

*Scoil Naomh Mearnóg,  
Bóthar na Trá,  
Portmearnóg,  
Co. Átha Cliath*



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**2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**

Dear Parents / Guardians,

I hope your children have all settled well back at school this week. Having visited them in their classes they appear happy to be back!

I am emailing you today regarding a change to our reception procedure for children in the morning.

During the past week, myself and the Leadership team have been monitoring the health and safety of pupils and the overcrowding situation outside our school gates in the mornings. There is a concern amongst ourselves, parents and the Board of Management regarding the health and safety risk to pupils at present with large numbers congregating on the footpath outside the school. We have observed that there is overcrowding on the footpath prior to the gates opening at 8.45, some of which may be caused by people arriving early at the school having been used to coming to school at 8.35 during Covid times.

Following consultation with our Management body and insurer, we have carried out a risk assessment of the health and safety risk and we are now putting an action plan in place which we hope will help alleviate the situation.

This action plan is outlined below and will be put in place **from next Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September:**

- We would like to remind parents that **our school's opening hours are from 8.45 – 2.30pm** and this is the time during which the school accepts responsibility for your children.
- We are encouraging pupils to be punctual and **arrive to school on time at 8.45**. We encourage everyone who can to walk/cycle to school where possible to avoid traffic congestion outside the school.
- From Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September the school gates will be opened at 8.35 and children will be required to line up in lines outside the entry and exit points for their classes when they arrive to school.
- Teachers from our Leadership team will be at the various entry and exit points to the building to show children where to go and to lead them into their classrooms at 8.45 where they will be greeted by their class teachers.
- To avoid congestion which we previously experienced in the school yard prior to Covid and to minimise the health and safety risk to everyone, we request that if parents of children in Junior classes are dropping their children into the school yard, that they do not enter the designated areas and congregate where the children are lining up. We request that all parents please keep behind the roped off areas of the yard.
- Please keep your child under your supervision at all times, particularly just before you drop them off to school and when you pick them up and when you accompany them off the grounds after school.

In the interest of everyone's health and safety, we urge all parents not to park anywhere on the footpaths outside our school. A reminder also that if you are entering or exiting the church car park that you are mindful of children making their way in and out of school. The issue of road safety will also be further highlighted with children in class to increase their awareness again of the importance of road safety.

We will continue to monitor and review the health and safety situation outside our school in the coming weeks but we are strongly relying on your co-operation to make this new plan work.

Thank you for your continued co-operation and support,

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Sinéad Trimble      **Principal**