worry!

Class teachers for 2020/2021

- Junior Infants: Ms. Murtagh
- Senior Infants: Ms. Horan
- First Class: Mr. Hennessy
- Second Class: Mr. McGuinness
- Third Class: Mr. Shaw
- Fourth Class: Mr. Murphy
- Fifth Class: Ms. Grimes (a new arrival to our staff)
- Sixth Class: Mr. Neary

Remember: If your child displays COVID-19 symptoms, ensure they DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL ,phone your doctor and follow HSE guidance.

In Summary

- We can't wait to have your children back in school!!
- Drop your child (to the gate at the top of the big yard) and Go- no parents to be on the yard in the morning (Teachers on yard from 8.40am)
- Any parent who wants to meet any member of staff must phone 01 8421614 and make an appointment
- Face coverings to be worn by all adults in the school building
- Please only send a full pencil case (which can be left in school) and copies with your child on the first day
- Please don't arrive early or late to the school yard.

-If your child displays COVID-19 symptoms, ensure they DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL ,phone your doctor and follow HSE guidance.

Kind regards,

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Niamh Cuthbert,
Principal.