



Care & Wellbeing



We have already shared with you the first two sections of our **Re-entry Plan** which focused on the safety measures we implemented for the re-opening of Thornhill College alongside changes to our curriculum delivery. This final section will go some way to address the main concerns you may have relating to the care and wellbeing of your child as she returns to school on a full-time basis.

Pastoral Support



The welfare of each girl is paramount to everything we do and now more than ever we must provide a calm and caring environment that enables pupils to feel secure and equally valued. We aim to model positive behaviours and reactions in these times of uncertainty to help the girls feel more confident and provide reassurance. To that end our approach has been very much influenced by Professor Barry Carpenter's '**Recovery Curriculum**'. We appreciate that we simply cannot pick up where we left off when school closed in March. We are advocating a relationships-based approach to ensure that our pupils are given the time and space to re-engage with their peers, staff and school community.

Whilst implementing a range of health and safety measures to benefit all we still wanted the school to feel warm and welcoming for the students on their return. A phased return ensured that all year groups had the opportunity to become familiar with our new procedures and confident with these before a full return to school and the curriculum on Monday 7th September.

The pastoral team will utilise form time to listen to the pupil voice, gauge their need and deliver appropriate support material/services. We aim to cover the following during the initial few weeks of the term:

- Health & Hygiene
- Social Distancing Measures
- ICT training on the various online platforms
- Mindfulness

'Now is the time to ensure that we restore mental wealth in our children, so that their aspirations for their future, can be a vision that becomes, one day, a reality.' You can read more about Professor Carpenter's work here <http://www.recoverycurriculum.org/>

Medical support



Our sick bay will continue to be available throughout the school day. However, the implementation of protective bubbles in Key Stage 3 and learning zones in Key Stages 4 & 5 means that new procedures will have to be implemented. If a pupil is feeling unwell our sick bay supervisor will be informed and subsequently visit the child in a designated area within their zone. As always, she will ascertain if the pupil is well enough to remain in school or needs to go home and will contact a parent/carer accordingly.

In our **Re-entry Plan** we outlined the procedures we would take if anyone becomes unwell in school with COVID-19 symptoms. Rest assured we will continue to keep abreast of PHA guidance and act with due caution and care. It is important to emphasise that parents/carers **do not** send their children to school if they display any of the recognised symptoms.

We are also encouraging all members of our school community to download the **STOPCOVID19 NI App** which is available to download from the Apple store or Google Play. This will help with tracing should any pupil or staff member test positive.

Our medical register is updated regularly, and we ask that parents/carers advise us if their child is to be included on this and to inform us of any medications that their child requires. The data collection form has a section for this but if a child's circumstances change then we request that you inform us immediately.

Pupils who are clinically vulnerable

DE guidance states ‘Pupils who are clinically vulnerable are those with pre-existing conditions who have been advised to stringently follow the social distancing guidelines and should learn from home where possible. A small minority of pupils will fall into this category.’ We will treat each case on an individual basis and refer to the guidance provided by the PHA. However, we do encourage parents/carers to seek specific advice from their hospital consultant or GP. Where there is medical guidance that a pupil should refrain from attending school, we will support the needs of the child through our blended learning strategy.



Child Protection

Staff will continue to follow the procedures outlined in our school’s Child Protection Policy which is available on our website. In addition, we have included an addendum to this policy that emphasises the arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection that have been put in place to support families and monitor pupil safety during this pandemic. We ask that you familiarise yourself with this policy and the procedures involved.

Members of our safeguarding team are:

Ms Claire Barr – Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs Orla Donnelly – Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Ms Sharon Mallett - Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs Elizabeth Mc Closkey – Designated Governor for Child Protection



School Counselling Service

Family Works, the school counselling service, will continue to be on offer to those students who may wish to avail of their expertise. Our dedicated counsellor will have a base in each of the bubbles and learning zones and will adhere to the 7 steps checklist to ensure health and safety of those engaging. We normally have a self-referral box available for the students, but it is not feasible to operate that system this year. Therefore, the girls will be informed during a form lesson of the procedures to follow to make a referral.



Communication

Clear and regular lines of communication between the school and parents/carers are paramount during these challenging times. A regular newsletter for each of the key stages will be shared via the school app by the respective heads of school. These newsletters will include relevant information, key dates, advice, celebrations and recommendations.

The girls will continue to meet with their form teachers daily and parents/carers are encouraged to make this person the first point of contact in terms of communicating any concerns, queries or requests. Two-way communication is vital and even though parents/carers may not have the usual ready access to the building we do ask that you communicate via telephone or the school info account. We will endeavour to respond as quickly as we can.

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**.