



Return to School

Dear Parents & Students,

Preparations are still underway for ensuring the safe return of your daughter to school. There have been some difficult decisions over the past few weeks since the Department of Education issued their guidance on reopening schools and in the interests of health and safety a number of changes have had to be made in relation to the school day and how we normally operate. Despite these changes, we will always continue to ensure that our school is a warm, welcoming and caring environment. We hope that you will continue to support us in any changes we will have to make and help our school community remain open and fully compliant to the government guidelines.

Return to School Dates

DATE	TIME	GROUP
MONDAY 31 ST AUG 2020	9:00am – 1:15pm	LEAVING CERTS ONLY
TUESDAY 1 ST SEPT 2020	9:00am – 1:15pm	3 RD YEAR STUDENTS ONLY
WEDNESDAY 2 ND SEPT 2020	9:00am – 1:15pm	5 TH YEAR & TY STUDENTS ONLY
THURSDAY 3 RD SEPT 2020	9:00am – 1:15pm	2 ND YEAR STUDENTS ONLY
FRIDAY 4 TH SEPT 2020	9:00am – 1:15pm	1 ST YEAR STUDENTS ONLY
MONDAY 7 TH SEPT 2020*	9:00am – 1:15pm	1 ST YEAR STUDENTS ONLY
TUESDAY 8 TH SEPT 2020	9:00am – 4:00pm	ALL STUDENTS IN SCHOOL
		(Full Days)

The School Day

Schools have been advised to try and minimise movement of students and staff throughout the school day. In this regard, Our Lady's College have made the following arrangements:

- **School Times**

There have been no changes to the start and end times of our school day. They remain as follows:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
<i>Start</i>	9:00am	9:00am	9:00am	9:00am	9:00am
<i>Finish</i>	4:00pm	4:00pm	3:20pm	3:20pm	3:00pm

- **Timetable**

The timetable has had to be rearranged to facilitate as many double class periods as possible, in line with government advice. This will reduce the number of movements throughout the day. Students will receive their timetable on return to school and it will also be available to view on Compass.

- **Staggered lunches**

There will be staggered lunchtimes for different year groups and students will eat their lunch in designated zones, where social distancing can be adhered to and monitored. Students will be shown and made aware of their zones when they return to school. The new times are as follows:

1st, 2nd & 3rd Years

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
BREAK	11:00-11:15	11:00-11:15	11:00-11:15	11:00-11:15	11:00-11:15
LUNCH	1:15-2:00	1:15-2:00	1:15-2:00	1:15-2:00	1:15-1:40

TY, 5th & 6th Years

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
BREAK	10:20-10:35	10:20-10:35	10:20-10:35	10:20-10:35	10:20-10:35
LUNCH	12:35- 1:15	12:35- 1:15	12:35- 1:15	12:35- 1:15	1:15-1:40

As always, 3rd, Ty, 5th & 6th Years are allowed to leave the school premises at lunchtime. All remaining years must remain on the school premises. No students are allowed leave the school during morning break.

- **Zones/Base Classrooms**

In accordance with the advice issued to schools in relation to minimising movement within the school, where possible each year group will be designated a base classroom/zone where the majority of their lessons will take place and teachers will move from class to class. There will be a seating plan in place and your daughter will be assigned a specific seat. There will be designated entry and exit points for each year group to the school. Students will be advised of their classrooms, entry/exit points etc. on their return to school.

Social Distancing Measures and School Protocols

- **Social Distancing**

In preparation for the return of our staff and students, the following measures have already been completed:

- All classrooms (with the exception of Practical Rooms), have been furnished with single desks. Markings on the floor indicate where a student's chair must be in order to maintain a minimum of 1m distance from other students.
- Hand sanitisers have been installed at the entrance to each classroom, toilets, canteen and at regular intervals along the corridors. Automatic hand sanitiser dispensers will be located at all entry and exit points to the school.
- Signage and posters are displayed around the school and at key areas. One way systems will operate on corridors and stairs, which are clearly indicated.
- Designated entry and exit points for different year groups. Students will be informed of their designated entry/exit point on return to school.

- **Face Coverings**

- Following the announcement from Minister Foley on August 7th, face coverings will be compulsory in second level schools for all staff and students. We recommend that students have 3 reusable face coverings, with one being kept in school as a spare one. Face coverings are to be washed each day. Students will receive guidance on the correct wearing/use of face coverings when they return. **Students are required to wear face coverings on entering the school gates and on public/school buses.**

- **Arrival/Departure**

On arrival to school students must go straight to their Base Classroom/Zone. We encourage all students to be on time in the mornings. Late arrivals to class are disruptive to teaching and learning. At the end of the school day, students must leave the school grounds immediately and not congregate in the school yard. Students will be informed of the correct

- **Lockers**

In order to adhere to health and safety guidelines and to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid 19, lockers will currently not be in use. Alternative storage solutions will be provided for each students' personal belongings in their base classroom.

- **Canteen**

We are delighted to be able to continue to provide canteen facilities. However, there may be an adjusted menu and pre ordering **ONLY** of all food is required. In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines, alternative space for consumption of food is being arranged. Students will be notified of this on their return to school.

Uniforms/Books

- Uniforms continue to be compulsory for all students in Our Lady's College. Details of PE uniform and changing facilities will be notified on return to school.
- The Book Rental scheme continues to operate as normal and all students who have paid the rental fee of €120 will receive a set of books for their own use. The school will endeavour to minimise the number of books students need to bring to school each day and the use of eBooks etc. in the classroom will be encouraged. School Books should be brought home once they have been distributed by the school to students and kept at home

Contact/Medical Details

- If there have been any changes to your contact details, in particular your address and phone details please notify the school. We will need phone numbers for **TWO adults**, which should include at least one parent or guardian and an up to date email address. It is essential that the school can contact parents/guardians at **all** times.
- Please notify the school of any changes to students' medical information. In particular, we need to be informed if a student is considered high risk (please refer to the HSE guidance on High Risk Students). We will be in contact with parents of these students when we receive further guidance from the Department of Education.

Communication

Communication between school and home is very important, now more than ever. Our main form of communication will be through our school app Compass. Please ensure that you have downloaded the Compass School Manager App and **enabled notifications**. We will post all relevant information on the Compass Newsfeed. If you have forgotten your log in details please email the school. Students should **not** have access to the Parent Account on Compass.

Please check our school website for information/tutorial on how to use the app. We would ask that parents notify us of their daughter's absence/explanation notes/appointments etc. by using the Add an Attendance Note feature of the app.

Access to School Buildings/Parent Appointments:

- In adherence to the guidelines issued by the DES, all visitors to the school (including parents) must **make an appointment prior to their visit**. While this is not normally our practice, in the interests of the safety of our staff and students, we will not be able to let parents into the school without pre-arranged appointments. A Contact Tracing Form must be completed before any appointments can be made. Appointments can be made through the school office email info@ourladyscolleegalway.ie. Please ensure your daughter has everything they need for the school day as we will not be able to facilitate the dropping off of items throughout the day.
- On arrival to the school, all visitors must wait outside before being admitted. They will be required to fill out **a Contact Tracing Form** at each visit and wear a face covering.
- If parents need to contact their daughter urgently during the school day, please do so **ONLY** through the school office. Students are not allowed to have their Mobile Phones switched on while in the school building, unless authorised to do so by a teacher/member of staff for educational purposes.
- If your daughter has to leave school early for an appointment, this information must be entered on the Compass App, with date, time and reason. Further information will follow on procedures to follow if your daughter is unable to attend school on a particular day. All absences will have to be notified to the school.

We look forward to meeting all our students again over the next few days. We are asking for your daughter's and your full cooperation in all the changes that have to be made to ensure Our Lady's College is safe for them and for our staff. Don not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries on info@ourladyscolleegalway.ie or on 091 563495 (please leave a voicemail if this number is engaged).

Kind regards

Cliona Ni Neill
Principal

Michelle Casserly
Deputy Principal