



Scoil Bhaile Garbháin,
Ballygarvan, Co. Cork
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26/2/21

Dear Parents,

We are delighted that the school building will be re-opening for onsite teaching and learning next Monday the 1st of March.

Unfortunately, only the Junior infant to 2nd classes will be returning next Monday, but the 3rd to 6th classes should be returning on March 15th. In the meantime, their Remote Learning will continue.

There is some important information for parents below and I would ask you to read it carefully before your child returns to the building.

1. All the updated guidance, for the safe return to on-site learning, provided by the Dept of Education, the HSE and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, has been implemented by the Board of Management and shared with the staff.
2. A Return to Education Form, will be sent to you via Aladdin, which MUST be completed in respect of each child returning to school after *any* absence from school.
3. I cannot stress enough the importance of NOT congregating at or near school at drop off and collection times.
4. All adults MUST wear masks on school grounds.
5. All communication with the school must be by phone or email.
6. It is very important that while we are in Level 5, pupils must not meet up or congregate before or after school, or on their way to and from school, whether those pupils are in their pods or not. It is equally important the families adhere to the Level 5 guidance on not mixing with people outside their bubbles.
7. The Junior and Senior Infant pupils will start at 9am and finish at 1.40pm. The 1st and 2nd class pupils will start at 9.10am and finish at 2.50pm. They will go to the usual entrance doors.
8. The GAA carpark will be open for drop off and collection only. Cars must not be left in the carpark as the Club car park is closed for members during Level 5.
9. Do Not send children to school if they have Covid 19 symptoms, if they are close contacts of a person with Covid 19, if they are awaiting a test, or if they are living with someone who has symptoms of Covid 19.
10. Do Not send children to school if they have travelled outside Ireland. Follow the latest Government advise on this matter.
11. Please co-operate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.

There is a document entitled "Key Facts for Parents" on the school website, (www.ballygarvanns.com), under the "Returning to school section". Please refer to that, if you require further information.

We were very successful at keeping the school Covid-free before Christmas, which meant that pupils, staff and parents were following the public health advice about hygiene and social distancing. The new dominant variant of Covid is in circulation now, and we didn't have to deal with that the last time we were in school before Christmas, so I would plead with you to make every effort to keep it out of the building, by adhering to the guidance for the sake of the children. We do not want to be going back to Remote Learning if at all possible.

As I said in a previous letter, the month of March is Society's opportunity to prioritise children during this pandemic, and allow them to have a normal school experience. I hope everyone will join together in the effort to suppress the Covid infection rates, for our pupils' sake.

Please reassure the children that school will be fun. They will see all their friends, and their teachers and SNAs are looking forward to welcoming them back. We haven't forgotten about the older pupils and their chance will come, especially if Covid levels remain low.

Thank you for your support and co-operation and we look forward to meeting you and your children again, next week, and from the 15th of March.

Yours sincerely,

Mairead Coakley
Principal