



**SALESIAN COLLEGE CELBRIDGE**

**“We care, develop, believe- together we achieve”.**

**General School letter 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

***School Closure Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 & On-line teaching and learning***

***Late start Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 9.30am.***

***Mobile phones***

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***Blessing***

Dear Parents & Guardians,

As we draw closer to the end of our first term on behalf of all the staff and school community I sincerely thank and praise all our students for their exceptional cooperation with all our school systems and protocols for Covid-19. I appreciate that it is very very challenging wearing masks all day and sitting in rooms with windows open during these winter months. I am glad to say that our reported case numbers of Covid-19 are still very low, and we hope this stays this way. We will arrange for a deep clean of the school over the Christmas holidays and will remind all our students on their return in January of the school systems that are keeping us all safe and well.

This is a long letter as there is a lot of updates and information for our school community. Please take the time to read it all and ensure that you are up to date with all our school news.

***School Closure Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 & On-line teaching and learning***

I congratulate all our students for their excellent on-line work on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December, especially our first-year students. Whilst Kildare was not on the orange or red weather warning list, given the neighbouring counties were, and in the interest of health and safety of all the school community, the Board of Management decided the safest option was to close the school and to notify parents as soon as possible.

In adhering to the Covid-19 systems we had to ensure that ventilation would be feasible but given the weather warnings this was a serious issue that had to be considered. Bar Covid-19 closures this is a rare event and such a decision is not taken lightly.

I understand and accept this may have caused difficulties for families, but it was done with the best of intentions.

We thank all our students for their work on the day and hope that they will not have to use their ICT skills in this way again soon.

***Late start Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 9.30am.***

All students will start school on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> at 9.30am with their Form Teachers. This late start is to facilitate a staff meeting. Students who travel to school on buses will be supervised in the lecture rooms.

***Mobile phones***

As we are all aware, ICT and mobile phones in particular are wonderful pieces of technology that have changed every aspect of communication and how we use ICT for work, rest and play.

As a school we have a positive and cooperative approach with our students and all staff.

We are all aware of the importance of our school Code of Behaviour which forms the basis of the efficient and effective operation of the school.

All our school rules have a fair and reasonable explanation.

Whilst we all understand and accept how mobile phones are now used as part of the educational experience, we also know that the incorrect use of phones and all their applications can have a very negative effect.

Mobile phones can be used to record without permission and take video images and photographs.

We do not want this in our classrooms or in any other part of the school.

Before school, during and after and especially during break times, we want our students to go outside, get some air and spend time with their friends.

We do not want a situation where students are using their mobile phones during school time and bringing the inevitable wrong and damaging use and subsequent consequences into our daily school life and experience.

Parents have repeatedly advised us that they like the fact that the students are not allowed use their phones – they agree that their time in school should be a break from the continuous checking, updating, texting, posting and so on.

We want this to stay this way.

I ask all parents and guardians to remind your son of the school rules in relation to mobile phones – especially our senior yeargroups.

### **School Rules**

The school rules are very clearly as follows:

- *The use of mobile phones is not permitted between 8.30am and 6.15 p.m. (Following afterschool study). All mobile phones must be turned off in school. **The following can constitute use of a mobile phone on the school premises: accessing the phone in any way for information, check the time, calendar, text messages, taking photographs, making a recording (video, voice, making a note), using any apps or other mobile phone functions.***
- *Breach of this rule will result in immediate confiscation of the phone for the rest of the day.*
- *The phone will be returned at the day and a sanction of either a €45 fine or 1 day suspension will be imposed.*
- *Students will have five days to arrange payment of this fine through the school Easy Payments on-line electronic payment system. If the fine is not paid within this five day limit, a suspension will automatically be applied.*

The only times a student can use a mobile phone is;

- With the direct permission and supervision of a teacher for a designated class / educational activity.
- The teacher must ensure the phone is turned off after the use of the phone.
- Students have been advised at every assembly at the beginning of the school year that their phones must be turned off – not simply put on mute / silence or airplane mode.
- Afterschool study
- Students who are signed up for afterschool study have permission to access their work on Teams and to use laptops.

As part of our daily announcements this week we will remind all students of this and spot checks will be completed in all classrooms.

Students who have their mobile phones on will be sanctioned.

As stated already there are very good reasons why we wish to keep our breaks and lunchtimes and corridors free of mobile phone use. Please remind your son of this rule as if there are any breaches the sanction of €45 fine or 1 day suspension will be applied.

### ***Mock exams February 2022***

At the time of writing, mock exams will be scheduled for Junior and Leaving Certificate students for February 2022. Having the formal experience of sitting the exams in accordance with the June terms and conditions is an overall advantage and productive experience for our students. All 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students will receive a letter this week about the mock fees which can be paid through our Easypayments system. An installment plan will be put in place for these payments.

### ***State Exams June 2022.***

The State Examination Commission have yet to advise schools if there will be an Accredited grades process as well as the “normal” written exams in June.

It is in our opinion prudent to prepare for all eventualities and all subject teachers will conduct regular assessments which may form part of an accredited grades process for 2022.

### ***Internet Safety Day 18& 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021***

As part of our SPHE and Wellbeing programme in the school workshops on Internet Safety are organised for first- and second-year students on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> January. There will also be an on-line workshop presentation for all parents aswell. As all things internet and ICT change on a daily basis and bring different challenges to our students and parents I would encourage all parents and guardians to attend this presentation. It will be held on-line. Further information will be shared in January.

### ***Updates on school policies***

The Board of Management have approved the following policies:

- **Assistive Technology Use policy**
- **Acceptable Internet & ICT Use Policy**

#### ***Policy Content:***

- Introduction & Rationale
- Legislation & School Policy
- Acceptable Internet Usage
- E-Mail
- Social Media Digital Citizenship
- Personal Devices
- School Website
- Support & Further Information

- Reporting on Inappropriate Content.
- Misuse of Digital Technologies & Sanctions.

- **PME Placement Policy December 2021**

***Policy Content:***

- Introduction
- Development of Policy
- Commitment to hosting student teachers
- Implication for the student teacher on placement
- Scheduling of student teacher on placement
- Induction Programme
- Support for the student teacher
- Role of Cooperating Teacher
- Continuing professional development for staff involved in supporting/facilitating student teacher placement.
- Communication of school placement policy to school community
- Policy Review
- Date policy was adopted

- **Anti-Bullying policy**

***Policy Content:***

- Introduction
- Board of Management
- Definition of Bullying
- Education and Prevention Strategies
- School Investigation Procedures
- Supporting Students
- Supervision and Monitoring of Students
- Prevention of Harassment
- Board of Management review
- Bullying report form

These policies are now updated and available on our school website [www.salesianscelbridge.com](http://www.salesianscelbridge.com).

***Child Protection Procedures***

The Board of Management will complete a review of the Child Protection Procedures and complete the risk assessment in January as part of the annual review which must be ratified by the Board of Management in February. The Designated Liaison persons are Ms. Brenda Kearns, Mr. John Leonard and Mr. Martin Kerins. All students will be reminded again that they can talk with any member of staff as well as our Form Teachers, Yearheads, School Chaplain and Guidance Counsellors about any concern they have.

***Extra-Curricular Activities***

Well done to all the students participating in the many extracurricular activities in the school which have returned this term. They include badminton, table tennis, rugby, GAA football and

hurling, chess club, music club, audio visual club, soccer and basketball. A huge congratulations to our U19 Basketball Team who reached the Regional Finals. They played against Wesley College on Thursday 9th December in the National Basketball Arena, Tallaght. This team has been hugely successful since first year, reaching this stage of the competition for the fourth time. Unfortunately, the result was not in our favour but on a positive note, the team still progress to All-Ireland stages. We wish them the best of luck in their upcoming games. I also sincerely thank all the teachers who coach and guide our students involved in all these activities. Well done to all.

### ***Transition Year News***

Transition Years have been busy with a wide variety of work experience placements, from the Gardaí to café work, building sites, garages, and veterinary surgeries. It was so interesting to hear their stories on their return. They begin a DEAR project, with sets of books provided by Celbridge library. The aim of the project is to develop a love for reading, with no expectations to analyse writing styles, themes or other elements that sometimes make reading too academic. The aim is 'reading for reading sake'. Their next exciting activity is a full day of 'bodhrán making'. They will make the bodhrán, design the skin and then learn to play the instrument. We are also embarking on a Photography Competition, beginning with our first theme: Winter in Castletown'. After Christmas our TY journey continues with a new timetable for each class. Students are continuing to complete their Gaisce Bronze Medal, with 3 different categories, new skill, physical activity, and community activity. This year TY class is a wonderful mix of cheerful, engaged, cooperative and enthusiastic gentlemen.

The current 3<sup>rd</sup> years will enjoy a presentation about TY and they can learn of the wonderful experiences ahead. The Parents' Information night will be via Zzoom in January.

### ***Instagram & Facebook Account***

Please sign up for our school Instagram @salesiancollececelbridge and our school Facebook account for daily updates on all the different school activities.

### ***Parents Association***

I thank all the parents who regularly attend our Parent Association meetings. They are still being held on-line but we hope when restrictions lift we will all be able to meet in person. New members are always welcome. Please contact them through [salesianparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:salesianparentsassociation@gmail.com). I thank the members who are organising the Debs for this year's Leaving Certificate 2022. A presentation will be made to all 6<sup>th</sup> year students in January.

### ***Non-Uniform Day***

Our Student Council and Ceangail & Cinnirí will organise a non-uniform day on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December in aid of our local St. Vincent De Paul Conference. Each student is asked to donate €3. 1<sup>st</sup> year students will also attend the fabulous Christmas quiz organised in two different groups this Friday as well.

### ***Board of Management – Parents Representative.***

There is now a vacancy on the Board of Management for a new parent's representative. All the school community thanks the excellent work and commitment of Ms. Terri Knightley on behalf of all parents. Details on the nomination and election process will be shared with all parents in January.

### ***Christmas Holidays***

We wish all our musically talented students every success in their preparations for our Christmas Carol Concert which will be streamed to all classrooms on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Students will finish at 12.00pm. The school will re-open on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2022. We thank all our administrative and caretaking staff for all their work this term and we also thank you, our parents and guardians, for your continued excellent support for Salesian College.

### ***A Christmas Blessing:***

***May you be blessed with spirit of the season, which is peace,  
the gladness of the season, which is hope,  
and the heart of the season, which is love.***

Ms. B Kearns, Principal