



Monday 20th April 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian and student,

I hope you and your family have had a restful Easter break and that you are all keeping safe and well in these challenging times. We appreciate how challenging the current Covid-19 crisis has been for families, and we are working hard to support all students and parents/guardians in our school community as the crisis evolves. We are all missing the normality of school life as we now adjust to new routines.

The past few weeks have presented many challenges, but the collective effort of our entire school community (students, staff and parents/guardians) in adapting to these new ways of working with remote learning is truly admirable. We are very proud that so many students and our staff worked very hard before Easter to minimise disruption to learning. Everyone in the school community has embraced the new term called 'Distance Learning' in an effort to fulfil a continuity of learning.

All of our teaching staff are working hard to ensure that learning continues, as we start a new term we are once again appealing for the engagement of all of our students in this remote learning process; your support as parents and guardians in ensuring student engagement is very important.

As you are aware, schools have remained closed to students since 13 March 2020. The current health advice is that all schools will remain closed to students until further notice.

We want to ensure to continue with our efforts with a focus on teaching, learning and the provision of effective feedback to students.

Students are asked to adhere to their school timetable

Wellbeing

We begin by asking you to look out for each other and if you are genuinely concerned for the wellbeing of one of your peers please contact me, Ms. Walsh, your Year Head or the Guidance Counsellor Grace Titus.

We have shared a number of resources on Wellbeing on our social media platforms.

This year Presentation Listowel is part of **Jigsaws One Good School Initiative**. This initiative aims to support young people and their mental health. Now more than ever parents need information on how they can support their daughters' mental health and wellbeing. We would like to develop a shared responsibility for mental health across our school community. This involves you as parents. Parents can avail of two **free one hour online** courses as part of our **One Good School** initiative. We would be delighted if you could take the time to complete one or both of the courses. They are on the following

- **Parent Self Care** - Encourage and enable parents to implement self-care strategies.
- **Mental Health Awareness** - this course aims to increase parents' awareness and understanding of youth mental health.



Please check out the website link below to complete the one hour course. We are hoping to get as many parents as possible to complete one of the two of the courses so we are one step closer to certification of being One Good School along with building a stronger community that has a greater understanding about youth mental health.

<https://jigsawonline.ie/parents-and-guardians/>

Jigsaw social media for students

Jigsaw social media channels are also a great source of information and support. It may be worth keeping an eye on them for updates and content developed by clinicians

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JigsawYMH/>
 - Twitter: @JigsawYM
 - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/jigsaw_ymh/

Students in Sixth Year and Third Year

We are especially mindful of the decision that affects students in Sixth Year and Third Year regarding the Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate examinations.

As you are aware, the Leaving Certificate has been postponed to late July/early August. The key priority for us as a school is that we will continue to help, guide and support Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle students during this demanding time. We will continue to support our students through our pastoral supports over the weeks and months ahead in these uncertain times.

State Exams – Latest Update

The State Examinations Commission have issued the following update regarding this years Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied and Junior Certificate Exams:

- Leaving Certificate written examinations postponed until late July/August.
- Junior Cycle examinations in June are replaced with school-based exams and assessments early in the new school year.
- As part of the wider public health measures, schools are closed until further notice.
- Practical examinations for Leaving Certificate students which were due to have been held in May are deferred. They will be rescheduled for late July/early August.
- The new Leaving Certificate exam timetable will be confirmed in early June.
- The admissions process for higher education, managed by the Central Applications Office (CAO), will operate as closely as possible to the usual time frame for offers and the entry date for first year students will be delayed.

Information on exam and assessment schedules, including the Leaving Certificate Applied and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme is available on the website of the State Examinations Commission: www.examinations.ie



The Department of Education and Skills and the State Examinations Commission are making every effort to support all students through this challenging time.

Students facing examinations have been asked to keep focused and to keep working in preparation for the exams which are now scheduled for July. More details will be forthcoming in the near future regarding the Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate examinations and we will bring this information to your attention without delay.

The new timetable will also include an LCA Task and Interview Plan – these exams will also take place during the main August window. The Minister’s decision also means that you will do the exams over a much more spread-out timetable and that the exams may not conclude until the early days of September.

Planning ahead

The Minister’s plan is that we work remotely until June 1st then take a two-week break and then Sixth Year teachers would reengage via on-line with their students until mid-July. At this point Sixth Years would return to the classroom environment up to exams which would provisionally begin on July 29th.

Change of Level

It remains our understanding that students may **not** opt to change to Higher Level in Irish/French or German if the Ordinary option was already indicated to the State Exams

Transition Year 2020-2021

We are currently considering a format for facilitating our parent information evening for Transition year. We will provide further details in relation to this in coming days following consultation with the TY Team.

Access to technology

It is our understanding that students have access to their Office 365 accounts and have either phone data or Wi-Fi to enable this access. It is also our understanding that each of you has access to some form of Tablet or Laptop to support this access. Please let us know if this is not the case.

Teaching and Learning

Our feedback is that all of you had regular contact with your teachers before Easter but there is a request for more on-line “live” lessons. We are working with your teachers in this regard and would plan that as teachers become more experienced in the use of the platforms this would increase in the days and weeks ahead – please do give feedback of this nature to your teachers – we are all in this together.

We understand that it is very difficult to learn via email and very challenging to stay motivated in this environment but I do ask that you re-engage with your teachers after the Easter break – returning work in a timely manner and sending requests for help as you require it.



Sixth Year Graduation Day 2020

It is my strong wish and our intention to run a Graduation for the class of 2020 as soon as Public Health social distancing regulations allow such a gathering.

Final message

My staff and I are very anxious to be available to you and to help you. Please contact us, all of our email addresses are available. Keep an eye on our website, Facebook page and Twitter account for updates and announcements.

To student I say ‘well done everyone’, you are all doing great work. These are tough times, because you as students want to meet your friends, see the teachers and enjoy break times and fun together.

There is a famous saying/truism in life “This too shall pass” and now we need to say this and believe in it. Meanwhile do your best, support your parents, mind your friends by:

- ✚ Staying Home
- ✚ Stay apart
- ✚ Connect online and help do your bit for Team Ireland by protecting yourself and your family.

However, we are not a 24hr service as teachers like yourselves need rest, sleep etc just like on a normal school day,

Mind yourselves everybody

Kind wishes

Eileen Kennelly

Eileen Kennelly
Principal