

Re: Reopening of Dominican College in the context of Covid-19

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We're looking forward to welcoming our students back to Dominican College in the coming days. I would like to advise you of the measures we've taken in the context of Covid-19.

The Irish vaccination program has been particularly successful over the summer months. A substantial percentage of the population has received their Covid-19 vaccinations and have acquired **significant vaccine protection** as a result.

These vaccinations do not mean that staff and students won't contract Covid-19. Covid-19 vaccines do not confer sterilising immunity to all individuals, i.e., vaccinated individuals may still transmit SARS-CoV-2 infection to others.

However, these vaccines serve us well in breaking the link between contracting Covid-19 and the likelihood of severe illness, hospitalisation or worse.

It is in this context; please note that the school continues to maintain Covid-19 control measures to safeguard our school community.

Please note the following:

- Dominican College has engaged our **external Health & Safety Consultant** to review our Covid-19 Protocols and work with the school ahead of the coming school year.
- **The Covid-19 Response Plan** has been updated in line with the Work Safety Protocols and updated guidelines from the Department of Education & Skills, The Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Health Services Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health. This document lays out the school's measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our school.
- **Covid-19 Risk Assessments** have also been updated to support the Covid-19 Response Plan as per the requirements of the Work Safety Protocols.
- **The Health & Safety Statement** has been updated to take into account the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic.

I'd now ask that you carefully consider the following "Student Return to School Safely Induction Form", which all students will need to read. This document provides more detail on the measures that students and their parents/guardians will need to be aware of on their return.

As always, we are here and happy to answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to welcoming you back.

Best Regards,

Cian O Doherty  
Principal,  
Dominican College



**Out of an abundance of caution, the Board of Management at Dominican College continues to maintain control measures to minimise of risk of Covid-19 transmission in the school.**

**We have updated Covid-19 Response Plan** and this addresses the risk of Covid-19. It outlines the measures we are implementing to address the risk of Covid-19.

**Parents / Guardians / Students should familiarise themselves with the Symptoms of Covid-19 i.e. Fever or Chills, Cough, Shortness of breath, Loss of sense of taste / smell. Students should immediately inform their Teacher should they experience any of these symptoms.**

**“Stay at home if unwell” Policy** is in operation at Dominican College. This means that if any student displays symptoms of Covid-19 they should stay at home.

**Physical Distancing** – 2 metre physical distancing must continue to be observed by all students. Note 1 metre physical distancing is in place in each classroom and must be observed.

**Face Coverings** – are required in all school settings where 2 metre physical distancing cannot be maintained. Wearing a face covering reduces the spread of Covid-19 in the school.

**Ventilation** – is a key control measure in our Covid-19 Response Plan. Windows will be kept open throughout the school day to ensure good ventilation into each classroom. In the colder months, we advise that students wear additional layers of clothing to offset the potential drop in classroom temperatures.

**Hygiene** – Students are expected to wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds using water and soap. Hand sanitiser will be in place around the school for students to use throughout the school day i.e. before and after each break.

**Respiratory Etiquette** - Students are reminded to cover their nose and mouth when sneezing / coughing. Used tissues should be discarded immediately in the nearest available waste bin. Cups, bottles, pens are not to be shared.

**Student based classrooms** will resume from the start of the school year for 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Years & TY i.e. Teachers will continue to travel between these classes to minimise interaction and increase separation of students.

**Physical Distancing** - Students are reminded to maintain physical distancing of 2 metres on corridors. Corridors should only be used for travel and never accommodation. Suitable signage is in place.

**Student Breaks** – Breaks are organised in such a way as to ensure physical distancing i.e. split breaks and designated areas for eating lunch both indoors (base classroom) and outdoors. Students are also encouraged to eat their lunch outside (weather permitting). **Student Canteen** will not be available.

**Student Lockers** are available to Senior Cycle students only. This measure is designed to decrease integration, increase segregation and avoid congregation of students before, during and after school.

**Contact Tracing Log** – is in operation for the detection and isolation of close contacts of a suspected / confirmed case of Covid-19.

**Only authorised personnel allowed in the building** i.e. those who have filled out the Covid-19 Self Declaration Form. Visitors to the school will continue by appointment only.

**Visitors** to the school will be by appointment only i.e. main entrance will be closed during class times. Parents / students are advised to ensure that they bring all items that are needed for a given school day.

**Water Dispensers / Fountains continue to be disconnected as a key control measure in preventing the transmission of the Covid-19 in the school.** Students are expected to bring their own water to school each day.

**Blended Learning Plan** –Dominican College continues to maintain our IT resources should they be required at some stage in the school year. This may see a return to distance learning / blended learning environment using G-Suite for Education and other technologies. We will provide more information if / when this is likely in the school.

**Cooperation with Public Health** – Parents / Guardians / Students are asked for to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and to follow any public health advice in the event of a case.

**If a student develops Covid-19 Symptoms in school the procedure is as follows:**

- The suspected case shall be accompanied case to Meeting Room adjacent to Office (the primary isolation room) or where already occupied the Boardroom at the main Entrance (the secondary isolation room) keeping at least 2 metres distance at all times.
- The school will arrange transport home. Public transport of any kind will not be used.
- The student shall avoid touching people, surfaces and objects so far as is reasonably possible.
- The student should cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided.
- Once the student has left the premises, appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and classrooms will take place.
- Dominican College will provide assistance if contacted by the HSE.