



5th January 2022

RE: January Reopening 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Firstly, on behalf of all here in Duleek GNS, I would like to wish you all a very happy and safe new year. I hope you and your families are keeping well during this current wave of the Omicron variant. We are looking forward to welcoming the pupils back to school tomorrow and hope you all enjoyed some special family time over the Christmas break.

Please see some important reminders below as we endeavour to keep our school community as safe as possible:

- If your child is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not send them to school and book a PCR test online or through your GP.
- **Staffing issues:** Please note that we will face further challenges in relation to staffing due to the volume of cases in the community and the associated restriction guidelines that must be adhered to. We have done and will continue, to exhaust every avenue to find a suitable substitute teacher to cover classes. However, please note that our special education teachers (SET) will have to be redeployed to cover classes and we may find ourselves in a situation where classes will have to switch to remote learning. Obviously, this will be a last resort and we will give you as much notice as possible if this is the case.
- When the school is notified that a child who has been in school during the infectious period has a positive (detected) COVID-19 PCR test result, a letter will be sent out outlining how they can access free antigen tests for their children in the identified pod. If there is more than one PCR positive case in a class then antigen tests can be arranged for the entire class. The Antigen Freephone number is: 1800 110055 or parents may order antigen tests online via www.hse.ie/schooltest. All children in the pod/class can continue to attend school as long as they remain asymptomatic and they do not have a positive COVID-19 antigen or PCR test result. **Please also note, the only way we are made aware of confirmed cases is if parents inform us. We do not hear from the HSE.**
- **Children under 13 years who are household close contacts** must restrict their movements for 14 days and they are offered PCR testing at day 0 and day 10. On receipt of a day 10 not-detected PCR test result, they may exit restricted movements. It is important that anyone who has been identified as a close contact, is very aware of



COVID-19 symptoms, and isolate and undergo testing should they develop any symptoms.

- Ventilation: Please note the best form of ventilation is through the opening of doors and windows. All classes have CO2 monitors to identify when more ventilation is needed. It is very challenging to keep a good level of ventilation whilst trying to maintain comfortable temperatures. **Therefore, we are advising that your child wears additional layers to keep warm** during the colder weather. We are seeking further guidance on HEPA filters for our particular circumstances, but it is important to remember that HEPA filters are not a replacement for good ventilation (i.e. opening windows).
- Please refer to the following link for Department of Education Guidance on the wearing of face coverings for pupils from 3rd – 6th Class [Guidance on the use of Face Coverings- in Primary Schools](#)
- Please ensure you adhere to any current isolation periods if you or any member of your household is deemed a close contact. For the most up to date advice on isolation, please click [here for under 13s](#) and [here for adults and over 13s](#) for the HSE/HSPC isolation guide.

Wishing you all a happy and safe 2022,
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Pádraig McGovern'.

Pádraig McGovern,
Principal,
Duleek GNS