

03/04/2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As the second term of the 2019/2020 Academic Year draws to a close in unusual and uncertain circumstances, I would like to thank you and all the students for your patience and cooperation over the past three weeks

I would also like to express my thanks to all the teachers and staff at Naas Community College for their flexibility and dedication in ensuring that education continued so effectively during this unprecedented school closure.

We have utilised the Schoology platform pretty effectively and we have added in the video conferencing tool, Zoom to ensure real time delivery of lessons where your children could interact with their teachers. Not the same as the face-to-face interaction, but a good substitute I hope you'll agree.

I hope that the students have found the Discovery Tasks interesting and rewarding and I also hope that the Social Tasks have made life a little easier at home. We will be publishing a compilation of both after Easter to showcase what students have been doing.

I am glad to see such participation and hard work from the students. That dedication will stand to them when the schools reopen.

As it currently stands, the schools are scheduled to reopen after the Easter holidays on Monday the 20th April. We are prepared for that to happen, but equally, we are prepared for a continued school closure. I suspect we will not have clarity on this until after Easter Sunday. When I have information about this I will contact you all immediately.

In relation to the State exams in June, we are proceeding with the assumption that the Junior Cycle exams will take place as scheduled in June 2020. Exam preparation and revision should continue as normal for Third Year students. Exam fees should be paid in the usual manner. Again, if there is any change to this, we will contact you immediately.

In relation to our permanent build: all construction has been shut down and will remain so until the end of the travel restrictions. I am not greatly concerned about the status of the permanent build as there will be scope to catch up over the course of the project.

In relation to the prefabs needed for our current site: Work has not begun on the ground works at Craddockstown yet. I am not going to worry yet, as the contractor has been appointed and all necessary administration preparations are in place. If we get to a position where no construction work has begun by the middle of May, then we will have cause for concern. Everything depends on the success of the travel restrictions and community distancing measures. Once this spread of the COVID 19 virus has been either halted or brought to a manageable level, we can get everything back on track. I am confident that once that happens the contractors will be in a position to move quickly towards completion.

In other matters, Wriggle will issue the code for the incoming 1st Year iPad store soon. That will be publicised on the school website.

Subject option lines for next year's 5th Years have been published today and will need to be returned on Monday 20th April.

Students who wish to apply to move directly from 3rd Year to 5th Year will be informed of the process on the 21st April.

The new Admissions to School Act requires all schools to submit an Admissions Policy to its Parent Body (KWETB) by the 30/04/2020. I will be sharing the new Admissions Policy with the Parent Association in the coming days and seeking their opinions by the 17th April. I will then convene a special meeting of the Board of Management to consider those opinions and then submit the completed policy to KWETB by the end of April.

As you can see, the school will continue to plan and prepare for the return of students, whenever that happens. We will do our best to communicate effectively with you over the coming days and weeks, via email, the school website, the school app, Schoology and our social media platforms. Our school email is constantly monitored and we will endeavour to reply as quickly as possible.

Thank you all for your patience and cooperation during this uncertain time. We will do our best to maintain a sense of structure and continuity for as long as this situation continues. We will get through this national emergency and our students will be well placed to continue with their education back in the classrooms.

Happy Easter to you all and hopefully I'll be in touch very soon, informing you that the school is reopening.

Best wishes,

Cianán Keeg.