



De La Salle College

Dundalk, Co. Louth



August 23rd 2021

Dear Students and Parents,

It is with great pride that I write to you as your new Principal. I look forward to meeting you and working with you over the coming years. As your Principal, I will strive to ensure that all families feel welcome and connected to our school family. Together, we will ensure that we maintain our tradition of excellence, respect, care and community that makes De La Salle College such a special place.

My wish for the coming year is that all our students engage fully with school life, build positive relationships, develop new skills, reach their full potential and that each student feels happy and safe while in our care.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome our students and staff back to school and extend a warm Lasallian welcome to our incoming First Year students and new students joining other year groups.

We begin this new academic year while continuing to adjust to the reality of living with the threat of Covid 19. It will bring challenges as we adapt to a new and variable teaching and learning environment. We will also have to engage with changes to our everyday routines as we return to school in the context of the reality of Covid-19.

Our main aim is to provide a safe teaching and learning environment that minimises the danger of transmission of the virus as far as possible. Our Return to School Document indicates the changes implemented to enable the school to open in a safe and sustainable manner. Please read the guidelines carefully with your son before his return. Your co-operation with the school response plan, the school's Code of Behaviour and the Covid -19 Protocols are vital in keeping our school community and our families safe.

I want to thank you all for your support and co-operation over the last year. Thanks to that co-operation, we had zero transmission of the virus within our school community.

Respect is at the core of everything we do in De La Salle. We expect all members of our school community to live by the school's motto "Recta Sapere" -"Right Judgement". We ask that they treat each other as they would like to be treated, with kindness, care, and empathy, thus paving the way for a very positive school experience for all members of our school community.

I extend a warm welcome to Mr McKeon, who joins me as Deputy Principal and the new teachers joining our Lasallian family.

I am sure you will join me in wishing our outgoing Principal, Patricia O'Leary, a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Timetables for the year are available to view on VShare.

Please see below important information.

Warm Regards,

Nicola Connolly

Principal

De La Salle Ethos – Our core Values

De La Salle Schools are Christian schools that share the mission of the Catholic Church and where people show care and respect for each other. De La Salle Schools offer a quality education to all students.

De la Salle schools are built around partnership, involving parents, students, staff and management.

De La Salle schools are concerned with the needs of the disadvantaged at all levels.

To maintain our high standards and develop your son's full potential, we need your continued support and co-operation.

Uniform

Our uniform is a very important element in the overall culture of the school. It identifies our students and should be worn with pride. I ask that you bear in mind the following:

- The official College jacket is an essential part of the uniform and the **only outdoor coat allowed**. Non-uniform jackets will be confiscated and returned to parents/guardians.
- The school tie must be worn at all times.
- Shoes must be all black, without logos. Runners are unacceptable.
- Where there is a genuine reason for not wearing any part of the uniform, this should be explained by a note in the student journal or via the school app. Any problem with the uniform should be resolved as soon as possible.
- A wristwatch is the only jewellery permitted. Earrings and Rings are not allowed.
- All students are expected to comply with the regulations regarding the school uniform, and I ask that you and your son familiarise yourselves with the uniform regulations. Failure to comply is considered a breach of the Code of Behaviour and may incur sanctions.

Code of Behaviour

- **The Code of Behaviour and the Covid 19 Protocols are available on the APP. Please read carefully with your son before the school year begins.**
- It will be vital to maintain good order in the school at this time. We must all play our part in implementing the relevant Covid-19 guidelines from HSE regarding regular hand-washing, social distancing, covering coughs and sneezes to help prevent the spread of the virus, and the wearing of face coverings. The school's Code of Behaviour and other relevant policies have been updated to provide for these changed circumstances, and full compliance with them will be extremely important.
- Students who are unwell or displaying any symptoms will have to be kept at home.
- While many of the restrictions have been lifted, we cannot revert to previous social norms; we must now continue to be far more conscious of our behaviour and the possible consequences. Without total care and commitment from all members of our community, infection rates may rise, and more lives will be lost. We all know of at least one person dear to us who is vulnerable because of age or underlying health issues. We also know that while young people may not show symptoms, they are

carriers of the virus. It is incredibly irresponsible and unacceptable for any of us to behave in a way that puts people at risk.

- It is important that young people refrain from meeting in large groups and keep a safe social distance apart. It is undoubtedly a challenge and an inconvenience. Still, it is a minimal price to pay if it saves someone else from severe illness or even death and if it allows schools to remain open during this academic year. We are all very anxious to keep schools open in the interests of well being along with the resumption of teaching and learning.

Mobile Learning Devices

We hope that school closures will not be a feature of the 21/22 academic year; however, we have to be prepared for the possibility of blended learning. This will most likely comprise of a combination of in-class and distance learning and is a scenario for which we must be prepared. Many students struggled to cope with distance learning using smartphones during the last academic year. To ensure sustainability and full access to distance teaching and learning during the coming year, students will need access to a suitable device to use at home, such as a tablet or laptop, along with a reliable internet connection.

Should a move to remote learning become necessary, it is very important for students to be able to engage as fully as possible with online lessons during the school day and to let us know if they are experiencing problems.

One Note and Microsoft Teams were introduced by teachers last year and will continue to play an important role in student learning during the coming school year.

Sixty Minute Classes

We will continue with 60-minute classes this year. This will mean 6 class periods in the day. It will provide more time for the active learning methodologies recommended, particularly for junior classes, reduce movement around the school and also reduce the weight of school bags for students. Unfortunately, lockers will not be available again this year for health and safety reasons. In the event of distance learning being necessary, students will have fewer subjects and classes to worry about each day.

Staggered Lunch Breaks

Staggered break and lunchtimes were introduced last year for Junior and Senior students and will remain in place for the coming academic year. Separate breaktimes allow for social distancing in the yard and in the canteen during break times.

Students are **not allowed** to leave the school grounds during the school day.

Unique schools cards

From September, the school will begin providing a fully contactless solution for students registering late arrivals and early departures. Students will receive three cards at the beginning of the new term. This will allow them to have one on their key ring, one in their bag and a spare one. Parents/Students should register their unique cards through the school App.

Replacement cards can be purchased from the office for €5.

More information can be found on the link below:

<https://vimeo.com/402612254/881b2d05f9>

How to assign your swipe card:

1. Open your school app.
2. On the main menu tap on your name
3. This will open your profile
4. Tap on Manage swipe card
5. Scan or enter in the code manually
6. Submit

Canteen Services

A full canteen service provided by TFW foods is available in the school. Information on cashless payment options is available on the school App. There will be a morning break service available from Friday, September 27th. Full service will resume on Thursday, September 2nd.