

20-10-20 @ 4pm



RE; School closure

Tarbert Comprehensive School

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Yesterday, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board, I made a decision to close the School for the reasons as outlined in my previous correspondence. That decision was made in the best interest of the entire Tarbert Comprehensive School community - to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all involved based on local circumstances and current information of Covid infection rates within the student population. The decision to close was also made based on the autonomy granted to the School to make such decisions.

The facts as of now, known to me are:

- 7 confirmed Covid-19 cases within the student population since last Wednesday (Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>)
- Four students in 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Two in 3<sup>rd</sup> Year and One in Leaving Certificate
- The HSE identified 9 student close contacts from case one, 0 from case two, 6 from case three and a bulk contact list of 30 students from the remaining cases yesterday

Today, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) have contacted me and expressed a difference of opinion with regard to this closure. The Department believe, in keeping with national policy, that individually affected students should remain off school as opposed to a decision to close the School entirely. **Therefore the DES have over-ruled the decision to close Tarbert Comprehensive School and instructed me to reopen from tomorrow morning. Naturally I have no choice but to comply with their instruction.**

Therefore from tomorrow, Tarbert Comprehensive School will re-open to ALL students. The DES have also confirmed that remote teaching will only continue as per the guidance document - *Continuity of schooling: Supporting Post Primary Students* who are at very high risk to COVID-19, this guidance is provided to support schools in making adapted education provision for students who cannot return to school because **they are medically certified as being at very high risk from contracting COVID-19**. The arrangements in this guidance apply to those students only. The DES also instructed us **not** to provide work at home to students who remain off because of fear of infection. However, if a student is required by the HSE to self-isolate or restrict their movements, they can be supported in continuing their learning remotely.

To conclude, my over-riding rule of thumb throughout my career has been – **what is the right thing to do** – in every circumstance I deal with. This situation was no different. I will continue, to the best of my ability, in consultation with all the stakeholders of this School to manage and protect the health, safety and welfare of all individuals to the very best of my ability. I want to thank you for your continued support and wish each and every one of you the very best in these difficult times and hope you and your families stay well.

Le meas,

Mr Richard Prendiville, PRINCIPAL

Mr. Richard Prendiville, **Principal**  
An Scoil Chuimsitheach, Tairbeart, Contae Chiarraí  
Phone :: 068 36105 Fax :: 068 36462  
Email :: admin@tarbertcs.ie

Ms. Leila Moloney, **Deputy Principal**  
Comprehensive School, Tarbert, County Kerry  
Web :: [www.tarbertcomprehensive.ie](http://www.tarbertcomprehensive.ie)  
Charity Number :: 20148706