

St. Colman's College, Claremorris



Newsletter for Parents/Guardians, 28th September 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope all is well with you as we enter the last school week of September 2020. I just want to take this opportunity to update you on a few things:

New Deputy Principal:

We welcome **Ms. Maria Byrne** to St. Colman's College as Deputy Principal. Maria has already taken up her position in the College and we wish her health and happiness in her role for many years to come. Ms. Byrne has been a member of the teaching staff of St. Raphael's College, Loughrea in County Galway for a number of years and she is very welcome to our College in Claremorris.

New Facebook page:

We launched our new St. Colman's College Facebook page over the past weekend (www.facebook.com/stcolmanscollege) and we will continue to update it with lots of information and photographs and posts about various things that are going on in the College. We would ask you to 'like' and 'share' it so that we can connect with as many people as possible associated with the College, both near and far. Please spread the word that our Facebook page is back online, and we will continue to use it to promote College events, celebrate students' successes and highlight all the usual activities our students and staff are involved in. Our Facebook page has always been extremely popular with parents/guardians, staff, students, former students and friends and we very much look forward to you engaging with it in the years ahead. Thanks especially to Mr. Anthony Timoney for all his work in relaunching our Facebook page, and indeed for so much work in the whole area of Information and Communication Technology in the College.

St. Colman's College 75th Anniversary:

St. Colman's College was founded in 1945 by Fr. John Colleran at the behest of the Archbishop of Tuam Most Rev. Joseph Walsh and the local community of Claremorris. This academic year, 2020-21 marks the 75th anniversary of those humble beginnings of the College and we intend to mark the anniversary throughout the coming year with various events. If you have any particular memories of the College in years gone by, any old photographs or video footage, any newspaper clippings that you think we would be interested in or indeed anything at all that is associated with our history, then we would love to hear from you! We are compiling information from the last 75 years with a view to organising it and sharing it with the St. Colman's College community both here at home and much further afield. If you can add anything to our efforts then please get in touch by phone at 094 93 71442, by email at office@stcolmans.ie or on our social media links, Facebook (see above) and Twitter (@SaintColmans). If you know someone who may have an interest in our endeavours in this project

then please put them in touch with us, we would really appreciate it! We will update you on various events to celebrate our anniversary over the coming week and months.

New Bike Shelter:

We have up to twenty students cycling to and from school every day nowadays and we are delighted to see that. Numbers have been steadily increasing over the past few years. Well done to those lads! They now have a brand-new shelter for their bikes, thanks mainly to the College's **Green School committee** led by Ms. Donna Gallery. The committee did a lot of work last year on the theme of Sustainable Travel and this helped greatly in our application for the bike shelter. The committee is working this year on the theme of Biodiversity and we wish them well in their work. We will keep you updated on their progress over the weeks and months ahead.

School Journal:

We are asking all students and parents/guardians to sign the school journal if you have not already done so. Journals will be checked in the coming days. Signatures are needed for all the following documents:

- CCTV policy
 - Code of Behaviour and School Rules
 - St. Colman's diary rules
 - Internet Acceptable Use policy
- Internet access
- School website
- iPad Policy document
 - St. Colman's College Anti-Bullying Pledge

Mobile Phones:

We would like to remind all students that taking photographs or any video footage is a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour. Students are allowed to use mobile phones discreetly at specified times during the day, as outlined in the school journal. Any breaches of this rule will be taken very seriously.

Covid-19:

We do not have any confirmed positive case of Covid-19 in the school. However, it is only prudent that we consider what procedures are in place to deal with such a situation were it to arise, so that all of us are aware in advance of what happens in such an event.

Safety and Control Measures

The Board of Management, school leadership and staff are very conscious of the need to keep all students, staff and visitors safe while in the school. The school is a controlled environment. There are control measures in place to combat the introduction or spread of COVID-19. These are based on:

- Physical Distancing

- Hand Hygiene
- Respiratory and Hygiene Etiquette
- Mask Wearing

We would ask you to continue to encourage your sons to observe all the protocols that are in place in the College so that everyone can stay safe and well. Thank you!

When a person displays symptoms of COVID-19 in the College:

The following steps are taken when a person, student or staff member, in the school presents with suspected COVID-19 symptoms:

- That person is moved to the isolation area prior to going home. In the case of students their parents/guardians will be asked to come to the school, take them home and contact their GP for a free telephone consultation
- If the GP recommends that the person go for a COVID-19 test, that person is now considered a query case for COVID-19 and all of his/her household members must restrict their movements until the results of the test come back
- In the case of a negative result (98% of cases), the GP will advise when the person should return to school – usually after 48 hours
- In the case of a positive result (2% of cases) Public Health doctors assume control of the situation. Based on questioning the person with the positive result, they will determine if they were within the school setting when they contracted the virus. If not, there may be no need to contact the school
- If the person was within the school setting when they contracted the virus, Public Health will contact the Principal to carry out a **Public Health Risk Assessment**. This is a set of questions to see who might have been exposed to the virus and who needs to be excluded or tested. **This risk assessment will be unique to each school**
- The Principal and Board of Management have no function in the risk assessment, other than to provide whatever information is required by the Public Health Medical Officer conducting the risk assessment
- The Principal and Board of Management may be asked to assist the Medical Office by sending a message from them to the relevant families identified in the risk assessment. Public Health will not contact other members of the school community
- **Please note the Principal and Board of Management are not permitted to inform members of the school community of the identity of the person or persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 for the following reasons:**

Doctor/Patient confidentiality

GDPR legislation preventing the publication of personal data without consent

If a student displays symptoms at home which may be consistent with Covid-19 what does the parent/guardian need to do?

The parent/guardian should contact their GP. The GP will decide if the child should be tested for Covid-19. If the GP determines that the child **does** need a Covid-19 test it is at this point that all of their household contacts are asked to **restrict their movements**. This means that siblings or staff members in the same household as the person who has the symptoms should be removed from the school setting. **Only the symptomatic case is asked to self-isolate.**

Note: There will be cases where the GP determines that a Covid-19 test is NOT required, and the child's symptoms may be due to another cause, e.g. the common cold. If the GP does not recommend Covid-19 testing, and it is early in the child's illness, the recommendation is to observe the child for 48 hours

and if no further symptoms develop, then he can return to school. If the GP has made a different diagnosis, parents/guardians should follow advice and recommendations on exclusion depending on this diagnosis.

Roy Hession

Principal