



Loreto Secondary School Clonmel

Coleville Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

25th March 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope that you are all keeping safe. Today I am getting in touch with our families to keep you up-to-date. Ordinarily we would do this on a daily basis with students. As this is not possible the best we can do at the moment is to send texts, emails and put letters on our website. The link to our *Letters to Families* is [here](#).

Today I want to draw your attention to some information:

- **School Closure extended**

As I am sure you heard yesterday the Taoiseach, Mr Leo Varadkar TD, has announced school closures will continue until Sunday 19th April 2020. The Taoiseach said *“My message to students facing exams is that they should keep focused, keep working and try, as much as possible, to prepare as normal for the state exams. We are doing everything in our power to make sure those exams happen”*. He also noted that the Minister of Education and Skills is working on contingency plans if needed to be put in place. The latest Covid-19 Statement from the Department of Education and Skills is at this [link](#).

- **Keep Active and Connected**

As a school we understand that the lack of certainty around school closures and state exams may be causing anxiety for some of our students, and indeed their families. We advise all our students and their families in the coming weeks to look after your mental health. There are two keep ways to help with that:

keep active



keep connected



There are so many opportunities and ideas on-line for keeping **active**, some of which our PE teachers have passed on to our students – try something new each day!

You are also reminded to keep **connected** to your family and friends. As the Minister for Health said yesterday you can stay apart but still stay connected.

- **Office365 is the platform we use to conduct Remote Teaching and Learning**

As you know as a school all contact is through Microsoft 365 (which includes Class Notebook, Teams and @loretoclomel.ie email addresses). We are satisfied that Microsoft 365 provides us with what is required to conduct Remote Teaching and Learning.

At this stage all students should have accessed their Office 365 using their unique USERNAME and PASSWORD. If this is not the case for your child(ren) can you contact the school at reception@loretoclomel.ie for this information.

We are all learning together about remote teaching and learning. Today I want to ask parents/guardians to sit with your child(ren) at some stage before lunch time on Friday 26th March 2020 and have your child(ren) give you a tour of their teams, etc. Your child(ren) can show you how they have been:

- logging on to Office 365

- connecting with their teachers
- gathering classwork and homework/assignments
- submitting assignments
- some have been attending live classes or watching videos.

From these conversations with your child(ren) you might become aware of areas that your child(ren) need help with. If this is the case in the first instance, please ask your child(ren) to message their teacher directly through Teams or emails. Following that, if further assistance is required, your child(ren) can contact their Tutor or Year Head.

- **Feedback re engagement with On-line Teaching and Learning**

The feedback from teachers is that most students are making a genuine effort with on-line classwork, study and homework. It can take some time to adjust to this new medium to be able to balance time among the various subjects and get used to studying at home! Remember that all teachers expect is that students make an honest effort.

With that in mind - there may be some personal circumstances or other issues that we are not aware of - please do (if appropriate) consider letting us know about these circumstances, as there may be some way that we can help.

- **Remote Teacher and Learning Protocols**

A reminder that Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Students are available on the website under Letters to Families or at this [link](#).

- **State Examinations Commission FAQs**

Following communication with the State Examinations Commission we have been advised of the following in relation to payment of JC and LC Examination Fees (this is a direct quote from the email):

- The closing date for the payment of the examination fee is 30th April 2020
- Parents in financial difficulties can hold off until they see the outcome from the Covid-19.

- **Contacting the school**

Remember that if you as a parent/guardian needs to contact the school please email us at reception@loretoclonmel.ie and your query will be forwarded to the relevant person.

To all in the extended Loreto Community who are working on the front lines at the moment, we want to say thank you for all that you are doing.

I hope that you all continue to keep safe – encourage your child(ren) to practice **physical distancing** and remind them that they can keep in touch with family and friends without meeting them.

Unless we have further up-dates it will most likely be next week when I next contact you.

Yours faithfully,

Anne Mc Grath,
Principal