



Points of information for parents on Scoil Mhuire's Covid-19 Response Plan **and** **Logistics Plan for the returning of students and staff to Scoil Mhuire**

Our Covid-19 Response Plan

A Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. A Covid-19 Response Plan includes:

1. A Covid-19 Policy Statement

The commitment of the school (Board of Management and all school staff) to implement the Covid-19 Response Plan and help prevent the spread of the virus (available to view on website).

2. A Covid-19 Risk Assessment for the school

This was carried out by management, the BOM and the Lead Worker Representatives.

3. A Lead Worker Representative for staff (LWR)

Ms. Michelle Doyle and Ms. Sandra Eastman have been appointed as Lead Worker Representatives for all Staff.

Checklists contained in the appendices of the Government's Covid-19 Response Plan for the Safe and Sustainable Reopening of Primary and Special Schools will be utilised by management, Lead Worker Representatives and staff to ensure a safe reopening which complies with Public Health Guidance.

4. Planning and Preparing for returning to school

- **Training:** All staff have received training.
- **Signage** has been displayed throughout the school:
 - Posters in classrooms re washing hands
 - Posters in classrooms re cough etiquette
 - Posters at each entrance to the school and throughout the building
 - Circular floor signs 1metre distanced on the corridors/stairs throughout the school (for social distancing).
- **Sanitising equipment** has been installed throughout the building:
 - There are dispensers at each door
 - There are dispensers in each classroom
 - There are dispensers along the corridor
 - Children will be encouraged to also bring their own hand sanitising gel to school
 - Children will be taught about hand hygiene
 - Please practise hand washing with your child (remember everyone must wash their hands for 20seconds – watch the videos provided (sing Happy Birthday in your head 3 times!))
- We aim to **reduce the touching of surfaces throughout the school**
 - No towels will be brought to school - paper towel dispensers have been installed in each room
 - Used tissues will be put in pedal bins (there is one in each classroom)
 - Each classroom has a toilet roll dispenser
 - Equipment/toys will be wiped down regularly
 - Pupils will not share equipment, where possible

- Any equipment used will be wiped down.
- Pods and Bubbles
 - A group of 4/6 children is now referred to as a 'pod'
 - A collection of pods will be known as a 'bubble'
 - Every class is referred to as a 'bubble'
 - Rooms 3 and 4 will work as one 'bubble'
 - According to Department of Education guidelines, 'children should not mix with other 'bubbles', where possible'.
- Social Distancing - Changes to classroom layout
 - Be aware the classrooms do look different as we have changed the layout of our classrooms to facilitate social distancing.
 - The recommendations for social distancing are:
 - 2 metres distance between adults
 - 1 metre distance between children indoors (from 3rd to 6th)
 - 2 metres distance between adults and children indoors, where possible.
 - 1 metre between pods
 - We have a one way system in operation on the corridors with yellow markings on the ground 1 metre distance apart.
 - In line with Department of Education guidance, the pupils in **Junior Infants - 2nd classes will sit in 'pods' with a distance of 1 metre between each 'pod'**. There will be limited close contact between 'pods' to reduce the risk of infection and for contact tracing reasons.
 - Each child in the 'pod' will have individual containers for crayons, pencils etc. These will be provided by the school and can be wiped down easily. Children will work together with the other children in their 'pod'.
 - In line with Department of Education guidance, **in 3rd - 6th classes, the children will be seated 1 metre apart from each other:** In some of our senior classes with larger numbers, we had difficulty trying to achieve this but we managed in the end. In some cases, we had to remove every other piece of furniture to ensure the 1 metre distance. All extra furniture has been stored in two large containers at the back of the school.
 - In the classrooms, an area for the teacher and the SNA (if applicable) has also been marked out.
 - Each child will have a basket under their tables where they will store their books. These will be provided by the school.
 - Coat racks will not be used so children will store their coats in their empty bags (their books will be in their baskets).
 - As you know, the school is divided into 4 sections – Red, Green, Yellow and Blue.
 - Each section has a corresponding door.
 - The Red door is the door at the front of the school, facing the road
 - The Green door is the Main door
 - The Yellow door is our Infant door
 - The Blue door is the door at the back of the school facing the grass.

- **Homework**

- Teachers will not give homework for the first week or until the students are settled.
- Each child will have two homework copies (A and B). These copies will be rotated. Copies will be kept at home for the week, returned and corrected weekly.
- We will be using the ‘See Saw’ App this year and we will begin introducing this in early September.
- We encourage children from 2nd to 6th class to have a ‘school pencil case’ and a small ‘home pencil case’ as we will try to limit the amount of things going between home and school.
- Children in the Junior classes will use containers provided by the school.

- **Break time, Lunch time and Yard**

- The Department of Education guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.
- To eliminate contact between ‘bubbles’, we have divided the yard in 6. We will stagger the breaks and lunches so that 6 ‘bubbles’/classes will be on the yard at the first break/lunch and 6 ‘bubbles’/classes at the second break/lunch.
- The children in Rooms 3 and 4 have been assigned an extra yard space along with the sensory garden where they can play as a ‘bubble’.
- We have changed our breaks from the usual 10 mins break and 30 mins lunch to 15 mins break and 25 mins lunch.
- Lunch times will be as follows:
 - At **10.45am – 11.00am the Red and Yellow ‘bubbles’** will have their ‘small break’
 - At **11.05am – 11.20am the Green and Blue ‘bubbles’** will have their ‘small break’
 - At **12.30pm – 12.55pm the Red and Yellow ‘bubbles’** will have their ‘big lunch’
 - At **12.40pm – 1.05pm the Green and Blue ‘bubbles’** will have their ‘big lunch’

(While the Red and Yellow ‘bubbles’ are outside playing, the Green and Blue ‘bubbles’ will eat inside and vice versa)

 - Junior Infants will have a separate break/lunch for the first few weeks
 - Here is a plan of our yard for your child to see where their ‘bubble’ will be:

Map of Yard at first break/lunch:

	Scoil Eoin Phóil building			
Grass	Senior Infants (Ms. Haughney)	2 nd class (Ms. Hanafin)	6 th class (Ms. Munroe)	Car park
	Junior Infants (Ms. O’ Grady)	4 th class (Ms. McBrearty)	6 th class (Ms. O’ Mara)	
	* * * Scoil Mhuire building * *			

Map of Yard at second break/lunch:

	Scoil Eoin Phóil building			
Grass	5 th class (Ms.Milner)	2 nd class (Ms.McCormack)	1 st class (Ms. Doyle)	Car Park
	5 th class (Ms. Cleary)	3 rd class (Ms. De Barra)	1 st class (Ms.Hughes)	
	<p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Scoil Mhuire building</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p>			

- Wet Day Supervision
 - Pupils will stay in their classrooms and will be provided with an activity. They will be supervised by one of the teachers in their section.
 - Pupils will be reminded to stay in their places and practise social distancing.
- Uniforms
 - Children will still wear their uniform and tracksuits for PE.
 - There is no requirement at present to wash uniforms every evening but we do ask that you wash uniforms regularly and that children do not wear uniforms to after-school activities, when visiting others or at the shops.
- Entry to the school in the morning
 - Entry to the school grounds will not be possible before 9.15am.
 - Children can arrive to the school anytime between 9.15 a.m. and 9.30 a.m.
 - The school traffic warden (lollipop lady) will be on duty at this time.
 - Children can enter the school grounds either through the Scoil Mhuire pedestrian gate or the Scoil Mhuire car park gate.
 - Each class will have an assigned door (which corresponds to their section of the building).
 - Parents can only come as far as the school gates (except for parents of Junior Infants and Rooms 3 & 4).
 - Parents will be encouraged to wear face coverings during drop off and collection time.
 - Class teachers will be in their classrooms to receive the children from 9.15am.
 - There will be 7 extra staff members on duty on the corridors/grounds in the mornings to begin with (wearing hi vis)
 - The children in Rooms 3 & 4 should arrive between 9.20am and 9.30am.

- Before they enter the building, children will sanitise their hands. They will then make their way to their classroom where they will have to sanitise at their classroom door.
- Children will sit in their allocated seat and engage with a morning activity on their desk while waiting.
- **Exit from school in the afternoon**
 - We have staggered the 'home times' to avoid having too many children leaving the school buildings on Green Lane at 'home time'. Here are the new arrangements:
 - **Infant classes will go home at 2 pm**
 - **1st and 2nd classes will go home at 2.45pm**
 - **3rd, 4th and 5th classes will go home at 2.55pm**
 - **6th classes will go home at 3pm.**
 - There will be socially distanced arrangements in place for the collection of children in the yard for parents of children in Junior Infants - 3rd classes.
 - 4th-6th class parents will not be allowed to enter the yard in the evening.
- **Access to the school - Visitors to the school**
 - We intend limiting the number of visitors to the school and to the yard.
 - All visitors to the school must wear a mask.
 - If a parent needs to call to the school throughout the day, they will be required to ring the bell and wait outside.
 - Forgotten lunches can be left on a table at the front door with the child's name clearly labelled on them.
 - If a parent wishes to make an appointment with a teacher or the Principal, we ask that you arrange a phone meeting.
 - Visitors to the school must fill a Covid 19 Risk Assessment Questionnaire (3 days before visiting the school) and a Contact Log.
 - A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities will be maintained. The school will also maintain a log of staff and pupils' contacts.
 - Please note: We are making a real effort to reduce visitors to the school - the safety of our students and staff is of utmost importance at all times.

5. Control Measures put in place to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid 19 in schools

- We will promote an **awareness of COVID-19 symptoms** throughout the school. The symptoms are:
 - High temperature
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
 - Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste.
- **Hand Hygiene** will be taught to the children. Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene:
 - On arrival at school
 - Before eating or drinking
 - After using the toilet
 - After playing outdoors
 - When hands are physically dirty
 - When they cough or sneeze.
- **Respiratory Hygiene** will be encouraged.
 - The school will display signage promoting respiratory hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
 - Teachers will teach respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
 - Parents should reinforce the message from the school.
- **Staff/pupils who display symptoms of Covid 19 may not attend school until they are symptom free.**
- **Children with a blocked or runny nose, but no fever can attend school or childcare**, but if they require paracetamol or ibuprofen for their symptoms, they must not attend school for 48 hours.
- **We suggest you make sure your child's hands are washed and you take your child's temperature in the morning before they leave for school.**
- **Please don't send your child to school if they are unwell.**
- **If staff/pupils display symptoms of Covid 19** they should contact their doctor who will arrange for a test. While awaiting the test and test results, it is advised that the household restrict their movements (stay at home).
 - If the test result is negative, the other members of the household carry on as normal. The person with the symptoms who has tested negative must be clear of symptoms for at least 48 hours before returning to school/workplace. All diarrhoea symptoms need to have been resolved for 48 hours prior to return to school.
 - If the test result is positive, the person must follow HSE guidance on self isolation.

- **Staff and pupils may not attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a close contact of a person with Covid 19.**
 - The staff member/pupil who is identified as a close contact must isolate for 14 days. A test will be arranged for the individual who is the close contact. While waiting for the test and the results, the household is advised to restrict movements (stay at home).
 - If the individual who is the close contact tests negative for the virus, they must continue to isolate until the 14 days have passed but the household may return to work/school.
 - If the individual tests positive, they must follow HSE guidance on self isolation. At the start of the year parents will be asked to give their consent for staff to take their child's temperature (using a scanning thermometer).
- **Reminder to anyone attending school who has travelled abroad:**
 - Government policy, which is based on official public health advice, continues to advise against non-essential travel overseas for everyone.
 - There are currently no restrictions on people coming into Ireland from a location with a rating of 'normal precautions' or 'Green'.
 - It is a requirement for anyone coming into Ireland, from locations other than those with a 'green' rating, to restrict their movements for 14 days, and this includes school staff, parents and children.
 - If a member of the household has travelled from a 'red' zone, the other members of the household do not need to restrict their movements. However, they must maintain public health guidance e.g. separate bedrooms/bathrooms where possible and socially distance in shared living spaces.
 - Restricting your movements means staying indoors in one location and avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible.
- **Physical Distancing**
See above
- **Use of PPE in the school**
 - Children are not required to wear masks.
 - Staff will keep a 2 metre distance between them and children. If staff members are less than 2 metres distance from children, they will wear masks /visors.

6. Impact of COVID19 on certain school activities

- **Homework**
 - Teachers will not give homework for the first week or until the students are settled.
 - Each child will have two homework copies (A and B). These copies will be rotated. Copies will be kept at home for the week, returned and corrected weekly.
- **Choir/Music Performance**
Choir practices/performances and music practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher level of risk and special consideration is being given as to whether they will be held,

and if so, how to ensure that the room is well-ventilated and the distance between performers is maintained.

- **Sport Activities**

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined to class groupings. If the PE hall is being used by different bubbles, common touch points will be cleaned at intervals throughout the school day.

- **Toys**

The amount of toys in the various classrooms has been reduced. Those that are required will be cleaned / disinfected on a regular basis.

- **Shared Equipment**

Where practical, pupils will have their own individual art and equipment supplies. Where equipment is shared, hygiene practices will be observed.

Musical Equipment/Instruments – To the greatest extent possible, instruments will not be shared between pupils and if sharing is required, the instruments will be cleaned / sanitised between use.

Library Policy – Pupils will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Shared Sports Equipment – Equipment sharing will be minimised and cleaned / sanitised shared equipment between users by different people.

7. Hygiene and Cleaning in School

- There will be additional cleaning throughout the school - during the day and in the afternoons.
- Training has been provided for all cleaning staff.
- Particular care will be taken in relation to cleaning arrangements for toilets and frequently touched surfaces – taps, desks, door handles, switches, handrails etc.

8. Procedures for dealing with a suspected case of Covid 19

- **Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.**
- **Children with a blocked or runny nose, but no fever can attend school or childcare**, but if they require paracetamol or ibuprofen for their symptoms, they must not attend school for 48 hours.
- **If staff/pupils display symptoms of Covid 19** they should contact their doctor who will arrange for a test. While awaiting the test and test results, it is advised that the household restrict their movements (stay at home).
 - If the test result is negative, the other members of the household carry on as normal. The person with the symptoms who has tested negative must be clear of symptoms for at least 48 hours before returning to school/workplace. All diarrhoea symptoms need to have been resolved for 48 hours prior to return to school.
 - If the test result is positive, the person must follow HSE guidance on self isolation.

- **Staff and pupils may not attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a close contact of a person with Covid 19.**
 - The staff member/pupil who is identified as a close contact must isolate for 14 days. A test will be arranged for the individual who is the close contact. While waiting for the test and the results, the household is advised to restrict movements (stay at home).
 - If the individual who is the close contact tests negative for the virus, they must continue to isolate until the 14 days have passed but the household may return to work/school.
 - If the individual tests positive, they must follow HSE guidance on self isolation. At the start of the year parents will be asked to give their consent for staff to take their child's temperature (using a scanning thermometer).
- **If a pupil complains of generally being unwell, they will be brought to the 'First Aid area' which is a new area that has been created in the main corridor (inside the front door). The area contains 4 chairs and will be divided by screens.**
- The pupil's temperature will be taken. (Parents will be asked to give their permission for this at the start of the year).
- The parents will be contacted (as is the usual procedure in Scoil Mhuire) and asked to come and collect their child.
- **A designated isolation area for suspected cases of Covid-19** has been identified within the school building - it is a small room on the main corridor, near the office. This room will only be used for suspected cases of Covid-19.
- **If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school**, the following are the procedures to be implemented:
 - If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
 - A staff member will accompany the pupil to the isolation room, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic pupil and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic pupil at all times. A staff member will wear a mask and supervise the pupil until they are collected by a parent. The pupil will remain in the isolation room until the parent comes to collect them.
 - A mask will be provided for the pupil/staff member presenting with symptoms. He/she will wear the mask while in the isolation room and while exiting the building.
 - If the person presenting with the suspected case is a staff member, another staff member will assess whether the staff member who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home.
 - If a staff member presenting with symptoms is able to go home, they will be sent home immediately.
 - If a staff member presenting with symptoms cannot immediately go home they will be facilitated to call their doctor and arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible. They will be advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.

- If a staff member is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Whether the suspected case is a pupil/staff member, the individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.
- Advice will be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided.
- The school will carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery.
- The school will arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved
- **The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process.**
- **The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made.**
- **The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.**

