



Parents' Update –August 2021

Dear Parents(s)/Guardian(s)

As we have now completed the induction programme of all our students for the academic year I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a number of important points.

Promoting Wellbeing.....

Promoting Wellbeing, among our College community is a priority to ensure a successful return to school for our students and staff as we continue to manage the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It has impacted on everyone's wellbeing at different times and in different ways. Our young people are adapting well and will emerge more resilient, stronger and having learned new skills.

We will continue to educate, share information, and promote the Junior Cycle Key Skills – Managing Myself, Staying Active and Staying Connected – to help our students manage themselves through this period of change.

Young people can, with family and school support, proactively preserve their own wellbeing by getting enough sleep, establishing routines, eating healthily, getting physical exercise, taking time to connect with friends and taking time to engage in activities.

Connect: Make time to connect with people, family and friends, at home and in school. By staying connected and nurturing these relationships, we feel happier, more secure which gives us a better sense of purpose.

Be Active: Look for ways to be active everyday – go for a walk or a run! Being physically active can improve our mental health and wellbeing.

Take Notice: Be curious! Pay attention to the present moment – to your thoughts, feelings and the world around you.

Keep Learning: Try something new! Setting a new challenge or learning a new skill will increase confidence which can improve mental health and wellbeing.

Volunteer your Time: Being linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and create connectedness with people around you.



Attendance & Punctuality

Parents are now requested to email their daughter/son's Tutor to inform them of any absence. This email should be sent to the tutor before 8.30a.m. (*A full list of email contacts is posted on the College website*)

As our Swipe Card System remains out of use due to Covid 19 restrictions students who are late for school will receive a late stamp in their journal before they join their class. Students who are consistently late may be suspended from the College.

- Students will be allowed access to the College from 8.20a.m. each morning and at 1.10p.m each afternoon.
- All students must be in attendance by 8.45a.m. and 1.15p.m.
- Students who are late for school will receive a late stamp and students who are repeatedly late may be suspended from the College.

Covid 19 Response Plan - Code of Behaviour & Lunchtime Arrangements

The Board of Management updated the College's Covid 19 Response Plan. The document is available to download from our website. This is a living document and will be updated on a regular basis.

Please note the following changes to the College's Behaviour Code, Attendance Policy & Lunchtime Arrangements.

Changes to the Code of Behaviour

The health, safety, physical and mental wellbeing of all school staff and students are of absolute importance to the school management. A student who is considered to have deliberately contravened the College's health and safety protocols in relation to Covid 19 and by their actions, placed the welfare of students and/or staff at risk, may be suspended from the College.

Lunchtime Arrangements

Students will no longer have access to the shops at the front of the College at lunchtime. Students will be advised that they are not to congregate outside the shops before or after school.

Managing Cases of Covid 19 in a School Setting – HSE Guidelines

The Department of Education & Skills and the HSE have issued revised guidelines to all schools in relation to the management of Covid 19 in schools. We have posted the HSE guidelines on our website.

The response to confirmed cases or outbreaks of Covid-19 in the community or in a school is the responsibility of and will be led and managed by **Public Health HSE**. All decisions as to appropriate actions following a confirmed case or outbreak will be made by their teams in the context of a full Public Health Risk Assessment procedure according to the principles set out in the document attached. Any actions to be taken by the school will be communicated directly by Public Health HSE. School management will be informed as and when such actions such as exclusion of children or staff; partial or full closure, are deemed necessary on public

health grounds. If the school is not so informed, it has **not been deemed necessary** by Public Health.

We will continue to zone the school by year groups and for the next academic year the following arrangements will remain in place:

Year Group	Location	Enter school	Bathrooms
First Years	Rooms 42 – 54	Side Entrance	Beside Room 51
Second Years	Rooms 2- 11	Main Entrance	Rooms 6 & 11
Third Years	Room 30 – 35	Enter at Room 26	Opposite Rooms 12-14
Transition Years	Rooms 12 -13 & 3B-4B	Enter at Room 16	Old Sports Hall/Block B
Fifth Years	Rooms 36 – 46	Enter at Students Entrance	Outside old canteen
Sixth Years	Rooms 1A – 10A	New Build	New Build

Communication & MS Teams Meetings

We will continue to host meetings with parents on our MS Teams platform in the coming weeks:

- Meeting for First Year Parents Monday 30th August
- Meeting for Parents of Sixth Years Tuesday 14th September
- Meeting for Parents of Third Years Tuesday 21st September

We will post reminders to parents in advance of these meetings.

Maintaining Uniform Standards

Over the last few months of final term there was an increase in students who were not fully compliant with the College's Uniform Policy. The Management of the College showed leniency in many cases due to the Covid 19 pandemic. However, the Management of the College will not tolerate a similar lack of compliance in the new academic year. It is imperative that all students honour the College's Uniform Policy. We remind students on a regular basis that they make a major statement about their commitment to the College by the manner in which they wear their uniform.

Footwear - what is acceptable and what is not acceptable?

The College policy is that students may wear black shoes (including Dubes). The wearing of Runners/Vans is not acceptable. We are now appealing to all parents to support us in regard to this matter.

PE Uniform

The College policy states clearly that only the official school PE tracksuit must be worn for PE Classes & extracurricular activities. Senior students, in particular, have not been fully compliant in relation to the wearing of the school hoodie and tracksuit bottoms.

Leaving Certificate 2021

The 2021 Leaving Certificate Results will be published on Friday 3rd September and we extend our best wishes to all our Leaving Certificate & Leaving Certificate Applied Students the very best.

Maximising Teaching Opportunities for Third & Sixth Years

We have sought additional allocation from the Department of Education & Skills and we have been able to reduce class sizes for some Third & Sixth Years. We are at present working on the formation of additional Maths & English classes so that all exam students maximise their access to their teachers. Consequently, there will be some realignment of classes and exam students will be informed of this in the coming week.

Allergy Awareness

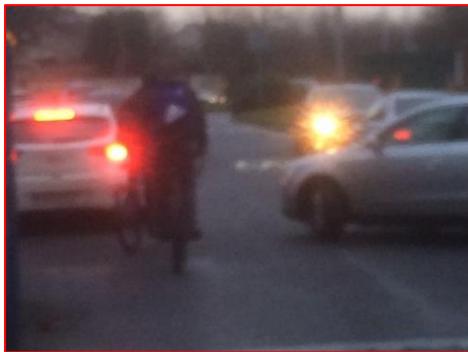
We would like to remind all members of the school community of our allergy awareness procedures. Nuts or products containing nuts should not be consumed in the College and should not be brought onto the premises. We thank you for your co-operation with this matter.

Health & Safety Parking at front of the school

We are reminding all parents not to park on the school grounds or on the slip road at the entrance to the College.

As more students intend to cycle to the College in the coming weeks it is imperative that they are given every opportunity to cycle to and from school safely. The images below were taken some time ago and represent the challenges facing students as they attempt to cycle out of the main gates of the College.

Parents whose children have a medical condition are permitted to enter the College grounds but must do so with extreme care.



Cycling to school – Wear a helmet

Can I once again make a special appeal to all students cycling to school to wear a helmet.

Getting it right

The Active Mobility Advisory Panel's recommendations to the Government include the mandatory use of helmets when cyclists are travelling on roads. While some people are averse to the proposal, The Straits Times shows how a good helmet can help save lives.

What to look out for when buying a bicycle helmet

LIGHTWEIGHT
Good-quality helmets can weigh as little as 300g

VENTILATION OPENINGS
Allow good air circulation and heat dissipation

Correct way to wear your helmet

It should sit low on your forehead – about two finger-widths above the eyebrows.



The two side plastic pieces on the straps should fit just below the ears.

Tighten the chin strap such that you can feel the inside of the helmet pressing down on the top of your head when your jaws are half open.

- The helmet **must always be buckled.**
- The buckle should be just under the chin – about a finger's width of space between the strap and the chin.

The makings of a good helmet

First layer: Cap shell

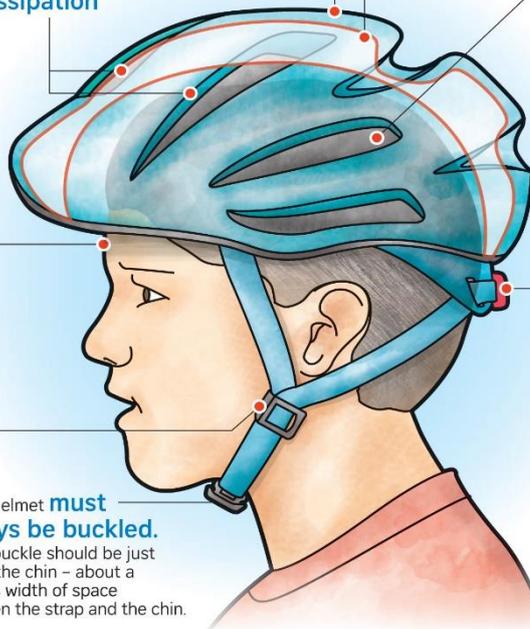
- Made of strong, tough polycarbonate
- Ensures the uniform dispersion of the impact force

Second layer: Foam layer

- Made from dense expanded polystyrene
- Effectively absorbs the impact force

Third layer: Pad liner

- Dense mesh structure
- Removable

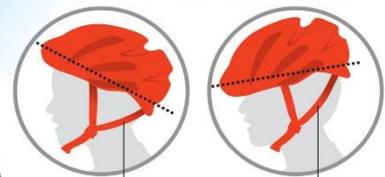


FINAL CHECK

- Gently roll the helmet back and forth and sideways while wearing it.
- A useful rule of thumb is that it should not move more than 1.5cm in any direction.

Adjust the locking mechanism for **back-of-head fit.**

Wrong way to wear your helmet



Poor helmet fit and straps are loose

Sources: UNITED STATES CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WWW.EXPLAINTHATSTUFF.COM STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

Summary Calendar 2021-2022

Sixth Year Meeting	Ms Teams Meeting for Parents of Sixth Years	Tues 14 th Sept
Third Year Meeting	Ms Teams Meeting for Parents of Third Years	Tues 21 st Sept
JCT Planning Day		Tuesday 14 th September 2021
College Closed		Monday 27 th September 2021
Midterm Break		Monday 25 th October – Friday 29 th October 2021 (incl.)
College Closed		Monday 6 th December 2021
First Term Ends		Wednesday 22 nd December 2021
Christmas Holidays		Thursday 23 rd December 2021 – Wed. 5 th January 2022 (incl.)

Second Term		College re-opens on Thursday 6 th January 2022
College Closed		Tuesday 25 th January 2022 – Junior Cycle Staff Training Day Department of Education & Skills.
Midterm Break		Monday 21 st – Friday 25 th February 2022 (incl.)
College Closed		Thursday 17 th & Friday 18 th March 2022 – St. Patrick's Day
Second Term Ends		Friday 8 th April 2022
Easter Holidays		Monday 11 th April – Friday 22 nd April 2022 (incl.)

Third Term		College re-opens Monday 25 th April 2022
Bank Holiday		College closed Monday 2 nd May 2022
Third Term Ends		Friday 3 rd June 2022
State Examinations 2022		Wednesday 8 th June 2022

*Junior & Leaving Certificate Examinations commence on Wednesday 8th June 2022

Please note that the above dates may be subject to change as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic