



Comeragh College

Tinvane, Carrick-On-Suir, Co. Tipperary

Telephone: (051) 640131

Email: info@comeraghcollege.ie



21st August 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. Following on from my letter last week which set out return dates for all students, I write to you today with more detailed information in relation to the safe reopening of Comeragh College. It is worth remembering that the school has, and continues to, implement the latest guidance available, but the measures outlined below may be subject to change, as per the latest documents from the Department of Education/HSE, etc.

In addition to setting out the arrangements that are put in place, all students will be provided with a comprehensive induction program on their return to school for 2020/2021. This, we hope, will answer a lot of questions, which I've no doubt students will have in relation to how school will function in this Covid-19 era.

The following sections outline measures/arrangements which the school has put in place for the reopening of our school.

Arrangements for School Reopening

Vsware- Vsware is the school portal. Student Timetables will be available on Vsware. The following information will be available for Parents/ Guardians: Student Attendance and Student behaviour records.

Traffic Management-parents are asked not to drive into the school carpark as these are for staff only (parents/guardians of students in the Comeragh Suite use the car park for drop off and collect). If your child has a designated SNA they will be met by that SNA in the car park and escorted into the school.

Book Rental and School Payments Arrangements- school book payments are to be paid online through the way2pay link which was sent to you via text message. School book payments must be paid prior to book collection. If you need to discuss an alternative payment plan please contact info@comeraghcollege.ie.

Lunch Times- this year we will have a split lunch break, senior students at one time and junior students at a different time, (this will be explained to the year groups as part of the induction process on their return to school), students will have their break and lunch in designated classrooms, We encourage all students to bring a healthy lunch to school.

School Arrivals (Morning)- When students arrive by bus or car, they are to come directly into the school. Each year group will have a designated entry point and exit point to the school building (details at induction). Students who are brought to school drop-off points by car/bus are asked to make their way directly into school safely, and adhere to all HSE guidance.

Base Classrooms- To facilitate year groups pods and to reduce the amount of student movement between rooms, the timetable has been completely reconstructed. This will accommodate student-based classrooms. The timetable has also been remodelled so that more classes are "doubles", again in an effort to reduce student movement during the school day. Students will have a base classroom for core classes.

Each student will have an assigned table and chair in their classroom. Each student will be responsible for keeping their area clean and tidy at all times.

Each classroom has a pedal bin for waste and a recycling bin for paper. We have identified indoor and outdoor areas for each group to use when finished eating. Again, this is to keep year groups in their pods as much as possible, as per HSE guidelines and to facilitate contact tracing if necessary.

School Uniform- We will be maintaining daily wear of the standard Comeragh College uniform and Comeragh College PE uniform. Navy or Black leather shoes are to be worn with the school uniform, no runners, boots or canvas shoes are to be worn as part of the general school uniform. Students in possession of a valid medical certificate may on occasion wear an alternative school uniform. The certificate should be presented to the respective Directors of the year groups.

School Website/ Twitter- I am acutely aware of the need to regularly relay information to you in this time of challenge and change. The school website can be accessed at www.comeraghcollege.ie

A tab has been added to the website specifically for posting information/guidance for parents/guardians, as an aid during this time.

Information will also be shared on the school's Twitter page @comeraghcollege

The school is also in the final stages of launching a school app. Details of same will be made available to you as soon as possible.

I do wish to stress that information sharing is a two-way process. If you have suggestions which you believe will make our school safer, please contact your child's Director (see list below)

The school has worked on a number of measures to promote the safety of the school community and its partners. Please take the time to read the list below carefully. If you/your son(s)/daughter(s) have any queries, please contact the school by email (info@comeraghcollege.ie).

1. Hand Sanitiser

- There will be hand sanitiser in every classroom.
- All students are encouraged to carry their own hand sanitiser.

2. Face Coverings (Masks/ Face Visors)

- Face masks are now compulsory
Both face masks and visors will be required at certain times during the school day (details will be issued at induction)
(In exceptional circumstances some students may be exempt from the wearing of face coverings due to a medical condition - please contact info@comeraghcollege.ie in relation to this)
- Comeragh College will provide 1 face visor and one washable mask (as well as two disposable masks) per student, these will be issued during book collection
Students must clean their visor every day.

3. Bathrooms/Toilets

- Maximum of 2 students will be permitted to use the bathrooms at any time.
- There can be no group gathering in toilets.
- Each bathroom will have disposable hand towels, soap and hot water and a pedal bin for waste.

4. Lockers- Lockers will not be available for use this year

5. Cleaning of classrooms

- Students must clean their own desk and chair and any other surface they may have been in contact with.
- The school will supply cleaning materials.
- This is now also part of the code of behaviour.

6. Good respiratory & hand hygiene

- All students are expected to follow government guidelines on good respiratory and hand hygiene.
- Training will be provided for students on this.

7. Break Times

As stated above, the school has remodelled the timetable so that there are less students at lunch break at the same time.

- Lunch time 5th and 6th year students: 12.25pm-1.05pm
- Lunch time for all other students: 1.05pm-1.45pm
- Senior and Junior Students MAY NOT mix during breaks.
- Students are encouraged to go outside at lunch time.

8. Social distancing

- All students must keep a minimum 1 metre distance at all times.
- This will be a large part of our code of behaviour.
- There must be NO; hugging, hand shaking, fist bumps, high fives, etc.
- These measures are in place to keep all members of our school community SAFE.

9. Movement around the building

- There will be a designated system for movement in the school
- Every effort has been made to minimise student movement between class periods (base rooms, double periods, etc)

10. Exiting from the School Building at 3:45pm

- Exits will allocated for student groups for departure from school at 3:45pm.
- This is to ensure that all students exit in a safe and orderly manner.
- This will be explained in detail to all students as part of their induction programme.

11. Access to the school building

Due to Covid 19 – the school building/campus will open at 8:15am

- Breakfast Club will continue to run in our school for 2020/2021. (during morning break instead of before school)
- All students will enter through designated door for their year group. This will be communicated at induction
- School doors will close at 8.50a.m. and any student arriving late will be asked to wait at the main reception and maintain social distance at all times.

12. Parents/Guardians – visiting the school/meetings.

- Where possible we ask that parents/guardians do not enter the school campus. If you do need to meet a member of staff this can only be accommodated by prior appointment.
- Should parents/guardians have items to drop off to school that your child has forgotten there will be a drop off point at the front entrance (ensure items are labelled with student's name and class). Please do not leave money at the drop off point.
- Like all staff and students, parents/guardians coming to school must wear a face covering and maintain social distance.

13. Sharing of personal items

- Students should not share ANY personal items. For example: Pens, rulers, calculators, hairbrushes, hats, food, bottles, etc.

14. Water bottles

- All students are advised to have their own water bottle, these may be refilled during the school day at the water fountains (the school now installed eight fountains). Please fill this prior to coming to school and label bottles.

15. Suspected symptoms of Covid-19

Any student who has any covid 19 symptoms should NOT come to school. They should seek a medical diagnosis and remain off campus until their situation has been clarified by a recognised medical practitioner, in line with HSE guidance.

- This will not affect attendance (please speak with student director)
- Parents PLEASE contact the school if your child has symptoms.
- If a student presents with Covid-19 symptoms, Parents/Guardians will be required to make arrangements to have their child collected **within a one-hour period from the time of notification**.
- **Please note that if a student is sent home because they have presented with Covid-19 symptoms, the school will require a letter from the GP to say that they have visited the GP or request that a negative Covid-19 test result is presented the school.**

16. Current contact information

- It is VITAL that the school has current mobile phone numbers for students' parents/guardians/contacts. **Please inform the school if your contact numbers have changed.**
- It is VITAL that you are contactable during the school day, in the interest of your son(s)/daughter(s) safety, especially during this pandemic.

17. Code of Behaviour

- We have always maintained very high standards of behaviour in our school and we know that all students will be aware of their personal responsibility with regard to COVID-19 and will support the school with new routines put in place to keep everyone safe. We will consult with all stakeholders with an addition to our Code of Behaviour specifically relating to COVID-19. Student behaviour records will be available for parents on the vsware portal. (log in details will be sent to parents/guardians of first year students/ all other students new to the school, via text)

18. Foreign Travel

- **If you have travelled outside Ireland, you must have completed 14 days of self-isolation and/or quarantine prior to returning to Comeragh College.** Please ensure you are aware of this and fulfil this requirement. (as per HSE guidance)

19. "High Risk" or "Very High Risk" Category for Students

- The HSE has information about these categories which you can read about on their website. We will work with any parent/guardians of students who are identified as at High Risk or Very High Risk to ensure appropriate protocols are put in place prior to the start of the school year. However we ask you to let us know if your child is deemed to be in one of these categories, (if you haven't already done so), and we can work with you to make the necessary plans.
- Please inform us if your son/daughter will not be returning to school at this time info@comeaghcollege.ie

20. Extra-Curricular Activities and Afternoon Study

- Our priority for at least the first two weeks is to implement appropriate routines for teaching and learning, as safely as possible, in the context of Covid-19. So, the earliest we will be commencing Extra Curricular Activities and Afternoon Study is the week commencing Monday 21st September 2020.
- If we are in a position to provide Afternoon Study, we will be splitting the year into smaller sessions and charging per session. It may be a case we will need to prioritise applications from 6th Years 5th Years and 3rd Years up to maximum numbers which we can accommodate under social distancing guidelines. Information on this will be forwarded to you at a later date.

21. HSE advice

- Please access the designated HSE website for the most up to date advice on <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

22. Headphones for ICT use

- all students will be required to have their own headphones, bring small headphones e.g. mobile phone ones.

23. Clearly label all items with the student's name

24. TY and LCA 1 work experience – Mr Breen will be in contact and if you have any questions please email him on dbreen@tipperaryetb.ie

25. Schools meals

- We are currently working with the Food Company who manage the school canteen on what options will be available to students. Further information to follow. Please ensure students bring healthy packed lunch and reusable water bottle each day.

26. First years Induction – each family will receive a letter by post outlining details re same.

27. Students over 18

- please email info@comeraghcollege.ie
We will be arranging an extra induction for students over 18

28. List of Student Directors/Year Groups

1 st Year – Ms Gráinne Larkin	email address – glarkin@tipperaryetb.ie .
2 nd Year – Ms Rebecca Hallahan	email address – rhallahan@tipperaryetb.ie
3 rd Year – Ms Katherine Cahill	email address – kcahill@tipperaryetb.ie
Transition Year – Mr Donal Breen	email address – dbreen@tipperaryetb.ie
5 th and LCA 1 - Mr Martin Lanigan	email address - mlanigan@tipperaryetb.ie
6 th Year – Ms Eimir Blackmore	email address - ebblackmore@tipperaryetb.ie

There are a lot of changes which have come into place this year. All of these measures that we are putting into place are to keep our students, staff, parents and all members of our school community safe.

Staff and management at the school are currently completing preparations for a safe return to school for all members of our school community.

I will issue regular bulletins/guidance documents in the coming weeks via texts, website posts, tweets and the school app.

I wish you and your families well for the coming weeks. I hope you continue to stay safe and well as your children enjoy the remaining days of the summer break and prepare for the start of term in Comeragh College.

Yours sincerely,

MR KEVIN LANGTON
(Principal)