



# Scoil Thomáis

Laurel Lodge, Castleknock, Dublin 15, D15 VWO2  
www.scoilthomais.ie

Dear Parents / Guardians,

This is to inform you of the plans and procedures now in place for the re-opening of Scoil Thomáis for pupils and staff on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 for Senior Infants, First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes**. The first day of school for **Junior Infants will be Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**, the timetable for the first weeks of school has been notified to Inf parents.

**Please check the weblink to the list of classes and teachers for September 2020 - and school times for your child's class for dates 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> September. Please note your child's teacher name and classroom number, start & finish times, and allocated gate entrance - \*\*\*\* Classes & Teachers for Sept 2020 and Return to School Timetable for Week 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> September\*\*\*\***

Many of you may have lots of questions and concerns about the return to school, what will classrooms look like? what safety measures are in place? and how will the school day be organised? Please log onto [www.scoilthomais](http://www.scoilthomais.ie) for updated information,

**Here is an outline of the plans and organisation for the return to school. This will guide you and your children and provide reassurance that by following the Department of Education and HSE guidelines, the return to school will be managed to minimise the risk of Covid 19 and maximise the safety of everyone. Please note, as the present Covid-19 situation develops over the coming weeks and months, some of the school's current arrangements and procedures may have to be changed or modified depending on public health advice. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) notice will be added to the website this week.**

Parents/Guardians and all adults who support our pupils have an important role in helping children to get back to school and it is vital that we all work together in a spirit of co-operation and positivity over the coming weeks.

**For the return to school, it will be necessary to stagger the number of classes entering and exiting the school in the morning and at hometime to ease congestion and the congregation of persons on or near the school building. Classes will have nominated entrance gates and routes to their new classroom and these arrangements must be strictly adhered to so that all the pupils can adjust to their new routines as soon as possible.**

We are aware that having different starting and home times for classes will cause some disruption for parents and families but please bear with us as the return to school is a very different experience for everyone this year. The plan below is for the first week of school ( ie Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September) and will be revised for the following week as we see how we are managing over the first few days of school. It is intended that the staggered morning and hometimes will be readjusted to 'as near to normal times as possible' over the coming weeks. The school start and finish timetables for class levels will be updated for week 2 and week 3/4 and will be notified via the school website as soon as possible after school reopens.

## **Morning and Hometime Arrangements for Senior Infants- 6<sup>th</sup> Class for Week 1 beginning Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September**

For each of these days, classes from Senior Infants to Sixth Classes will come to and finish school at the times shown.

- Junior Classes ( Infant – 2<sup>nd</sup> Class) may have one parent/guardian accompany them onto the school grounds
- Senior Classes ( 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> ) are expected to walk from the school gates to their teacher/classroom **WITHOUT** a parent.
- School staff will be at the school gates and in the yard to help and direct pupils to/from their classroom over these days.

Classes	Parents Note	Come to School	Hometime	Gate	Route
Senior Infants	Parent/guardian to accompany to class line	9am – 9.15am	1.40pm	Community Centre Gate – C	Teacher meets class in yard
5 <sup>th</sup> Classes	Pupils only NO parents/guardians	9am – 9.15am	1.40pm	Rise Gate -R	Walk directly to classroom
6 <sup>th</sup> Classes	Pupils only NO parents/guardians	9am – 9.15am	1.40pm	Vale Gate -V	Walk directly to classroom
1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Parent/guardian to accompany to class line	10am – 10.15am	2.40pm	Community Centre Gate – C	Teacher meets class in yard
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Parent/guardian to accompany to class line	10am – 10.15am	2.40pm	Shops Gate - S	Teacher meets classes in yard
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	Pupils only NO parents/guardians	10am – 10.15am	2.40pm	Rise Gate - R	Teacher meets class in yard
4 <sup>th</sup> Class	Pupils only NO parents/guardians	10am – 10.15am	2.40pm	Vale Gate – V	Teacher meets class in yard



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Here is some other useful information points to assist you to prepare your child for return to school

**The School has a Covid19 School Policy (available on the school website). A Scoil Thomáis Covid-19 Response Plan based on the DES ROADMAP FOR REOPENING SCHOOLS will be available on the school website over the coming days. Other practical information will be also posted on the school website – please check for updates**

**SCHOOL UNIFORMS:** Pupils wear full school uniform (1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Classes ) each day - tracksuit uniforms for PE days as advised by teacher. Junior Infants & Senior Infants wear tracksuit uniforms every day. All uniform items are available at Leddy School Uniform Suppliers. School navy shorts may be worn during the month of September. Uniforms are not required to be washed every day however, the school advises that it is good practice that children change out of their uniform as soon as they arrive home from school each afternoon.

**FACE COVERINGS:** School staff have been issued with visors and staff will wear visor/masks whenever a distance of 2m cannot be observed. All adults entering the school premises or on the school grounds SHOULD WEAR A FACE COVERING. Children under 13 years do not have to wear masks - however if you wish your child to wear a mask he/she must be able to manage to place and remove it themselves as school staff cannot assist with pupil masks.

**VISITING THE SCHOOL:** All visitors or parents seeking to come to the school must make an appointment and meetings with teachers or other school staff are strictly by appointment only – please phone the school 8201022 or email secretary@scoilthomais as necessary. All visitors coming to meetings or other school business must sign the contact tracing log at the school office.

**SCHOOL LUNCH:** Pupils bring lunch to school as usual – remember healthy lunches and a drink. Please label all lunch boxes and drinks bottles and no sharing of foods or drinks. Reminder that NUT BASED FOODS CANNOT BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL AS THERE ARE PUPILS IN MANY CLASSES WITH NUT INTOLERANCE CONDITIONS. Pupils will have their lunch in classrooms.

**FORGOTTEN ITEMS FOR YOUR CHILD:** Please make sure that your child brings his/her school lunch/drinks etc to school. We cannot facilitate dropping lunches/ school bags etc into the school office except in cases of absolute need.

**COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL/Teacher/SNA/Principal/Deputy Principal:** Parents who wish to send a message to teacher/SNA can (i) write a note in their child's school journal (ii) send in a letter to teacher/SNA with your child (iii) email the school office secretary - and the email will be forwarded to Teacher/SNA/PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (Teachers/SNAs cannot answer emails during classtime) (iv) arrange for a phone call via the school office (v) Parent or Teacher/SNA requests for meetings must be kept to a minimum and must be by appointment only.

**RETURNING FROM TRAVELS ABROAD** – please follow the Department of Foreign Affairs advice regarding travel quarantine – additionally the BOM advises that all pupils and parents returning from any travel abroad allow 14 days before returning to school in the interests of the safety of all the school community.

**SCHOOL GATES AND YARD AREA** – please do not congregate at the school gates in the morning at home time – all persons at the school should observe social distancing. Only Parents/guardians of junior classes ( Infants-2<sup>nd</sup>) should come to the school yard as senior pupils ( from 3<sup>rd</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> ) should come through the school gates without a parent. There will be additional school staff on duty in the school yard to assist pupils in getting to/from their classline/classroom.

**YARDTIME/BREATHING:** Pupils will go to the yard each day , weather permitting, however there will be only two classes on each yard area with classes allocated to separate areas of the yard. There will be new rosters for yard time and supervision arrangements for all classes. Windows and doors of classrooms will be open whenever possible to allow for maximum circulation of air and ventilation of rooms.

**NEW CLASSROOM BUILD:** Please be aware that the new classroom build is in progress causing some disruption to the school yard at the area facing the back of the shops - the builders have placed hoarding around the site so please stay clear of this area. The ENTRANCE/EXIT door at Classroom 6 cannot be used due to the school build. Construction traffic will not be allowed onto the school grounds during morning entry/hometime collection of pupils



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**SANITISATION AND CLEANING:** There will be additional cleaning in place throughout the whole school and common touch areas will be cleaned regularly and classrooms will be sanitised daily. Sanitisation units are installed at each classroom. Disposable paper towels are in all pupils and staff toilet areas and regular handwashing will be advised for pupils and staff. All pupils should have a small bottle of hand sanitiser for their own personal use during the school day

**The Department of Education has helpful advice and videos for parents/guardians to assist with the return to school**  
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a04fc-advice-for-students-and-their-families/>

**CODE of BEHAVIOUR:** Pupils are expected to co-operate with all the necessary procedures and instructions of school staff in relation to safe practices to minimise the risk of Covid 19. The school aims to ensure a culture of positivity and togetherness when dealing with Covid 19 procedures and protocols at all levels. Pupils who deliberately endanger the health and safety of other pupils or staff members will be regarded as breaching the school Code of Behaviour and will be sanctioned accordingly. Negative behaviour which in any way undermines or targets a pupil or staff member based on symptoms or a diagnosis of Covid19 will be dealt with under the school AntiBullying Policy and/or Code of Behaviour. Deliberate spitting or coughing or threatening another pupil or member of staff in school in relation to Covid 19 will be considered a serious offence and will be dealt with accordingly under the Code of Behaviour and sanctions imposed up to and including suspension.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS UNWELL** – please do not send your child to school if he/she is unwell or is displaying symptoms of Covid, in all such cases please seek the advice of your doctor. If your child is unwell in school or is displaying symptoms associated with Covid, he/she will be brought to the designated ISOLATION AREA and a parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to take the child home immediately. Please co-operate with this request in the interests of the safety of all the school community and have some family member on call for such emergencies. In cases of a confirmed diagnosis of Covid the HSE will notify all relevant contact persons following from the contact tracing process. The HSE will advise the school on the action to be taken and all necessary procedures in such cases and this information will be communicated to parents/guardians as necessary. The school must respect the confidentiality of all health related issues for staff and pupils and cannot discuss details of any such cases.

**SCHOOL STAFF WHO ARE UNWELL** cannot attend school and a substitute teacher/SNA will be sourced to cover for the absent staff member so please be aware that such cases may arise during the school year for your child's class.

**CLASSROOMS** have been rearranged to comply with DES recommended layouts and pupils must cooperate with the placements organised by teacher for the class. Excess furniture and toys etc have been removed and sharing of school equipment and resources amongst pupils will be minimised. The school library, computer room and PE hall will not be operational for classes for some time, this will be reviewed as the weeks go by.

*All our school staff are very much looking forward to welcoming your children back to school on 1<sup>st</sup> September. We recognise that the return to school may cause anxiety for some and delight for others. Our priority is to ensure the smooth and safe return to school for everyone and we are confident that the children will settle back quickly into the routine of the school day when they see all their friends and teachers and SNAs. The planning and organisation that has been done over the past few weeks by school staff and management aims to offer a balanced approach that protects the health and wellbeing of pupils and staff and also allows for the resumption of teaching and learning activities.*

Finally, we especially remember our 2020 Sixth Class pupils who will be starting in their Secondary Schools this week. Also advance congratulations to all our 6<sup>th</sup> Class Confirmation pupils on their special day on this Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August. May the sun shine on them and their families!!

Best wishes to all our parents & pupils and staff for the 2020/21 new school year

*Mary McGarry, Principal & Mary Ryan, Deputy Principal*      *Date: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020*