



08.05.20

RE: School Closure Update / End of Year Assessment for 1st, 2nd, TY & 5th Years/ School Year 2020-2021

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We hope you are all well as we continue to face this national public health crisis together. We are writing to you today to update you on the situation in relation to the current school closure and to begin the process of planning for the new school year.

Following the Taoiseach's latest announcement last Friday, we now know for certain that, while our staff will once again be able to access the school building from 18th May, students will not be returning to the school building before the end of the current academic year on 29th May and that, therefore, learning and teaching will continue remotely until that time.

A summary of the remaining weeks of the school year is as follows:

Term Three

Week Beginning 5th May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning ongoing for all students.• Students in 1st, 2nd, TY & 5th Year advised of details of end of year projects/assessments by their teachers.
Week beginning 11th May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning ongoing for all students.• 3rd year students advised of structure of final assessment by their teachers.• Online Confirmation of Return.
Week beginning 18th May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning ongoing for all students.• Remaining 1st, 2nd, TY & 5th year projects and assessments submitted.• 3rd year end of term assessments take place this week
Week beginning 25th May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning ongoing for all students.
Friday 29th May 2020	Last day of remote learning for students.
Early June	Reports for 1 st – 5 th year students issued.

End of Year Assessments & State Exams for 1st, 2nd, TY & 5th Year Students

Among the implications of this is that our usual end of year assessments cannot now take place as normal. Instead, our teachers have created a series of projects and assignments for 1st, 2nd, TY and 5th year students that will serve as their end of year assessments for this year. Details of these projects/assignments have been shared with students on Schoology. These will be marked, graded and reported to you in the normal way shortly after the end of the year.

Student/Parent/Staff Surveys

We have begun the process of reviewing the submissions we received from students, parents and staff over the past week. Thank you to those of you who took part. Thank you as well for the very many kind and encouraging words we received from so many of you.

In general, the picture the survey responses portray is a generally positive one, in the circumstances. However, what is also clear is that the current situation is affecting all of us in very different ways. For example, 49% of parents reported that their children were adapting very well or managing comfortably with the current situation, while 31% were making fair progress and 20% are finding things extremely difficult, with students reporting broadly similar numbers in their responses (46%, 38% and 16% respectively).

At this stage, we've identified three broad trends in the responses to all three surveys:

- **Online Classes**
 - Many students and parents expressed that they are finding these useful and would like more of them.

Mol an Óige agus Tiocfaidh sí



- Our teachers are working to expand the provision of online classes where possible, whether live or recorded, and we are prioritising our 6th years in this respect.
- **Workload**
 - Most parents reported that their children's workload was manageable, while some parents reported that their children did not have enough school work to do, with slightly more reporting that there was too much work and that their children were struggling to manage.
 - Students also reported different experiences of managing their workload. Those students who are finding things difficult to manage found that keeping track of their different subjects and the work required was challenging
 - In our tutorial engagement with students going forward, we will be reminding them about the importance of routine and keeping to a schedule. We have made resources available to students to help with this.
 - If you are concerned about how your child is managing their school work, please get in touch with their Caomhnóir/Moltóir or a member of the Guidance team.
- **Timetable/Schedule**
 - A number of parents, students and staff reported challenges around managing the schedule of work and issues around clashes of online classes.
 - Teachers will endeavour to stick to the normal school timetable where possible, as we have advised students to do since the beginning of the closure. However, this is not always possible for a variety of reasons. We will be advising students to stick to their normal timetable where there is a clash of online classes, and they can access the clashing class, recorded and stored on Teams or Schoology, when they have available time.

A number of students and parents requested that they be contacted by a member of the school's Guidance team. The members of the Guidance team will be in touch with these students over the coming days and we will continue to analyse and evaluate the responses we received to assist us in delivering the best possible educational experience for our students in the current challenging circumstances.

School Year 2020/2021

Confirmation of Return (COR) & Student Direct Contribution

Under normal circumstances, we would currently be in the midst of preparations for COR day. For those of you new to the school, COR day takes place once a year in May, where each student's parents are asked to confirm that the student is returning to the school in September and to make the first payment of their Student Direct Contribution for the next academic year.

As with so many other things, COR day will not be able to take place as normal, however we are working on an online alternative and we will communicate details to you early next week. The information we gather through this process is critical for us to be able to plan effectively for the new school year.

Our Student Direct Contributions for each year group have been passed by our Board of Management and approved by the board of LMETB and we will pass on details of how and when payment can be made early next week.

We are acutely aware that many of our families will be experiencing challenging financial circumstances due to the ongoing crisis. If you feel you will have trouble paying the Student Direct Contribution for your child/children for next year, please make contact with the school in confidence as soon as possible.



Uniforms

Our school uniform supplier, schooluniformsdirect.ie, have like all businesses been adapting to the current circumstances and have set up a new 'Pay a Deposit' scheme to allow staged payments for uniforms. [Visit their website](#) for more information.

Book Lists/Book Rental 2020-21

As you will be aware, from September, 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students will receive a set of books through our Book Rental scheme. Subject departments are currently finalising the list of titles and a book and stationary list for all year groups will issue towards the end of May as usual.

Communication

Please continue to direct your queries through the main office – 01-8254102 / ratoathcollege@lmetb.ie – where they can be directed to the right person as necessary. The [special page on our school website](#) continues to be updated with new information as we receive it.

Yours faithfully,

Seamus Meehan
Principal

Colm Connolly
Deputy Principal

Donna Kelly
Deputy Principal

John McCarthy
Deputy Principal