



SCOIL MHUIRE TRIM

Patrick Street, Trim, Co. Meath,



Return to school

August 2020

Parent/Guardian Information Booklet

Information contained in this booklet is valid at the time of publication (24th August 2020) - there may be changes as we keep the situation under review - you will be notified of any changes.

You should also read the [Student Information Booklet](#).

Covid 19 Policy Statement & Response Plan

The Board of Management Scoil Mhuire, Trim Board has a **Covid 19 Policy Statement and Response Plan** in place - see website for details.

Worry/Stress/Feelings of Anxiety

If your daughter is feeling anxious about COVID-19 or anything related to it, the Guidance Counsellors Ms Mahon and Ms Whelan are available to help her. If she is feeling concerned about returning to school, that is understandable. We are encouraging students to talk to their parents/guardians about any worries they may have about school return.

We expect that the Department of Health will release a document before schools reopen that will contain vital information for you and your daughter about returning to school and about staying safe. There will also be a national information campaign to support you and your daughter and to keep you informed about COVID-19 and to prevent it spreading. It is important that you read this document carefully when it becomes available before your daughter

returns to school. We will give you further information on this - the DES website is www.education.ie

Online Training on COVID-19 Prevention

We have been advised by the DES that all students will be required to complete online training on the prevention of COVID-19. As soon as we have further information we will provide you with it.

High-risk and vulnerable students

The link below contains a list that shows what a high-risk and at risk person is: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>

If your daughter is in the high-risk or very high risk category, you must contact her Year Head at info@scoilmhuiretrim.ie to let them know. Any student in the high risk or very high risk category cannot return to the school without discussing their condition with the Year Head or Principal. The GP should be consulted prior to any discussion with the school - the school cannot give medical advice to individual students.

Keeping Safe

All official guidelines from the Government and the HSE must be followed. These guidelines are liable to change and we will outline any changes if and when they occur.

Your daughter must maintain physical distance and follow recommendations carefully. Where possible, this should involve keeping two metres (2 m) apart from other students. In classrooms, your daughter must observe a one metre (1 m) physical distance from others around her. However, she must keep a two metre (2 m) distance between herself and her teacher at the top of the room. Signage will be displayed in the school to help students with physical distancing.

Contact with Parents

Students who display symptoms of Covid 19 at home **must not** come to school. Students who are displaying symptoms of Covid 19 in school will need to go home without any delay. Parents must ensure that the phone contact details we have on file are correct – if you have changed phone number in the last year,

please contact the main office immediately at 0469431439 or email at info@scoilmhuiretrim.ie

It is essential that you monitor your phone during the day to check for a phone call from the school and come without delay to collect your daughter should the need arise.

Hygiene

Students entering the school building must sanitise/wash hands

Your daughter must continually wash/sanitise her hands throughout the day. There are hand sanitising/wash stations at each entry/exit point to the school. In addition, there are numerous sanitising stations located around the school. – see map.

On entering the classroom for each class period, your daughter will use the sanitising station in each room to sanitise her hands. Having sanitised her hands she will then work with her teacher to sanitise her own work area.

She does not need to wear protective gloves for school. The use of disposable gloves in the school by students is not generally recommended. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves. Instead, it is far better to keep washing her hands and maintain all other sanitary hygiene.

The use of hand sanitizer does not negate the need to wash hands.

Here is a reminder about correct hand-washing procedures:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

It is essential that your daughter does not touch or hug another student during the day. She must not share any equipment or food with another student.

Your daughter should ensure that she and the people around her follow proper respiratory hygiene. This means covering her mouth and nose with a tissue or her bent elbow when she coughs or sneezes. Used tissues should then be immediately and safely disposed of into a nearby bin and hands washed.

By following good respiratory hygiene, your daughter will protect herself and the people around her from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

There will be additional cleaning staff on the school premises during the school day.

Face Masks

Your daughter is required to wear a face mask in order to minimise the risk of spreading infection. We recommend she has 3 reusable cloth face mask each day.

It may be difficult to get used to wearing a face mask for a long period of time so we recommend that your daughter practices wearing her face mask as much as she can before returning to school.

[Advice on how to properly use face coverings can be found here.](#)

Symptoms of COVID-19

If your daughter is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, she must not come into school. Instead, phone your doctor and follow the HSE guidelines on self-isolation, found below: [HSE guidance on self-isolation](#)

If she experiences any symptoms of COVID-19 while in school, she must let her teacher know immediately and must then go straight to the Principal. If the Principal is not available, she must go to one of the Deputy Principals. This link will show you all of the symptoms.

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html> .

If your daughter has been in contact with someone who has been confirmed with a COVID-19 diagnosis, she should not return to school for two weeks. Instead, follow the HSE guidelines below: [HSE advice on restriction of movement](#)

If your daughter experiences symptoms of COVID-19, there is a plan already in place and we will follow the steps carefully. It is important that you know these steps as well so that you understand what is happening. Please read this information before your daughter returns to school: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/48037-dealing-with-a-suspected-case-of-covid-19-covid-19-response-plan-for-safe-reopening-of-schools/>

a result, we will have different class sizes depending on the size of the room that your daughter is in. In order to allow for physical distancing in rooms, the school has set up a Satellite Room in the Assembly Hall. Some students will occasionally

Resources and Equipment for Subjects

We usually encourage students to share, in keeping with the school ethos but your daughter can no longer share any equipment or books with another student to avoid risk of catching Covid 19. All students should have their own equipment such as pens, pencils, calculators, erasers, art materials, earphones etc.

Specific subjects may require the purchase of additional resources as the school can no longer allow the sharing of equipment.

- The science department is requesting students purchase safety glasses, sourced by the school and only to be purchased from the school.
- Other subjects may have other requirements - students will be advised on return.

For all other subjects, your daughter will be given specific further information from her teachers on return.

All equipment and items of uniform should be labelled clearly with your daughter's name.

Facilities

- **Classrooms/Assembly Hall/Library** and all other available space in the school have been repurposed to maximise space for physical distancing - all excess furniture has been removed. The large Sports Hall will remain in place for PE.
- **Cleaning:** Cleaning and sanitizing of the school building has been ongoing for the last 2 and a half months. In addition to our normal cleaning regime, a Covid Cleaner has also been employed to work in the school & remain on site during the school day cleaning and sanitizing.
- **PPE:** A large stock of PPE has been ordered in accordance with DES guidelines - it includes face masks/visors for students and staff who may have forgotten them (all members of the school community should have their own masks/visors/ wipes for use on desks in classrooms etc - Hand sanitisers are located all around the building
- **Signage:** Extensive signage will be in place around the building to remind everyone of the protocols to stay healthy and Covid free.
- **Lockers** Students will not be permitted to use their lockers within the first six weeks of the return to school. Access to lockers will be reviewed after that time. Your daughter will need to think carefully about what books to carry in her school bag. Many teachers will not require her to bring in text

books for every lesson so she will be able to leave them at home. She should focus on just bringing in her copies/hardbacks to take notes in. She will not need any text books at all for at least the first week back. All she will need is her school journal, copies and writing materials for the first week.

Due to restrictions on access to lockers, each year group will receive a 'text book time-table' which will outline which subjects require textbooks each day. This time-table will be given to students during the first week of return.

- **Water Fountains.** Your daughter will need to bring sufficient water and other drinks to school with her. She will not be able to refill her bottle during the day because the water fountains will be inaccessible for the foreseeable future.
- **Vending machines** will not be available at the beginning of this year. Please make sure that your daughter brings enough food and drinks. This will be reviewed at Mid-Term.
- **Canteen** will be open for limited take-away foods such as ready-made and pre-packed cold food and drink items. Sitting in the canteen will not be allowed. This will be reviewed at Mid-Term. The canteen will not be open during the first week so you must ensure that your daughter brings her lunch every day.
Lunch should be brought in a lunch box and all waste packaging must be taken home.
- **Lunch Times** will be staggered in so far as possible and students will be allowed to go outside to get fresh air at some stage during lunch time. A maximum of 2 students will be permitted to sit on a picnic bench at any time. Students will need to sit diagonally opposite each other on picnic benches ensuring at least 1m physical distance.

Uniform

It is vital that your daughter wears her correct uniform at all times as we can no longer provide replacements for the day. Your daughter must consider a face mask, hand sanitiser, wipes and a box of tissues or handkerchiefs as part of her uniform.

She will also need to bring in earphones into school every day. This is in case she is unexpectedly assigned to the Satellite Room for online learning during the day at any point. The school cannot provide earphones to her due to contamination risks. Her earphones must be clearly labelled with her name.

PE & Changing Rooms

The changing rooms will be out of use until such time as the Government removes the requirement for physical distancing. This means that your daughter will wear her school tracksuit into school on the day she is timetabled to have PE. She does not need to bring her uniform as she will remain in her tracksuit for the whole school day.

Your daughter's own tracksuits and or clothing such as leggings and T-shirts must not be worn. She will be given a PE 'pass card' for the day she is timetabled to have PE at the beginning of the year and must carry it with her on the days when she is wearing her school tracksuit.

Wearing her school tracksuit into school on a day when she doesn't have PE will be considered a breach of the Code of Behaviour, which is currently being updated accordingly.

Extra Curricular Activities

Extracurricular activities may have to be curtailed - any restrictions will be in line with HSE advice.

Movement around the building

There will be many new COVID-19 signs around the school building reminding your daughter of the key rules and recommendations.

Your daughter must walk on the right hand side of the corridors at all times. This is in order to minimise the risk mixing with other students walking in her vicinity.

Arrangements for Break Times and Lunch Times.

Your daughter must eat her lunch in the room allocated to her at the start of the year. It is vital that she does not go to other rooms as this will increase the risk of spreading the virus in our school. There will be increased supervision by teachers on corridors to ensure students do not move around during lunch.

She can use the toilet at break times but must not linger on the corridors. She must not share any food with someone in her class. This is to minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19 among students.

Homework and Online Engagement

Please make sure that your daughter knows how to access her Google Classroom account and joins all of the relevant classroom groups in her subjects. She should be checking regularly into her school email and Google Classroom accounts to keep up to date with school and subject specific information. Her passwords should be kept safe and private.

Parents are also encouraged to join their daughter's Google Classrooms which provides a weekly email summary of their daughter's work containing information about missing work, upcoming work and class activity.

Make sure that your daughter knows how to upload documents to Google Classroom and to her student folder [if she is in the Junior Cycle, she will already have one set up]. She will need to know how to do this in case that she needs to upload homework online.

Appropriate Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour is being revised so as to incorporate the school's expectations and requirements of all students to ensure a safe school environment for everyone. Further details to come. All students have a responsibility to engage in physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette – no hugging, no physical contact, no sharing equipment, no congregating in groups. Any misbehaviour in the context of the school's efforts to keep everyone safe and healthy will be dealt with under **St Joseph's College - Code of Behaviour. An appendix will be attached to the Code of Behaviour which deals with protocols and expectations around Covid 19 safety**

Parents and students will be consulted on the revised Code of Behaviour.

Physical Distancing Outside School

Students/parents should not congregate at the school gates or in the school grounds prior to entry. Please continue to ensure physical distancing of 2 metres (2 m) where possible and 1 metre (1 m) at least when in the vicinity of the school.

It is vital that students engage in physical distancing outside of school - any irresponsible behaviour in this regard could potentially put everyone in the

school community at risk. **In particular while outside of school we expect that students must not breach HSE guidelines on gatherings for groups.**

Your daughter will be met at the main school door by the Senior Leadership Team and advised where to go on the 1st day of return.

Travel to School & Arrival

Please consider encouraging your daughter to walk or cycle to school if safe to do so, avoiding use of public transport where at all possible. Of course we understand that some students must of necessity travel to school by public transport. We do not yet know how easy or otherwise it will be for students to travel on buses when schools reopen. Our Year Heads & tutors will be liaising with students who travel by bus and taking into account the difficulties that may arise.

Visits/Access to School by Visitors/Parents

Will be strictly by prior appointment only and restricted to essential visits only.

Communication via email/phone/note in your daughter's journal is to be used instead. All essential visitors will be required to take a temperature check and wear a mask.

Contact Tracing

All essential visitors will be required to provide name and contact details on arrival – for contact tracing purposes. This information will be kept in accordance with St Joseph's Data Protection Policy

Forgotten Items/Lunch etc

The only items that parents will be allowed to drop off at school for a student will be an essential item.

In the context of the current pandemic a forgotten textbook/equipment/ are not considered essential. A phone call must be made to the Front Office to sanction any visit to the school - only essential visits will be permitted

Collecting Students [Early]

Parents should give students a note in their journal giving permission and explaining the reason for leaving school early.

Parents who are collecting students must wait outside the school building until the student comes out.

In cases where parents have to collect students unexpectedly a phone call should be made to the school in advance & the parents should wait outside.

We expect parents to engage in appropriate physical distancing in the vicinity of the school.

And finally, let's all work together to keep our school community safe in these unprecedented times. The ever-evolving situation will require constant review and we ask for your support and understanding as we adapt to the new normal.