



# HARTSTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARENT NEWSLETTER

WED, 2ND | SEPT | 2020

## Blended Learning

The continuity of education is as the core of our learning and teaching strategy for academic year 2020/21. Blended learning is a new methodology that we are familiar with and will be using to provide continuity of education for all students. Following guidelines from the DES we are required to reduce our numbers in most of our classrooms. We have created extra learning spaces for the overflow of students from these classes. The areas have been assigned to each year group so as to minimize interaction. Teachers will be sharing their lesson online with all students for their classes and students in the overflow areas will be able to follow the lesson from their assigned area. Allocating students to these areas will be on a rotational basis.



## Base Classrooms

Our school has reopened on a staggered rotation. This has helped us to review and evaluate our current procedures. We have noticed that there is a lot of movement between classes and while we cannot limit this completely, we will reduce it for the safety of everyone. From Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> we will be moving to base classrooms for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and TY classes. This will create changes in student timetables but we feel it is necessary to make the school safer. Students will remain in their base classrooms with teachers coming to them except for option subjects where students will move to their option rooms. This change will limit the interactions between students on the corridor and enhance our safety measures to limit the threat of Covid-19.



*"Thank you to all our parents and guardians for supporting us over the last few weeks. We understand it has been an anxious time for everyone. Our priority is to keep your child as safe as we can and your ongoing support is much appreciated."*

## Visiting Procedures

We have over 1,000 students in our school so our office is very busy every day. We understand that parents, guardians and visitors need to make contact with us but we will be limiting the number of people that we can let into the school from now on. This will cause a delay in requesting to speak with someone however it is important for us to keep our school as safe as possible. Please respect this and do not call to the school unannounced. ***Phone the office beforehand*** and make an appointment. If your child has forgotten something, **please call the school first to let us know you will be arriving**. There will be a **drop off box** at the front door to leave your child's belongings in. Visitors who refuse to wear a face covering will not be permitted access to the school.



## Continuity of Education

By next week all new students will have received their log in details for Microsoft Office and MS teams. Students will use this platform to engage with their teachers for homework and classwork. Students who have been instructed by the HSE to self-isolate can continue their education through MSTeams also. IT teachers will provide support to students who are new to using these platforms. Students who are rotated into the overflow areas will use devices to follow their class teacher during lessons. For the next week we ask that students bring their own devices so that they can access the class content in the overflow areas.

School devices will be available to students in the overflow areas soon.



## Face Coverings

Cloth face coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact.

It is therefore a requirement that teachers, staff and students attending post primary schools wear a face covering when a physical distance of 2m from other staff or students cannot be maintained.

In certain situations, the use of clear visors should be considered, for example staff interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.

All students on the post primary transport scheme should be asked to wear face coverings unless there is a good reason not to do so.

Cloth face coverings should not be worn by any of the following groups:

*any person with difficulty breathing*

*any person who is unconscious or incapacitated*

*any person who is unable to remove the face-covering without assistance*

*any person who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.*

The above criteria must be verified by a medical professional.



*Working Together to Protect Each Other*

# Summary

- Bring your own device for the next week. School devices will be available very soon
- Extensions of staggered reopening until Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>.
- First full school day for all on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>
- School will close at 11.40 on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September to facilitate LC Results 2020
- Teachers and students will use Microsoft Teams to provide blended learning.
- Base classrooms will be arranged from Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> onwards. Students will receive new timetables with room changes on them.
- Due to max numbers being allowed in certain rooms, overflow areas for teaching and learning have been arranged. Students will engage with classwork using a device during while in the overflow area. This will be arranged on a rotational basis.
- Face coverings are mandatory for all students, staff and visitors. Please see the following page for more information on this.
- We will be using Hartstown Community Center as a learning space for TY classes on Thursdays and for some PE classes.



• Working Together to Protect Each Other •