



18th August 2020

St Columb's College


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 StColumb'sCollegeDerry

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Carer(s)

In early July I wrote to you, outlining our draft plans for reopening St Columb's College in August/September 2020. At that time, I took the decision not to provide a very detailed *Roadmap for Reopening* as I was conscious that the situation might be very different in August.

I provided you with a further brief communication on Monday 10th August. In that I explained that we had been informed that we would be receiving updated guidance in relation to the reopening of schools on Thursday 13th August.

This guidance (*New School Day*) duly arrived - all 70 pages of it - and since then we have had the opportunity to consider it fully. In light of this guidance we are now updating you on our plans for the reopening of St Columb's College for all of our pupils and staff.

The position of the Minister of Education has been well publicised in recent weeks; put simply, he is anxious that schools reopen for pupils for all kinds of reasons. This is very much our wish too, and as our *Roadmap for Reopening* will demonstrate, we are doing all that we can to return our *collegeboys* to full-time education as soon as possible.

That said, we recognise that there will be a level of anxiety for all members of the St Columb's College community, given that any relaxing of the lockdown carries an element of risk. We will be doing all that we can to minimise that risk, but it is abundantly clear that Covid-19 is still with us and so each one of us – staff, pupils and parents – has a key part to play in making this work for everyone. We must remain vigilant to *Keep it Out* of our school.

Boiling the document down to its essentials, *New School Day* is asking us to put in place a number of mitigations against the possible spread of Covid-19. These include:

- Regular handwashing;
- The implementation of protective bubbles to limit contact with other pupils (either in the same year group or other year groups);
- Staggered arrival and departure times (where possible);
- Staggered lunch times.

We are also introducing additional mitigations of our own, as you will read in the *Roadmap for Reopening*.

I hope that our *Roadmap for Reopening* will give you confidence that we are committed to do everything that we can to keep every member of our St Columb's College Community safe each day. Above all, I want you to know that we cannot wait to have all of our *collegeboys* back with us.

With every good wish.


FJM Madden
Principal

