

Information for Parents on Return-to-School 2022/23

1. Welcome back to all our pupils and a special welcome to pupils new to our school this year. As always we appreciate your support as we return to school. Covid is finally a distant memory but we will still have to adhere to certain procedures that were in place over the last two years. We will be constantly reviewing how procedures are working in the school and if necessary we will change them. This year will be different from the previous years in regards to arrivals and dismissals.
 - Pupils will return to school on Thursday 1st September- 9.00am to 12.00pm
 - 3rd class pupils are to come at 9.15am and line up at their lines in the backyard. There will be signs for where they are to line up so don't worry!! Teachers and staff will be there as well.
 - There will be a full school day on Friday
 - There will be no longer staggered arrival and dismissal times.

Class	Thursday 1st Sep	Friday 2nd Sep
6 th	9.00-12.00	9.00-2.40
5 th	9.00-12.00	9.00-2.40
4 th	9.00-12.00	9.00-2.40
3 rd	9.15-12.00	9.00-2.40

1. **Contact Details:** Please ensure that we have the most up to date phone number at which you can be contacted. If you have not provided an e mail address you can do so by contacting Mairead in the office at 4526555 or by e mail info@stthomas.ie
2. **Hand Hygiene:** The importance of hand hygiene and cough etiquette will continue to be a major focus of every day. Children will practice regular hand hygiene throughout the day. Sanitisers are available on entry to the school and in each class room. Sanitisers only work on clean hands so it is important that children come to school with clean hands. There is no need for children to bring their own sanitiser to school.
3. **Cleaning:** We will continue to maintain the highest standards with regards to cleanliness in the mainstream classrooms and throughout the school. All personnel will continue to take responsibility for this so that we can operate in a clean, safe environment.
4. **School Day/ Attendance/ Punctuality:** The school day will return to normal for all standards- 9.00am-2.40pm. Full attendance is critical to the success of your child during these years. If they are in, they will succeed academically, socially and be exposed to all the wonderful extra curricular activities that take place in the school. It also minimises any behavioural issues as they are fully engaged in the school life due to full attendance.

We will be running punctuality drives throughout the year and all pupils are expected to be in on time every day.

5. **Class Bubbles/Pods:** There will no longer be class bubbles/ pods in the classroom. This will also apply to the yard but classes and standards are expected to play with their own standards. Younger classes do not mix with older classes and vice versa.

6. **Breaks:** Break times will no longer be staggered. There will be 2 x 20 minute breaks for each standard. Children will no longer have to wear a coloured bib in the yard unless they are taking part in training on the astro.

7. **Arrival:** Children can arrive on the school grounds from 8.50am onwards. They will line up in the yard on arrival at their designated place and will be collected by their teachers. Staff members will be on the yard to help out. Please be assured that there will be plenty of staff on the school grounds in the mornings to help children get to their classrooms and become familiar with this. On wet days pupils will go straight into their classroom at the correct time.

8. **Parents on School Grounds:** We ask that you do not enter the school grounds unless absolutely essential. We encourage a drop and go approach. It is important that the pupils get into their own routine as quickly as possible and we need to keep the numbers of people on the yard as low as possible for health and safety reasons. Please do not try to approach any member of staff in the yard as meetings between parents and teachers can only take place by prior arrangement. When the school day is over the following arrangements will apply

9. **Home Time:**

a. *Pupils from 6th class will exit through the small gate at the front of the school beside the school garden.*

b. *Pupils from 5th class will exit through the small gate at the front of the school beside the school garden.*

c. *Pupils from 4th class will exit through the back gate near the church at Kiltalown*

d. *Pupils from 3rd class will exit through the back gate near the church at Kiltalown*

Pupils should meet their parents outside the school gates where possible. The class teacher will walk their class to the gate and staff positioned at designated points throughout the grounds will also be helping out. *Older pupils are not permitted to wait for younger siblings on the school grounds or collect them from the Junior School.*

10. **Visitors to the school:** Visitors to the school must have an appointment and visitors will still be kept to a minimum. Only one person should be in the lobby area at any time. Visitors can only enter the school building if they have an appointment.

11. **Support Teachers / Special Needs Assistants:** Support teachers/ Special Needs Assistants will continue to support the pupils under their care in a withdrawal/ in class fashion. In class hygiene measures will continue to take place in regards wiping tables and

chairs in support rooms using wipes/disinfectant in between different pupils or small groups attending. If staff are moving between classes they will observe agreed sanitising routines.

12. Shop: School supplies will be available from the school. Price list will be on the school website and teachers will also have a copy.

13. Book Rental: Cost for the year is €25 which will cover all the children's needs for school.

There are three ways the money can be paid:

- Online
- In an envelope and given to the class teacher
- Through Mairéad in the office

14. Uniform: Children are expected to be in uniform each day they come to school. They can choose to wear either the school tracksuit, school uniform and/or school shorts. There are no exceptions to this. There are spare jumpers/ tracksuits in the school that are washed and pupils will be asked to wear them for the duration of the day. Parents will be contacted if a child comes to school not wearing the school uniform and has not brought in a note. Uniforms are available through school warehouse- www.schoolwearhouse.ie

15. Homework: Written and oral homework is expected to be completed every night it is given. A note must be provided if homework is not completed.

16. HSCL: We are very lucky that Julie McKenna is our Home School Liaison Community Coordinator again and will be linking in with you this year. She can be contacted at 083 009 2792

17. Contacting the school: You can contact the teacher by sending in a note, ringing the office at 4526555.

18. Collection of Children during the School Day: If a child needs to be collected during school time the parent/guardian should let Mairead the school secretary know beforehand by ringing 4526555. When the adult arrives at the school please enter via the lobby and your child will be brought from their class to the parent/guardian by a member of staff. The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out at the lobby. No adult should enter the school building, unless by prior appointment or to collect their child.

19. Suspected cases of Covid-19: The guidance from the HSE which was issued in February still stands. Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 and follow all the necessary guidelines as outlined on the hse website.

I hope that the above information is beneficial to you and if you should have any questions/ issues/ concerns please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Kind regards,
John Rennick