St. Francis Xavier Senior School

Roselawn Glade, Castleknock, Dublin 15

  

17th August 2020

**RE: Returning to School Specifics**

Dear Parent / Guardian,

The Board of Management and the School Leadership Team have been working to ensure a safe return to school for all pupils and staff. The school reopens on **Thursday 27thAugust** as communicated on the academic calendar in June. We are finalising our school’s ‘Logistics Plan for Reopening’ which will be available to view on our website [www.sfxsenior.com](http://www.sfxsenior.com) on Wednesday, 19th August. Outlined below are some of the key information points for parents.

**Access & Exit of School Building Procedure**

In line with Department Guidelines and in consultation with the Junior School, start and finish times will be staggered to ensure the safe movement of all our pupils. We ask for parent co-operation with these times as it will mean that the numbers on school grounds at any one time will be minimised.

Pupils in the Senior School will be split into 2 groups (Group A and Group B) with each group having different starting times, break times, lunch times and finishing times. *Details of your child’s class teacher, classroom number and start/finish time will be available to view on the website on Wednesday afternoon.*

**Group A Start time: 8.30am Finish time: 2.10pm.**

**Group B Start time: 8.40am Finish time: 2.20pm.**

* Each group should arrive at their assigned time and proceed directly and without delay to their classroom via the **external** classroom door.
* To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, children and adults are not permitted onto the school grounds before their allocated time.
* Members of staff including our SET teachers and our SNAs will direct the movement of pupils to their classrooms. All staff on the yard will be wearing hi-viz jackets.
* Teachers will be in their classrooms awaiting pupil arrival.

**Punctuality**

* Punctuality is essential to the safe return of all of our pupils.
* Strictly adhere to your child’s arrival/collection times.
* Late arrivals will impact start/finish times for other groups.

**Reopening Visuals**

To enhance the safety of our pupils, a one-way system will apply on the school grounds around the Senior School. We will be creating visuals showing the route through the grounds that your child will take when coming to school this year.

**Collection Time**

* We encourage pupils to walk/cycle to school if possible.
* If you are collecting your child, please do not enter the school grounds before your child’s departure time.
* Pupils will leave their classrooms in their pods and will be asked to exit the school as quickly as possible.
* Where possible, please allocate a meeting point away from the school.

**Access to School – Restricted**

* Parents and visitors will no longer be permitted access to the school unless an appointment has been made in advance.
* Meetings between parents and teachers can only take place by prior arrangement.*(This may have to be more restrictive depending on guidance - it is quite possible that the recommendation will be for remote meetings/telephonic communications.)*

**Collection of Children during the School Day**

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

* Parent/Guardian phones the School Office in advance to notify the school that their child will be

collected early.

* When the adult arrives at the school, they should go directly to their child’s **external** classroom door.
* The class teacher will sign out the child in the classroom record book.

**Children Displaying Symptoms**

If any child is feeling unwell or displaying symptoms please do not come into school. If any members of your household are unwell with symptoms of Covid-19 we also ask that your child(ren) stay at home.

If a close contact has been abroad please follow guidelines regarding restricted movement/self isolation.

For the safety of the school community, pupils must not come to school if they are displaying symptoms of:

* + High Temperature
  + Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
  + Cough, sore throat or viral infection
  + Loss or changed sense of smell or taste

Any child who staff consider to be displaying these symptoms will be promptly brought to the Isolation Room and parents will be contacted to collect their child immediately. If necessary, in such circumstances, the Health Service Executive may be contacted to provide further guidance to the school or relevant parents. The school’s decision is final in such cases. All contact details provided for the pupils **must** be up to date before the school reopens. All children **must** have at least one parent/guardian available at all times to take a call from the school. Parents/Guardians must have arrangements in place for their child to be collected **immediately** if required.

**Dealing with a Suspected Case** Please find details in the school’s Logistics Plan for Reopening which will be available on the school’s website from August 19th www.sfxsenior.com

**Children with Underlying Health Conditions** Please find details in the school’s ‘Logistics Plan for Reopening’ which will be available on the school’s website from August 19th www.sfxsenior.com

* ***High Risk Pupils*** *should attend school but take extra precautions. Please inform the school by Friday, 21st August on* [*o.fficesenior@sfxns.ie*](mailto:o.fficesenior@sfxns.ie) *if your child falls into the high risk category.*
* ***Very High risk Pupils*** *Parents are required to provide a medical certificate to the school from a medical professional to state that it is essential that their child remain at home due to Covid-19 reasons and their health conditions. Teachers will provide work for these children via Google Classroom. Please inform the school by Friday, 21st August on* [*o.fficesenior@sfxns.ie*](mailto:o.fficesenior@sfxns.ie) *if your child falls into the very high risk category.*

**Hygiene & Sanitising**

* Automatic hand sanitiser dispensers are located at all entry points and in all classrooms and support rooms.
* All toilets have been fitted with paper towel dispensers for drying hands.
* Toilets will be regularly cleaned throughout the school day and liquid soap levels checked by a member of our cleaning staff.
* Common touchpoints will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.

Regular Hand Washing and Sanitising

* Pupils will wash and sanitise their hands regularly, especially when going to the toilet or using/touching common surfaces.
* Signage stickers will feature prominently in toilets about how to wash hands. HSE videos will be available to teachers to teach pupils how to wash their hands properly.
* All pupils must have their own personal hand sanitiser (as per Book List).

We hope that all pupils will return to school with good hand hygiene practices and coughing and sneezing etiquette. Please see the HSE video for more information. <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>.

**Cleaning**

Extra cleaning staff are employed to clean and sanitise throughout and after school day.

**Lunches**

* Please ensure your child brings their lunch to school to avoid adults having to come to the school during the day.
* Parents are asked to remind their child not to share their food or drinks with other children.
* Children will eat their lunches at their desks, as is our usual practice.
* Lunch Boxes - parents are asked to ensure that their child’s lunch box, bottles and other lunch utensils are thoroughly cleaned before sending into the school and on return home.

**Lost and Found**

We will no longer be able to facilitate a Lost and Found Property service. Please ensure that all clothes and belongings are clearly labelled with the child’s name.

**Pencil Cases**

* It is requested that pupils have 2 sets of stationary: one for school and one for home.
* On the first day of term, children bring their pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc. to school and leave these belongings in school. Please include a pencil sharpener with a lid that can hold the pairings.
* There will be no sharing of stationary items.
* Each child will be given a plastic box for their school books.

**Copies**

We recommend that all parents cover their child’s copies with a plastic cover for ease of cleaning. These are available at most stationary stores including the Book Haven and on ww.schoolbooks.ie.

**Uniform**

Children’s uniforms must be cleaned and washed regularly as a child may have coughed or sneezed into their sleeve as per coughing protocols. To facilitate regular washing, pupils will alternate between their school uniform and school tracksuit. Pupils may wear runners on uniform days.

School Tracksuits: Mondays - Wednesdays - Fridays

School Uniforms: Tuesdays - Thursdays

As a school we strongly advise that children should wear their school uniforms or tracksuits **only for school related activities.**  Uniforms or tracksuits should be taken off straight after the child arrives home from school for the day. They should not be worn in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

At a minimum your child will be outdoors twice daily. Please provide your child with a waterproof jacket/coat with hood, so that we can make this possible even in inclement weather.

**Teaching and the Curriculum**

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.

Each child will be a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we will assure parents that staff will take this into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2020/2021 school year. Teachers will be working with the curriculum content, objectives and learning outcomes in line with the DES recommendations in order to ensure that pupils are ready to commence new learning. Initially, greater time and attention will be given to Numeracy, Literacy, SPHE and P.E.

The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum Guidelines for us and parents are asked to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during the return to school.

**Class/Bubble Closure or Full School Closure**

In the Event of a Bubble Closure (full class) or Full School Closure, our teachers will continue to work with their pupils using Google Classroom.

**Extra-Curricular Activities**

Please note that there will be no extra-curricular activities in our school with the exception of Tigers After- School care. This situation will remain under review.

**Reminder:** Children who have travelled from countries NOT on the Green List should not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period.

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**Shared Responsibility**

The Board of Management and School Management Team are committed to ensuring that all of the protocols and procedures are implemented for the safety and wellbeing of all of our pupils and staff.

We must all be aware that there is no “No-Risk” scenario as stated by Government. Therefore, it is most important that all of us, individually: **Staff, Pupils and Parents** are responsible for our own practices and behaviours while in our school, and also, outside of school.

The Board of Management and Staff of St. Francis Xavier School appreciates your support as we try to safely reopen the school building.

We ask for your patience as we endeavour to embed these necessary precautionary and protective practices at the beginning of the school year. We understand these changes will cause some challenges for parents and we are sure you understand that our focus has to be the safe reopening for all our pupils. Working together, we hope to be able to progress the reopening in as safe a manner as possible for all.

Yours in partnership,

John Mitchell Adrienne Darby

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Cathaoirleach, An Bórd Bainistíochta Príomhoide/Principal

Chairperson, Board of Management