

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We would like to welcome you back after what we hope was a relaxing Christmas break.

As you know from the recent government announcements, we are moving our teaching online. Fortunately, as a school we are in a position to move online easily as we are an iPad school and have the technology at our fingertips for our pupils and staff to easily work from home.

We would like to let you know of a few details for the coming weeks. We have taken on board suggestions from all stakeholders from the last lockdown and implemented them into our new plan to ensure our remote learning is even stronger this time around.

The Minister for Education Norma Foley TD and Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion announced on Wednesday 30 December that the school Christmas break would be extended by three days, with schools reopening on Monday 11 January.

That decision was made so as to allow every member of the school community to follow public health advice closely and minimise their contacts before people return to school.

However, the Government has since changed its stance on this due to surging Covid-19 infections with several thousand positive cases a day now compared to less than 300 per day before the Christmas holidays.

While transmission of the virus in school-going children is still below average it has, since Christmas day started to increase sharply every day since and at a very fast rate. There has been a significant recent deterioration in all of the key disease indicators (case numbers, hospital admissions, ICU occupancy etc.) and the potential impact of new, more transmissible, variants of the virus.

If schools were to open, this could lead to an even higher level of ongoing transmission.

We would like to inform you of a few changes for the coming term, these have been outlined below.

- There will be a new timetable for students and staff to follow. This will be circulated to all pupils and will be available online and attached to this email. We are working on a reduced ***live teaching timetable*** to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is of a high standard and that pupils and staff do not become overwhelmed with work, whilst still ensuring that the curriculum is being delivered. Pupils will still get the opportunity to complete the set number of hours per subject, required by the department of education in the form of live classes. We want to maximise on our teaching and learning time this year and ensure that pupils are working to the best of their ability and not bogged down in hours of work. This has been linked below.
- Pupils will be required to log on for tutor time at 9am each morning. A roll call will be taken by the tutor each morning. This gives pupils an opportunity to chat with classmates and the tutor to ensure that pupils are still getting some daily interaction with peers. It also gives pupils time in the mornings to touch base with their tutor and have any questions answered.
- Classes are set for 1 hour but 30 minutes of this may be live teaching and the other 30 may be an independent assigned task. Teachers may use this time in different ways to ensure that teaching and learning is beneficial. There is a break between each class to allow for consolidation of knowledge and to complete any tasks set by the teacher.
- Pupils will be sent a link to their emails from each teacher adding them to a Microsoft team for each of their classes. Please ensure you remind your child to check their emails as this is where they will get notified of the live classes which will be held in their teams app. If you have any problems with this, ask your child to log this with the iteam, watch the ipad information session video or log it in the remote learning parent/guardian form which are all available on the website and we will try to resolve this as soon as possible. They can also mention this to their tutor in the mornings.
- Pupils will upload any work to their one not under the 'School closure 2021' heading. This is where the teacher can correct the work and give feedback.
- Parents/Guardians can check the website for an ipad information video to help with any ICT issues.

- Pupils should have their cameras turned off at all times. There are remote learning guidelines for Clonturk CC which all pupils should follow. Please read these carefully with your child. These are linked below.
- Tutor time will be held at a later time of 10.45am this coming Monday morning to allow teachers and pupils time to set up and assist with any IT issues.
- During tutor time on Monday, tutors will go through the contract that has been sent to pupils. Please read this carefully with your child. This has been attached.
- Tutors will go through this to remind pupils of what is required of them during online lessons.
- Remote teaching will then take place from 11.15am on Monday morning.
- SEN pupils will still have extra support in the form of an SNA or smaller break out rooms to ensure they are fully supported through this time. This timetable will follow shortly.

Please email the school if you have any queries and we will do our best to get back to you.

We look forward to starting back to school this Monday.

Regards,

Clonturk CC