

Tel. (094) 9371442; Fax. (094) 9362170

24<sup>th</sup> August, 2020

**RE: 2020-21 Academic Year**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the new school year. I wish to thank you again most sincerely for choosing to send your son to St. Colman's College. I look forward to working with you the parents, the student body, the Board of Management, the Students' Council, the Parents' Association and the local community to ensure a quality all-round education for the young men of our community.

The last academic year was very unusual and unprecedented with schools being closed due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. The months of March, April and May were difficult ones for students, staff and parents and we acknowledge their support in trying to ensure the continuity of learning up to the summer holidays. We also acknowledge the pressure that was put on Leaving Certificate students because of uncertainty involving the Leaving Cert and then the introduction of Calculated Grades. I want to particularly thank our teachers for their work in introducing and maintaining Distance/Online Learning. Our Leaving Certificate students are awaiting their examination results and we wish them well in the future and in whatever career paths they choose to take.

Our staff membership will remain virtually unchanged for the next academic year and we are lucky to have retained most of our talented and experienced members.

We plan to reopen the school at the end of August, beginning of September in accordance with government guidelines. We will have a staggered re-opening with teachers returning for Health and Safety/Covid Training on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August and for a Staff Preparation Day on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. Students will return progressively thereafter as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> Years – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Years – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Years – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Years – Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Years and LCAs – Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September**  
**TYs – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

LCAs and TYs will be required to come to school for Induction on Friday; TYs from 9.30 to 11 a.m. and LCAs from 11.15 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. They must wear their school uniforms. Afterwards they will be allowed to go home. LCAs will begin their Work Experience on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September, TYA on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September and TYB on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

Because of Covid 19 and Government Guidelines the school day may be different from other years as we are replacing our forty minute classes with one-hour classes. As with other academic years classes will start at 9 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. from Monday to Thursday. On Fridays classes will start at 9 a.m. but end at 1.10 p.m. Students should be in school by 8.50 a.m. and should proceed directly to their respective classes at that time. Those who arrive before that time may congregate in the lunchroom/gym where social distancing will be required.

On the morning of their first day in school each year group will receive induction/training in relation to keeping themselves safe from Covid 19, Social Distancing, Hand Sanitisation etc. Students will be expected to sanitise their hands on entry to and exit from the school each day and will be expected to Social Distance, as much as possible throughout the day.

As for other academic years there are some housekeeping issues we need to highlight: The following are the **Voluntary Contributions and Charges** required by the school. We would appreciate if you would pay these on the first day your son attends. During the school year we may make additional requests for contributions for the provision of services to your sons. **Contributions are mandatory only in that services will not be accessible if not paid for.**

<b>Personal Insurance:</b>	<b>€10 (mandatory) Per Student - mandatory</b>
<b>Photocopying/Printing:</b>	<b>€40 (€60 for family) - mandatory</b>
<b>Annual Voluntary Contribution:</b>	<b>€80 (€110 for family)</b>
<b>Total for one student:</b>	<b>€130</b>
<b>Total for family:</b>	<b>€190 (based on two brothers attending)</b>

**Please note that payments are mandatory only in that the service will only be provided if payment is made.**

**We would very much appreciate if all parents would pay the Annual Voluntary Contribution (€80/€110) in full this year as the Department of Education does not fund all of the services provided by the school to your sons.**

**Our Personal Insurance Charge of €10 now covers both school and non-school activities and is effective 24/7 for the full calendar year, not just the school year. This is extremely good value for money and should be availed of by all parents. PLEASE NOTE THAT ONLY STUDENTS WHO PAY THE €10 CHARGE WILL BE COVERED.**

We are in the process of setting up an online payment system called “**Way2Pay**” to facilitate parents making payments without the necessity of handling cash and cheques. We hope that this system may be up and running next week after staff training later this week. In the meantime, parents may still pay their contributions by cheque or cash.

I urge you to **follow closely your sons’ progress** at school, to support and encourage them in their endeavours and to support the teachers in their work. I would particularly emphasise the importance of students attending school every school day and would urge them to participate in all aspects of school life. **Please note that a sustained poor attendance record, without medical certification, could be damaging to a junior student’s chances of being allowed**

**entry to Leaving Certificate Applied and Transition Year and to a senior student's chances of being allowed to attend Leaving Certificate Graduation.**

We encourage **high academic standards** and also emphasise the importance of good behaviour, good manners and respect which should be shown to all members of the school community. Where there are incidents of misbehaviour the School Rules and Code of Behaviour will be applied, without fear or favour, and a safe and appropriate learning environment will be provided for your sons.

Please note that the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for articles lost or stolen on the premises. To minimise the number of jackets, jumpers, books, bags etc. which are lost or stolen during the year please ensure that all such articles have your son's name printed clearly and conspicuously on them.

**It is now mandatory for all first year students to have their names visible and stitched/embroidered on their school jackets on the right breast side directly across from the College Crest.** This service is available from Philips and J.T. Sports for a small extra fee on purchase of a jacket. We would also recommend that all other students would do the same. Since the introduction of this rule the number of jackets that have gone missing each year has decreased considerably. Please notify the school office if your son is wearing the second-hand jacket of a student who has left the school and whose name is still on the jacket. **Please note also that the school jacket is the only jacket allowed on the school grounds.**

**During last year a number of School Uniform Jackets were left in the school and unclaimed.** As they were not collected or identified with a name we were unable to return them to the owners. We have given them to the St. Vincent de Paul shop in Claremorris and they are available to purchase there. **White undershirts/t-shirts/vests are mandatory again this year.**

Please also encourage your sons to report any incidents of theft or interference **with personal or school property** to the school authorities immediately, even if the victim is someone other than the reporting student. Please remind your sons that it is also their duty and responsibility to ensure a safe and caring environment for each other.

The School Code of Behaviour, School Rules and other relevant information and policies are printed on the School Journals that **all students must have with them at school at all times and must be brought to detention by any student who is put on detention (both weekday and Saturday).** All parents and students should study the Rules, Codes and Policies carefully and sign where appropriate.

Please also note that the school website, [www.stcolmans.ie](http://www.stcolmans.ie) has a considerable amount of information about the school. The "**Parents**" page contains the "Book Lists for 2020-21" and the "School Calendar for 2020-21" etc. You may also keep up to date with school events and activities through the school **Facebook page and Twitter Page (@SaintColmans)** both of which are linked to the website.

For the last number of years, we have had a **texting service** in place through which the school can contact parents for school business. **Please ensure that the school has your up-to-date**

**mobile number/s.** If you notice that you have not received texts during the last school year, or indeed during the summer months, please phone the school office as soon as possible to ensure that your mobile number is included. **The text number provided must be that of a Parent/Guardian and not of a student.**

The school Calendar for the 2020-21 Academic Year is accessible on the “**Parents’ Page**” of the school website, [www.stcolmans.ie](http://www.stcolmans.ie). Due to the Covid 19 pandemic this is a provisional calendar. We will notify you of any changes to the Calendar during the year.

I wish you all well for the new school year.

Yours faithfully,

Roy Hession  
Principal