



2019/20

Bulletin 37

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School Closure for Students

- An announcement was made this morning by the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD of the closure of schools, pre-schools and further and higher education settings, for a period until 29 March 2020, to support efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19. This will take effect from 6pm this evening, Thursday 12 March. This is in line with the advice of the National Public Health Emergency Team.
- The context of this decision is to try to minimise social contact.
- Schools are closed to students during the period of closure.
- In order to minimise the impact on teaching and learning, all schools are asked to continue to plan lessons and, where possible, provide online resources for students or online lessons where schools are equipped to do so. Schools are asked to be conscious of students that may not have access to online facilities and to consider this actively in their response.
- Teaching staff and non-teaching staff should be facilitated in working from home during normal school hours where this is possible, though staff may need to be in school and attend to work and other issues as necessary.
- Caretaking, secretarial, cleaning and other staff should only be in the school as necessary.
- Where facilities are available in a school for online delivery of support for students, teachers who wish to avail of this should be facilitated, once this is in line with HSE advice on social distancing and gatherings.
- It is important, in particular, that absences such as maternity leave etc. are keyed into the OLCS payroll system to facilitate continued payment of salary.
- All Board of Management employees should be paid during this particular period of school closure.
- Schools are asked to prioritise supporting exam classes to continue to prepare for State examinations.
- The State Examinations Commission will issue updates regarding the impact of school

closure on the oral and practical examinations.

- The State Examinations Commission has asked us to advise schools that project work relating to the State exams should remain in the school as normal and not be taken home by students.
- It is advised that all school facilities such as sports halls, swimming pools and playing pitches should be closed during the period of school closure.

John Curtis
General Secretary
12th March 2020