



Saplings Special School

September/
October 2021

Saplings
Educating for life

New Faces & Goodbyes...

We welcomed back our current students and 4 new faces on a phased basis over the first week of September. We hope that **Alex, Jayden, Jovanty** and **Pearl** will really enjoy their time with us in Saplings Special School for Children with Autism and Complex Needs, Kill. We are delighted to have re-opened safely this September and look forward to keeping your children and our staff as safe as possible in the months ahead.

We have some new faces in the school this year – **Aoife** has returned as the teacher in Classroom 1, **Liana** has joined us as a teacher in Classroom 5, and we welcomed seven new tutors due to a variety of Covid and non-Covid related absences – **Andrea, Deirdre, Lorna, Owen, Peter, Teresa** and **Zoe**. **Jason** and **Roisin** have come back to us again this year. We said goodbye to **Miriam** over the summer, and **Julie** last week. We wish them the very best on their next adventures and we also wish **Geraldine** the best of luck teaching in Italy while on career break from Saplings this year.

Covid-19 Update:

The dreaded 'C' word! We successfully kept Covid-19 out of Saplings last year & hope to continue in that vein in 2021/22.

The Department of Education & Skills in collaboration with the HSE have updated their Covid-19 Advice to more accurately reflect the Delta Variant, which is summarised below.

Please do not send your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms:

A fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above). **A new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.** Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties. **Loss or change in your sense of smell or taste** Fatigue/ Aches & Pains **Feeling sick or vomiting/diarrhoea** Sore throat **Headaches** Runny or blocked noses

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

- Phone your GP - they will advise you if your child needs a coronavirus test
- Treat your child at home **Keep your child at home until they are 48 hours symptom free** or until they have a **negative Covid-19 test and a doctor**

provides a written medical explanation for the symptoms to the school.

Keep your child at home for 48 hours after you last administered paracetamol or ibuprofen (for any reason)

Restrictions Update:

All primary and special schools are expecting an update from the DES on our Covid-19 restrictions in the coming weeks. We are hopeful that this will be an easing of restrictions which will allow for the following (on a phased basis):

- Allowances for more crossover between Pods which would allow the removal of staggered entry and exit times.
- The return of in-person meetings (at least for small numbers)
- Increased access to the school for external professionals (SLTs/ OTs etc)
- Allowances for more crossover between Pods (which will make it easier to facilitate the return of community trips)
- The return of outdoor community activities in the first instance and indoor community activities in the longer term.