



September 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

Dear Parent(s)/ Guardian(s),

I hope that your child is enjoying their time so far at DVS . I know they have missed out on the normal induction day in June but we will do everything we can, despite all the complications for now that the pandemic is still causing, to help them settle in and be happy.

These are just some of the steps we are taking in order to minimise the risk of Covid spread at our school:

- Break times are staggered so all students are not out at the same time. Break times for First Years are 10:20 – 10:40 am and 12:40 – 1:20pm.
- Smaller classes with adequate spacing
- All Classrooms are equipped with sanitiser, wipes etc.
- Thorough cleaning regime in place
- A limited number of CO2 monitors to measure ventilation have just arrived and are being installed.
- Ventilation is important so windows may have to be left open from time to time. If this is the case, students will be allowed wear jackets or extra tops in class
- We will continue to have PE but cannot use changing rooms. Therefore on PE days, for the time being, students will be allowed wear PE gear to school. Hopefully this will also allow another opportunity to have the uniforms washed, as we are advised.

We don't want Covid to be the focus of the year at DVS. Teaching and learning is what school is about and although our extra – curricular programme may be curtailed for a while, we will plan a schedule of lunch time activities in the next few weeks.

### **Some other items for your attention**

#### **Access and use of VShare.**

All Parents/Guardians have by now received a username for VShare. This is the system we use to record attendance, school reports, timetables and behaviour. You have access to this via the vshare app or on your PC using the web-site : [drumshanbovs.vshare.ie](http://drumshanbovs.vshare.ie). When you use this initially you will be given instructions to reset your password. You can use vsmail on the app to communicate with your child's Year Head . You'll find more information about using vshare on our school web-site: [www.dvs.ie](http://www.dvs.ie).

## **Important contacts**

The First Year Head is Lorraine Devaney. She will be an important point of contact for you. You may also have queries on learning support and on exemption from Irish. These should be addressed to Lorraine McLoughlin. Towards the end of the school year, subject choice for second year will be an important issue and you will be in contact with Daithi Hughes, our Guidance Counsellor. All of these teachers will be in class most of the day so the best way to contact them will be by e mail. Alternatively you can leave a phone message for them to call you back. E mail addresses as follows:

[lorrainedevaney@msletb.ie](mailto:lorrainedevaney@msletb.ie)

[lorrainemcloughlin@msletb.ie](mailto:lorrainemcloughlin@msletb.ie)

[daithihughes@msletb.ie](mailto:daithihughes@msletb.ie)

## **Notifying the school of absences**

The best way to notify us of pending or past absences is using the attendance feature on the vsware app. The advantage of this is that it immediately updates your child's attendance records. Alternatively you can send a regular e-mail to the Year Head or you can use vsmail. Of course, you can also use the Student Journal if you wish. However, for now we are to minimise taking up and checking these journals.

## **Reporting any behaviour issues**

Last year, mainly because of the covid restrictions, we started using vsware to record incidents of misbehaviour. We are continuing with this for now but plan to review this policy before the mid-term break. You have access to behaviour records via VSware.

## **The curriculum for First Year**

As you know, our First Years are divided into four class groups. All classes for now, are mixed ability and we also try to ensure similar numbers of boys and girls in each class. Students will take T Graphics, Art, Woodwork, Music, Business, Engineering and Home Economics on a rotation basis. They will also do Guidance for part of this rotation as part of our well-being programme. The students exempt from Irish are provided with alternative classes.

## **Lunch time arrangements**

For now, at least, First Years will not be allowed to leave school grounds at break time. They will have comfortable seating at break in the Mayflower, the school shelters and/or the school classrooms. Lunch time activities are being organised.

## **Using Microsoft Office**

In the coming weeks all First Years will be provided with an account for Microsoft Office. This will give them access to the MSOffice suite on up to five devices. They'll receive tuition

during IT classes on how to use the most relevant features of MSOffice. Teachers will be setting up their classes on TEAMS and using this to record class notes.

### **Importance of your contact details**

It is essential that we have up to date telephone contact details for you. From time to time we will send SMS messages on important school events, unexpected closures, and occasionally seeking your views on school matters. Of course we also need to be able to contact you in the event that your child becomes ill or gets injured.

### **The school calendar**

The updated school calendar for 2021/22 will shortly be published on our web-site.

***Reminder :** Please do not send your child to school if he/she has any cough, temperature or any symptom of Covid. All students (other than those exempt) are required to bring and wear a face mask at school and on the school bus. In some very small classes, or where at all possible when there's a 2 M distance we will allow students to remove masks.*

Yours sincerely



Martin Fallon

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Principal