



Re: School Closure & Remote Teaching

25th March 2020,

Dear Parents/Guardians/Students,

I hope you are all well during these uncertain times. I am sitting here in school and the silence is deafening. Normally, the sound of 832 students and a staff of 70 people would be echoing through the corridors, hopefully, I will be hearing those sounds again soon. The sound of laughter, gossip, fun and friendship.

However, until then I ask everyone to follow the advice that we are receiving from all of the health professionals & the government, we all have to do our part.

I am sure you all have heard by now that Schools will remain closed until Mon 20th April, & that both the Taoiseach and Minister for Education have stated that the Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert will go ahead.

We are here as a school to support you all in whatever we can for however long this may last.

Here in PSS Wexford we have devised a Remote Teaching timetable for students & staff that will work for the duration of the closure here in the school. All students & teachers will work from this timetable. Again, I remind Parents/Guardians/Students to please keep up with their work, please check your office365 emails on a regular basis and the other learning platforms that your teachers are using. Do not have any reason to fall behind this situation will end and your education should not suffer as a result have no regrets!

The general feedback from staff, parents, & students has been very positive. I would like to commend all the hard work that is being put into remote teaching by our teachers, students & parents. All of our jobs now will be to sustain that interest that the students have had in the initial days for what could be a number of weeks/months.

We are very lucky in PSS Wexford in that we are an iPad ready school and have been using E Learning & technology for a number of years here in the school. Every student has their own iPad & all have access to Office 365 and our teachers have been very busy preparing lessons and work for our students while at home. We are also very cognisant of the fact that Wi-Fi and broadband access can be limited or non-existent in certain parts of the county.

Staff & students are contacted each day by email and any further updates will be communicated to you all by email, twitter, Facebook, Instagram and on our webpage.

Many of our staff are finding it difficult to juggle remote teaching and looking after their own children, so I would ask parents/guardians to be patient in these uncertain times. In addition, staff are aware that many of our students are helping at home, minding smaller siblings. These are not normal times.



For all students out there I would advise the following:

- **Set yourself a normal timetable and routine everyday:**
- **Get up at the same time as you would for school**
- **Have a good breakfast**
- **Be ready each day for whatever subjects are timetabled for that day – have all your resources ready**
- **Have your break time & lunch time planned and what you will eat**
- **Talk to your friends by phone, social media during the break times or go outside for some fresh air.**
- **Get your work done!**
- **There is no excuse for anyone to fall behind in work.**
- **Your teachers are putting in the work so should you**
- **I would also advise that students be kind on social media to their friends and others, & to be careful of sending or reading incorrect or false information that is floating around.**

Finally, 3rd & 6th years please stay focused. Despite last week's news about orals and practical's the state exams are still going ahead as well as course work, which is now planned for the 15th of May.

Therefore, I am going to ask you all to practice the 4 Ss of sustainability that have been used & mentioned on social media over the weekend.

- **SIMPLE**
- **SLOW**
- **STEADY**
- **SUPPORT**

Wishing everyone well & may we all get through this as a community stronger than before, stay safe and remember all of those who are putting their own lives at risk to keep us all safe. We should all be very appreciative of all of their extraordinary efforts at this time.

Below is the statement from the DES made on the 24th March re School closures.

Yours sincerely,

William Ryan

Principal



24 March, 2020 - Covid-19 Statement from the Department of Education and Skills

All schools, pre-schools and further and higher education settings will remain closed to students until 19 April 2020.

The decision has been taken following advice from the NPHET (National Public Health Emergency Team) as part of efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19.

All young people and children are urged to practice social distancing, and to minimise physical contact to keep themselves and others healthy and to limit the spread of infection. This should include minimising social contact, avoiding meeting up and keeping physical space of two metres between each other. Parents and guardians are urged to support young people and children to follow those simple guidelines.

Minister for Education and Skills Joe McHugh TD said: "This is an extremely difficult time for everyone, not least students and their parents.

"The decision to keep schools closed until after the Easter break is based on public health advice. It is a hugely important aspect of our continued effort to limit the spread of Covid-19.

"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.

"Teachers and students have answered the call to remote learning with exceptional flexibility and adaptability. You are all a credit to the education system.

"I am also deeply conscious of significant work being done to ensure continuity of learning across our higher and further education institutions. The impact of emergency measures has not stopped education, it has inspired innovation and we are indebted to all those continuing to provide education in these trying times."