



Curriculum Delivery



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A great deal of our focus in recent weeks has been on ensuring that a range of safety measures were undertaken to allow for the re-opening of Thornhill College for all year groups. These were shared with all members of our school community through our detailed **Re-entry Plan**. However, with the return of our students we must also prioritise the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that our young people continue to strive and thrive to achieve their full potential.

The Department of Education states that “Post-primary schools should encourage pupils to keep their distance where and when possible within capacity and delivery restraints. However, strict social distancing requirements have been relaxed between pupils in schools and should not be a barrier to the delivery of practical subjects. The practical elements of a wide range of subjects ensure that pupils have access to specialist equipment and high-quality teaching and continue to develop essential skills across all Areas of Learning.”

Practical Subjects



The implementation of protective bubbles at KS3 and Learning Zones in KS4 & 5 now means that teachers are no longer delivering their subjects in their own classroom environments with the specialist equipment required for aspects of delivery readily at hand. We fully appreciate the importance of experiential learning but have taken the decision that we need to assess the full reopening of the school before any practical work can commence in Science, T&D, Home Economics, Music, Drama and IT.

For the initial weeks our practical subjects will focus on the theoretical aspects of their course. However, there will also be the opportunity for teachers of practical subjects to bring materials to the protective bubbles and learning zones and allow for some experience of the practical element. This will only happen where the health and safety of all are guaranteed. Furthermore, teacher demonstrations and our blended learning strategy can also support the delivery of specific topics.

As soon as it is safe to do so we will ease these measures and the girls can return to their 'hands-on' practical work which is so vital for the acquisition of skills which are core to many subjects and a key component of many qualification assessments. In practical subjects, good hygiene practices will be a key risk mitigation measure.

Physical Education



PE is a compulsory element of the curriculum at both Key Stages 3 and 4 and we appreciate the positive impact that physical exercise can have on young people's health and wellbeing. The Department advocates that "from September all children will continue to have regular access to PE within the curriculum." As an added safety measure, we have taken the decision to close our changing facilities and allow the girls to come to school in their PE uniform on those days they have timetabled PE lessons. The students will be informed when practical PE lessons are due to commence.

Practical PE lessons will be delivered outside and for health and safety reasons there will be no internal activities in the Sports Hall, gym or fitness suite. All outside PE activities will be weather dependant. No after school PE clubs and activities are available until further notice.



Blended Learning

In our **Re-entry Plan** we stated that we at Thornhill College have a contingency plan in the event of a localised or wider lockdown. This will involve engaging with pupils on an ongoing basis through the wide range of e-learning platforms we have available.

A full detailed parent guide on blended learning has been compiled and will be shared with you via our school app very soon. We hope this will answer some of the questions/concerns you may have. Furthermore, our pupils will receive training on the use of Google Classroom and the various platforms available on their return to school.

Should we find ourselves in a position whereby we must implement our blended learning strategy we endeavour to support pupils and staff with the necessary IT facilities. We have some capacity to lend digital devices to those students who may require them and will use the EA scheme available for the procuring of further devices. Our ICT Strategy Group will conduct an audit in the coming weeks, and you will have an opportunity to request support.



Homework

Our comprehensive re-entry strategy prioritizes not just the health and safety of our entire school community but of course their well-being too. We believe that it is essential that both pupils and staff are given the time to become accustomed to the structure and rigour of school life again. Therefore, pupils in KS3 will not be set homework until the week beginning **Monday 21st September**. Homework for KS4 & 5 pupils will be gradually reintroduced.

For health and safety reasons teachers will use their chosen online platform to mark work and provide personalised feedback to the students. Furthermore, a range of

other strategies will be utilised to provide appropriate direction and feedback e.g. verbal, whole class, email, modelled responses, mark schemes, self-marking etc.

Course content



In recent days there has been an announcement from CCEA regarding the consultation for course content for individual subjects at GCSE, AS & A2 Level. As soon as we receive further information, we will share it with you. This will have a huge impact on subject delivery and teachers will adjust their plans accordingly.

Foyle Learning Community



A number of our girls attend another school to access a particular subject at post-16 level. We will continue to work closely with the schools in the Foyle Learning Community to ensure practical and manageable arrangements for the delivery of these subjects. It is absolutely crucial that students exercise the same good hygiene practices expected in Thornhill College whilst also adhering to the health and safety measures implemented by the host school.

Our commitments to you



The care and welfare of all central to our planning.



A continued focus on academic excellence.



Clear and regular communication to help parents/carers stay engaged, informed and connected.



High expectations from **all** for **all**.