



# *Scoil Phobail Beal Atha h-Amhnais*

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## **BALLYHAUNIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

David McDonagh *Principal*  
Orla Macken *Deputy Principal*

Dear Parent/Guardian/Student,

I hope you are keeping well.

Next Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, is a significant day for the whole country as it marks the full return to school for all students. While this is a very welcome development it is absolutely essential that we all follow closely the public health guidelines that are in place. This is necessary to ensure the health & safety of all stakeholders.

It is also important to remember that we are returning to a different situation than what pertained before Christmas. The arrival of new variants which are proving to be more transmissible requires us all to be even more careful than we were previously. Also, prior to the Easter Break only 5<sup>th</sup> year & 6<sup>th</sup> Year students were present in the school. The increased student population that will be present in the school from next Monday on requires that we all exercise the greatest amount of caution as we go about our day.

To ensure everyone's Health & Safety the following guidelines must be observed:

Students/Staff should not attend school in the event of the following:

- if they **or any member of the household** display any signs or symptoms of Covid-19. In situations such as this you are advised to self-isolate and contact your GP
- if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19
- if they have travelled outside of Ireland recently

Staff and students are expected to co-operate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.

We will also continue to implement the safety measures introduced last September. Students and staff are required to:

- Maintain regular hand hygiene;
- Maintain physical distancing;
- Apply appropriate respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette; and
- Maintain environmental hygiene.

As before students will be required to wear face coverings.

It is a requirement that teachers, staff and students attending post primary schools wear a face covering when a physical distance of 2m from other staff or students cannot be maintained. This applies both indoors and outdoors.

All students on the post primary transport scheme should wear face coverings unless there is a good reason not to do so.

Wearing a face covering or mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic. Face coverings should be changed and refreshed regularly.

As communicated previously senior students no longer have the option of going downtown at lunch break. The canteen is open should students wish to avail of its service.

Students are now permitted to wear their PE Uniform to school on days that they have PE. However, they must wear their school jumper at all times. As before, students are not permitted to wear “Hoodies” to school.

We understand that this has been an exceptionally stressful time for many. We will do everything we can to assist and support our students in the next number of weeks. To that end please do not hesitate to contact us if your circumstances have changed in recent weeks.

We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone Monday morning. If we work together and follow all guidelines I am confident that it will be a safe and rewarding return for all.

Regards,

*David McDonagh*

Principal