



Our Lady's Grove Secondary School

Our Lady's Grove, Goatstown Road, Dublin 14

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope this note finds you and your families well. It is hard to believe that the mid-term week is almost over. Hopefully it has been one of rest, enjoyment, and recuperation for you all. I wanted to write to you about four important topics today in advance of our return next Monday.

To begin is some exciting and positive news. Our Senior Hockey Team has made the Division 1B final after wonderful progress through the earlier rounds. This is the first time in many years that one of our school teams has reached this stage of the competition. We are all immensely proud of the squad and what they have achieved. The match is due to be played in Three Rock Rovers Hockey Club on **Tuesday 8th of March** at 10 am. Due to the level of achievement, we as a school community intend to permit the entire school to attend the match. We feel that this will be wonderful occasion for us all to celebrate a school achievement together. Buses will run from the school after first class on the Tuesday. All students will return to school following the game, and regular classes will resume.

Another reason for writing is to inform you that the Department of Education have written instructing me to insert an additional holiday date to our school calendar between now and May. This additional day is required as the school is already due to be closed on the 18th of March, the date of the new public holiday. After in-school discussions the date decided upon was **Tuesday 3rd of May**. Please keep a note of this date as a change to the previously published school calendar.

The third reason for writing is to inform you about our upcoming **Open Night**. This will be held on **Tuesday 15th of March** between 5 and 8pm. We encourage you to invite extended family and friends who may be interested in sending their daughters to the school in coming years. We are really looking forward to welcoming everyone on the night. As always, our students, your children, will be our greatest advertisement.

Finally, you will have heard the government announcement in relation to Covid procedures in schools. We welcome that we may be approaching an end to what has felt like an interminable two years. Internal ventilation, hand sanitising and the use of HEPA filters will continue in school, but enforced social distancing will end. We will immediately revert our class seating arrangements to their pre-covid design from Monday. That will open access to lockers, which we will release to all students as soon as is possible. Outdoor breaks will be maintained, weather permitting, but most other restrictions relating to practical subjects, use of bathrooms and indoor sports will be lifted.

In relation to mask wearing, we are all aware that its status is moving from mandatory to advised. I will personally continue to wear mine in the short-term. Of course, I want to see the back of them as they interfere with all aspects of school relationships and teaching and learning. However, I am conscious of our students who are approaching high stakes state

exams, students and staff with vulnerable extended family and students and staff with existing medical conditions. These make getting any Covid variant at best worrying, and at worst dangerous.

I will not stop any student coming to school without a mask, but I ask you all to consider the wider context for the next few weeks. As has been the case throughout this pandemic, masks are available free of charge for students from the school reception.

As a school community we will continue to monitor public health guidance and review our procedures in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely

Colm Dooley

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Colm Dooley', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval border.

Principal
Our Lady's Grove

