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Principal Mr Paul Berne | BA Hons | PGCE

24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope this letter finds our entire Edmund Rice College community well as the Summer holidays draw to a close. As indicated in my letter to you on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021, an update on the plan for school return would be provided once renewed guidance from the Department of Education was received. Having received the guidance, please find below the following guidelines that will be in place when pupils return to Edmund Rice College.

#### Pupil Return Dates

All year groups will have an induction day(s). Pupils **will only attend** for their induction on the dates specified below. Our first full day for all pupils will be on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021. School bus and canteen services will be unavailable until Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021. If a pupil is in school prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> September, they should bring a packed lunch. Only those pupils entitled to free school meals will be able to access the canteen from 1<sup>st</sup> September. All other pupils will require a packed lunch. This will be reviewed at Halloween.

Year Group	Induction Day(s)
8	Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> August: 9am-12pm (School buses will not run on this day) <i>There will be a special introductory Mass for all Year 8 pupils in the Assembly Hall at 10am. Due to COVID regulations, unfortunately we cannot invite parents at this time.</i>  Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September: 9am-3pm  Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September: 9am- 3pm
9	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September: 9am-3pm
10	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September: 9am-3pm
11	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September: 9am-3pm
12	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September: 9am-3pm
13	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> August: 9:30am-11am (School buses will not run on this day)
14	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> August: 11:30-1pm (School buses will not run on this day)

### **Start/End Time and Uniform**

The school day starts with the journey to school. If a pupil travels on a school or public bus, they should wear a face covering throughout the journey. Children travelling by car should be dropped off at the turning circle outside the school grounds and enter via the pedestrian gate. Cars will not be allowed into the car park. There will be a staggered start and end to the school day for the first term at least. School starts for all junior pupils at 8:50am with registration and ends with deregistration at 3:00pm. Junior pupils should be in school for as close as possible to but before 8:45am. Senior pupils should be in school for registration for as close as possible to but before 9am. Classes commence at 9:15am and finish at 2:50pm to enable staggered exits. This will be reviewed at the end of the first term.

Children should attend school in full school uniform and be fully equipped with school bag and books. Trainers should not be worn to school. All pupils should wear black leather shoes.

On days when children are doing PE they will be allowed to come into school wearing a tracksuit (preferably school tracksuit) with school PE kit underneath. Football colours should not be worn. As per the school's uniform policy (attached), pupils should wear full PE kit with black or navy tracksuit bottoms. **Shorts must not be worn into school.** Please note that coloured leggings are not permissible. Our schools PE clothing can be found on our online shop below.

[https://www.oneills.com/uk\\_en/shop-by-team/education/schools/edmund-rice-college.html](https://www.oneills.com/uk_en/shop-by-team/education/schools/edmund-rice-college.html)

### **Daily Procedures**

When pupils arrive at school, they will sanitise their hands using the sanitiser stations and put on their masks before going to their form class for registration or their Year Group Zone if they are on site earlier than 8:45am. Pupils will move around the school for their classes. Each classroom will be equipped with sanitiser, anti-bacterial spray and blue hygiene roll. An enhanced cleaning regime will continue throughout the day

### **Lunch**

Hot meals/Salad bar will resume in the school canteen from Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 only for those pupils who are entitled to free school meals. If a pupil is not entitled to free school meals, they should bring a packed lunch to school. Canteen facilities will not be available at break time. Year 13 and 14 pupils will be permitted to leave the school premises at lunch time from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September provided they have permission from a parent/guardian.

### **Bubbles and Face Coverings**

Under the changes announced, educational settings are no longer required to operate a system of formal protective bubbles to allow for greater flexibility in the delivery of the curriculum and allow pupils access to all classrooms. The guidance outlines that it is no longer appropriate for post primary pupils to receive teaching and learning in a single base classroom with limited access to specialist accommodation. Therefore, pupils will move from class to class and this will ensure pupils in ERC can resume engagement in practical subjects. However, for the first term at least, Edmund Rice College will maintain some of the principles of consistent year group bubbles, before school and at break and lunch for contact tracing purposes. This has proved effective in mitigating virus transmission last year and pupil's ability to learn will not be impacted.

As per DE guidance, face coverings will continue to be used in post-primary schools for at least the first six weeks of term, subject to a later review on 8<sup>th</sup> October. We would ask that all pupils come to school equipped with an appropriate face covering, unless they are exempt from wearing one.

### **Asymptomatic Testing and Close Contacts**

All post primary staff and school pupils will again be offered LFD testing twice weekly for the 21/22 academic year. Further information will follow.

In terms of the requirements for staff and pupils to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive case, the PHA is currently preparing guidance to ensure that school aged pupils only self-isolate until they have received a negative PCR test. Staff who are fully vaccinated are not required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact. We would ask that if any member of the household is symptomatic or awaiting a test result, pupils should not attend school until a negative test has been received.

All pupils will be updated on the new procedures during their induction days. We are excited to welcome the pupils back to Edmund Rice College for what will hopefully be more of a normal year for us all.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'P Berne', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

P Berne

Principal