



# Saplings Special School

May/ June 2021

Saplings  
Educating for life

## Covid-19 Reminder:

The Kildare area has been hit hard with Covid-19 positives since the schools re-opened after Easter. Many classrooms, year groups and schools in Kildare have announced closures in recent days. We all need to pay extra close attention to the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and take all necessary precautions to keep our school community safe, and hopefully avoid any closures in Saplings.

## As per current DES and HSE rules, you must not send your child to school if your child has:

- A temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- Any other common symptoms - a new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, or shortness of breath
- Been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 or been living with someone who is unwell and may have Covid-19
- For 48 hours after taking paracetamol or ibuprofen (for any reason)
- For 48 hours after the last instance of vomiting and/ or diarrhoea

In order to protect our students & staff, the school will have to send any child who has Covid-19 symptoms home, and they will have to remain home until they are 48 hours symptom free.

## If your child has any common symptoms of Covid-19 you will need to:

- Isolate your child as much as possible.
- Phone your GP - they will advise you if your child needs a coronavirus test
- Get advice from your GP about whether anyone the child lives with also needs to isolate or if they can attend school/ work.
- Treat your child at home for their symptoms. Keep your child at home until they are 48 hours symptom free.
- Your child should only leave your home to have a test or to see your GP.

## Children who are close contacts of someone who has coronavirus

- If your child has been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus, you should restrict their movements for 14 days, even if they feel well.
- If your child develops symptoms, isolate your child and phone your GP to arrange a test for coronavirus.

## When it is okay to send your child to school or childcare

It's usually okay to send your child to school or childcare if they:

- only have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze
- do not have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more (as long as their temperature has not been lowered by taking any form of paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- do not have a cough
- have not been in close contact with anyone who has coronavirus and do not live with anyone who is unwell and may have coronavirus
- have been told by a GP that their illness is caused by something else, that is not coronavirus. Your GP will tell you when they can return to school or childcare.
- have got a negative ('not detected') coronavirus test result and have not had symptoms for 48 hours.

If you notice any symptoms please keep your child off school and monitor them until they are 48 hours symptom free. We all need to be extra cautious at the moment due to the high numbers of Covid-19 cases in Kildare schools at present.



### Baby boom...

There must be something in the water in Saplings at the moment! Aine and Aoife welcomed babies Robyn and Tom in January, and Dana and Jenny welcomed babies Elsie and Devin in March! All mummies and babies are doing well and we look forward to meeting the little ones as soon as the Covid-19 restrictions allow it.

### Update on Our School's Behaviour Analyst...

As you know, Wendi and the other 12 Behaviour Analysts have been fighting for their permanencies since the school transitioned to being a DES Special School in 2011. I usually update you on the status of their case at Parent's Association meetings but due to Covid this has not been possible for the past year. You may remember that the last update was in December 2019, when Wendi won her case at the Labour Court. The Labour Court ruled that the "case be conceded" and that the DES should meet with the Behaviour Analysts as a matter of urgency to resolve the issue. Almost a year and a half later, this meeting still has not taken place. The Behaviour Analysts believed in good faith that this ruling would be upheld, but that Covid restrictions had impeded

the Labour Court's mandated meeting. However, with less than nine weeks remaining on the Behaviour Analyst's current employment agreement with the DES the situation has now become untenable. Louise and Wendi have been in contact with the DES directly, with Ministers Foley (Minister for Education) and Madigan (Minister for Special Education) and with all of the TDs in North and South Kildare to push for the Labour Court's ruling to be implemented and the vital service of a full-time Behaviour Analyst to be maintained in our school, and in the twelve other affected schools. We have had some positive correspondence from local TDs who are highly concerned that such a valuable service for children with autism and complex needs is being threatened, especially after all the trials and tribulations that the students have experienced over the past year.

### Megha's Fundraiser...

Megha and her family have kindly decided to donate Megha's gorgeous flowing black locks to the Rapunzel Foundation, which is a charity organization that works to improve the lives of those living with hair loss (alopecia). She also hopes to raise money for the school in the process. We hope to raise €1,500 to purchase a new iPad for each classroom. You can donate

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by searching 'Megha's Haircut' on iFundraise or at this link: [www.ifundraise.ie/fundraiser/11402757\\_megha-s-hair-for-someone-who-lost-their-hair-.html](http://www.ifundraise.ie/fundraiser/11402757_megha-s-hair-for-someone-who-lost-their-hair-.html) There will also be updates and links on our school Facebook page (Saplings Special School Kill) and on the school website [www.saplingskildare.ie](http://www.saplingskildare.ie)

### School Tour...

Unfortunately our traditional school tours (Tayto Park, Cinema, Farm etc) will not be possible this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, we still want to mark the end of the 2020/21 year during which our students coped fantastically with the huge number of changes that were introduced to keep us all safe! We are hoping to have another party day like we did at Christmas time, with bouncy castles, activities, ice cream, games and lots of fun! We will be in touch again shortly regarding costs for this event (costs in line with the average school tour price).

#### Dates for your diary:

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May (May Bank Holiday) – School Closed

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> to Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June (Inclusive) (June Bank Holiday) – School Closed

Summer Fun Day – Date TBC