

# St. Philip's Junior National School

Mountview, Clonsilla, Dublin 15

Principal: Mrs. Ruth Molloy

Deputy Principal: Ms. Eimear Igoe

Chairperson BOM: Mr. Fergus Hamill

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Dear parents and staff members,

I hope that you are well and that you all had a peaceful mid-term break. I am writing to you in relation to the significant easing of public health measures in schools.

As you may know, the Government decided to significantly ease public health measures relating to Covid-19. As part of these measures, the government accepted the recommendations of the NPHET to remove remaining restrictions relating to mask-wearing and physical distancing in schools.

The Department of Education has written to schools advising them in relation to how this might be implemented, I have attached a copy of this advice for your information.

## ***Key Features of the Changes Being Made***

There are a number of significant changes in the government advice to schools. These will be implemented on a planned and measured basis, so that staff and pupils alike are comfortable with the changes that they will see. These include:

- Removal of the requirement that staff and pupils wear face masks in school
- Removal of the requirement to maintain children in class bubbles, each separated from the other
- Removal of the requirement for children to remain in PODs within their classrooms

## ***Wearing of Face Masks will continue to be permitted***

The Department guideline are clear that if members of staff or pupils wish to continue wearing face masks or coverings, they may do so.

## ***Infection Control Measures that Will Remain in Place***

There are a number of infection control measures that will remain in place. Chief among these is Staying at home if you have symptoms: the requirement to stay at home if you have symptoms remains for pupils and staff alike.

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread.

Further infection control measures that will remain in place in schools include:

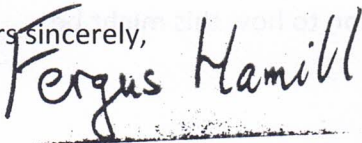
- hand washing,
- respiratory hygiene,
- ventilation
- enhanced cleaning

## **Continued Support to Pupils in Getting Used to these Changes**

As a school, we are pleased to see the continued return to normality as the threat of Covid recedes. We will make sure that children and staff will be supported through the changes, and we will be available to answer their questions and allay any anxiety they might have. We will move forward slowly, while we plan the changes needed for a full return to teaching and learning without 'PODs and bubbles'.

On behalf of the Board of Management of the school, I want to thank the staff of the school for their tireless work in keeping pupils and staff safe throughout the pandemic. We hope that the coming weeks and months will see St Philip the Apostle Junior National School returning to the activities and the social interactions that make it such a vibrant, active and fun place to work and learn.

Yours Sincerely,



Fergus Hamill

Chairperson,

Board of Management