

# Cahir National School

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24/08/20

R.E. – New School Year and Covid Updates

Dear Parent / Guardian,

I hope you are all keeping well at this time. The Board of Management and School Staff are looking forward to welcoming all our pupils and parents / guardians back to school for the 2020/2021 school year on Monday next, 31<sup>st</sup> August. Preparations have been under way for the last number of weeks and I wish to pay tribute to Ms Hanley and all the staff for their efforts in preparing the school for the safe return on pupils.

On Wednesday night our Board of Management ratified the **Logistics Plan for Re-Opening Cahir National School**. I would urge you all to carefully read this document as it identifies the procedures and routines that the school will be adopting on our first day back. The previous traffic arrangement will need to continue to ensure the safe drop off and pick up of our children.

I am also attaching the school's **Covid-19 Response Plan**, which is based on what was recommended by the Department of Education in The Roadmap for the Full Return to School and also in the Health Service Executive's Interim Recommendations for the reopening of Schools and Education Facilities.

There will be enhanced cleaning regime in the school. New detergents, disinfectant, PPE and cleaning equipment have been purchased to facilitate this extra cleaning. We are satisfied that we have control measures in place to ensure that this will be a safe re-opening. It will take some time for all of us to get used to the "new circumstances" as we become familiar with the new routines and procedures designed to keep everyone safe and to prevent the spread of the virus. There will, undoubtedly, be some unforeseen challenges and we will deal with these as they arise.

I realise that this is a nervous time for both parents and students but as stated by numerous commentators recently there is no zero-risk solution to the reopening of our schools. By following these procedures, adopting a balanced approach, and applying common sense we can mitigate the dangers and reopen our school fully. This will allow our students to reengage fully with learning, socialise with their peers, and begin to enjoy school life again.

Our focus for the first couple of weeks will be to reassure children and help them feel comfortable with the new arrangements. Should you have any queries; please contact the school office on [cahirschool@gmail.com](mailto:cahirschool@gmail.com).

To the parents of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class; I wish to inform you that Ms Aisling Mahony will be covering the maternity leave for Ms O Sullivan for the beginning of the year. We wish Ms O Sullivan all the best for the remainder of her maternity leave.

The Board of Management have given permission to avail of the Aladdin Schools software in the school. I have used this software for a number of years in both my previous schools in Laois and Castlegregory. Communication is an important feature of this technology and parents will be contacted directly by text message, email or an app. We hope to use Aladdin to circulate news and announcements to parents and families from next week on.

Finally, I wish to express how excited I am to be beginning next week in Cahir National School and to meeting all the children. Despite the current environment, we are all looking forward to a successful year ahead.

Le gach dea-ghuí,  
Patrick Crean