



25 March 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

We have received confirmation from the Dept. of Education & Skills that all schools will remain closed until 19 April 2020.

The decision has been taken following advice from the National Public Health Emergency as part of efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19. All young people are urged to practice social distancing and to minimise physical contact to keep themselves and others healthy and to limit the spread of infection. Minister for Education & Skills Joe McHugh said *'This is an extremely difficult time for everyone not least students and their parents. The decision to keep schools closed until after the Easter Break is based on public Health advice. My message to students facing exams is that they should keep focussed, keep working and try as much as possible to prepare as normal for the State Exams. We are doing everything in our power to make sure those exams happen.'*

For those students doing the Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate the State Examinations Commission has published a FAQ for candidates on their website:-
<https://www.examinations.ie/misc-doc/BI-SE-67826275.pdf>

In addition to keeping on top of the academic work I would also like to remind students of the benefits of keeping well and healthy and I would recommend that students try and incorporate some physical fitness into their day whilst still maintaining social distance. The Physical Education teachers, Ms Donna Graham, Ms Sorcha Furlong and Ms Emma Keavney would encourage students to plan some exercise every day either on her own or with family members throughout this situation as it is important not only for physical health but also mental health.

Finally, schools have been asked to communicate the following message from President Michael D Higgins.

<https://president.ie/en/media-library/news-releases/statement-from-president-of-ireland-following-his-signature-of-the-health-preservation-and-protection-and-other-emergency-measures-in-the-public-interest-bill-2020>

President Higgins is urging young people to respond in a generous way to the Health Service Executive's advice on measures to alleviate the spread of Covid19. T This further reinforces the pronouncements of An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, other government ministers and health

officials on the responsibility of all to adhere to social distance guidelines and to respond to HSE advice at this time of national emergency.

Students are reminded that they can play their part in the national effort to curb the spread and the worse effects of the Covid-19 virus. Schools are closed to students at present to prevent the spread of this highly contagious and potentially lethal virus. By avoiding assembling and socialising in groups, students will be playing their part in supporting the national health campaign.

I hope that you and your family are keeping well and minding yourselves at this time. I ask you to continue to encourage your daughter to stay focussed and to study each day until the Easter break.

Yours sincerely

Peter Macnamara

Principal