



13th August 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian and students

After a long absence, we look forward to welcoming our students back to Gallen Community School as the 2020-21 school year commences and cannot wait for the return to routine in our lives. We hope that this letter finds you well and that your family is looking forward to the return to school.

As the welfare, health and safety of our students and staff is of paramount importance, we have taken considerable steps to ensure that the full and safe return to school is achieved in the coming weeks. I am contacting you to inform you of the measures taken thus far and I will continue to follow up with regular updates and information regarding emerging requirements, changes etc. In order to allow students an opportunity to fully familiarise themselves with the routines of the new school year and to undertake a safety protocol induction we have staggered the return dates for each year group as follows.

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| Fri. 28 th August | <i>COVID Induction for 6th Year students</i> | <i>2pm – 4pm</i> |
| Mon. 31 st August | <i>COVID Induction for 3rd Year students</i> | <i>9am – 11am</i> |
| Mon. 31 st August | <i>COVID Induction for 2nd Year students</i> | <i>2pm – 4pm</i> |
| Tue 1 st September | <i>COVID Induction for 1st Years & Return to school</i> | <i>9.00am – 4pm</i> |
| Wed 2 nd September | <i>COVID Induction for 5th Years 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th Years return</i> | <i>9.00am – 11.00am 9.00am – 1.20pm</i> |
| Fri. 4 th September | <i>COVID Induction for TY Students & return to school</i> | <i>9.00am – 4pm</i> |

Please refer to the school website www.gallencs.com for the full updated school calendar.

Please note the additional considerations prior to students returning to school:

- In line with Government guidelines face coverings are required for all students and staff.
- As recommended by the Department of Education and Skills, each class group will be assigned a base classroom in which the majority of their lessons will take place. In order to ensure compliance with social distancing recommendations, we are currently working on reducing individual class sizes for a very small minority of classes throughout the school. As a consequence of this there may be a teacher change in one of your son's/daughter's subjects. This is an unavoidable result of the necessary adaptations required for our safe return to school.
- On arrival to the school each morning, students will be asked to go directly to their base classroom.
- To ensure social distancing is maintained through the school, a one-way system of movement will operate around the school grounds. Students will be induced to this on their return.
- Students will not have access to a student's locker at the beginning of school year. We will monitor this decision as the term progresses and as our students become accustomed to their new routines.
- All classes are remaining at 40-minute duration.
- Sharing of any materials between students will not be possible. Please secure enough pens and stationery for individual use.

Ferbane, Co. Offaly

Tel: 090 6453600 Email: admin@gallencs.com Web: www.gallencs.com

Principal: Garrett Buckley Deputy Principal: Stacey Guinan



- Students will have staggered break and lunch times to help maintain social distancing at all times.
- Canteen will be operating as normal with social distancing measures in place.
- Water fountains will not be in operation in the school. Students are asked to bring their own bottles of water or they can be purchased at our school canteen.
- To limit social interaction with personal outside of our immediate school population and protect all within our wider local community, no students will be permitted to leave school grounds during the lunch break unless they are returning to their house of residence. It is strongly recommended that all students remain on the premises at lunch time maintain social distancing.
- We ask that you discuss the importance of social distancing, frequent hand sanitising and respiratory etiquette with your son/daughter prior to their return to school as we have a pivotal role to play in safe reopening of our school community.
- All students must adhere to all HSE Covid-19 regulations. Failure to do so would impact on the health and safety of other members of our school community and therefore immediate contact will be made with the parents/ guardians of any students found to be in breach of the school's safety guidelines.
- Unfortunately, for the moment, we will not be in a position to allow parents/guardians to come to school without an appointment. Parents are asked to phone or email the school with any queries you may have or to arrange a meeting.
- In order to avoid delays in the distribution of books as the new school year commences, we ask those who are availing of our Book Rental Scheme to ensure that the fee is paid as soon as possible.

We look forward to welcoming our students back to Gallen Community school in the coming weeks and to a safe return to education for all members of our school community. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time with any queries you may have.

Yours sincerely

Garrett Buckley
Principal