

COVID Response Plan and Control Measures

for the Safe and Sustainable Re-opening of

**Scoil Mhuire
Leixlip, Co. Kildare**



Last Updated: 28th August 2020

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1) **Introduction**

Scoil Mhuire is a Catholic co-educational primary school. There are 301 pupils on roll, 12 Mainstream Classes and 2 ASD Classes, 12 mainstream teachers, 2 Special Education Teachers, 4 Support Teachers, 1 shared SET with another school, an Administrative Principal, 7.75 SNA posts, a full time Secretary, full time Caretaker and 4 Cleaners.

2) **Scoil Mhuire Covid-19 Response Plan**

A COVID-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. This document identifies the steps Scoil Mhuire are taking to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that will be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself in the event that COVID-19 is introduced to the school. One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning.

The following document outlines the control measures Scoil Mhuire has put in place to mitigate the risk of infection and transmission of COVID-19. It is important that staff, pupils, parents / guardian / carers and the wider school community adopt these control measures to help mitigate the risk of infection from COVID-19.

This document has been created in line with the following guidance documents and best practice.

- Reopening Our Schools: The Roadmap for the Full Return to Schools (DES, July 27th 2020)
- COVID-19 Response Plan for the Safe and Sustainable Re-opening of Primary and Special Schools (DES, July 27th 2020)
- Returning to School: Curriculum Guidance for Primary School Leaders and Teachers (July 2020)
- Guidance for Primary Schools and Special Schools on PPE, Consumables and Equipment (7th August 2020)

Note: This is a living document which will be updated accordingly as per Department guidelines. Parents / Guardians and Staff will be notified of any changes to this document. Queries should be directed to office@scoilmhuireleixlip.com.

Responsibility

The Board of Management have a legal obligation under The Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to assess the risks associated with COVID-19, implement control measures to eliminate/reduce the associated risks, design, provide and maintain a safe working environment, plan a safe systems of work and provide suitable training and PPE measures.

Staff should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

The Board of Management, staff, pupils, parents and guardians have a collective responsibility to ensure the safety of themselves and others in the implementation of these measures. The assistance and co-operation of all is critical to the success of this plan.

Ratified by the Board of Management: 28th August 2020.

3) Scoil Mhuire Covid-19 Policy Statement

The Covid-19 Policy Statement shows 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.



Scoil Mhuire COVID-19 Policy Statement

Scoil Mhuire is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions. This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: Nora Nesal Date: 17/8/20

Signed: Paul Cooney Date: 17/8/20

4) Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The BOM aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the workplace must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education. Details for the safe reopening of the schools and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

Before reopening, the school will ensure the following are completed/in place:

Communication & Training

- Implemented means of keeping up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates;
- Implemented means of passing on this information in a timely manner to staff, pupils, parents / guardians and others as required;

Staff Communications

- Ensured that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education
- Provided staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form
- Identified a Lead Worker representative
- Outlined a process for staff to raise concerns via the Lead Worker Representative
- Identified any High Risk Staff and advised them of the Department of Education's agreed arrangements
- Advised staff of the availability of the supports of the occupational health and wellbeing programme through Spectrum Life

Parent & Student Communications

- Publish **Scoil Mhuire COVID 19 Response Plan** on website & issue **Scoil Mhuire COVID policy** to all parents / guardians in advance of school opening
- Issue **Scoil Mhuire Logistics document** in advance of school opening and update to school website. This plan is to highlight the key points of information from the **Covid 19 Response plan** for parents/guardians.
- There will be a video issued in advance of school opening showing entry points, sample classroom layout and hand-washing/sanitising facilities to help familiarise parents / guardian / carers and pupils with the new measures in place and ease any apprehension about the return to school.
- On the first day of school, teachers will take all pupils through the following:
 - Acknowledgement of the COVID -19 virus and discussion on the difficult period that it may have presented over the last number of months
 - The importance of everyone playing their part in helping to prevent the introduction and spread of the virus
 - Hygiene measures including viewing the washing hands video, use of hand sanitisers and locations, when they need to wash hands, respiratory measures to stop the spread of the virus etc.
 - Outline the Bubble and Pod approach and how that will operate.
 - Outline new break/lunch arrangements and how they will operate.
 - System in place for the sharing of equipment
 - Approach for homework for initial settling in period
 - Staying at home if feeling sick
 - What to do if developing symptoms

School Buildings

- Posters and other signage are on display throughout the building to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19
- The necessary changes have been made to the classroom layout to support physical distancing

- Identification of isolation room and isolation route
- Installation of hand sanitisers in all rooms/hallways.
- Storage boxes for every student available in each classroom to store their books
- Unnecessary clutter has been removed to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment.
- The health and safety risk assessment will be reviewed and updated
- Made necessary arrangements to restrict access to the school and maintain records of contacts to the school
- Water systems in the school have been flushed by maintenance throughout the lockdown and summer period to prevent Legionella disease.
- School equipment has been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again.
- Bin collections and other essential services are in place.
- PPE, sanitation supplies and appropriate cleaning materials have been made available.
- School clean has taken place.

4.1) Induction Training

All staff will undertake and complete COVID-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. The aim of such training is to ensure that staff has full knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health
- COVID-19 symptoms
- What to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- Outline of the COVID-19 response plan

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and will be updated with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal who is supported in this role by the BOM.

Staff training has been provided to all staff members.

A national information campaign to support parents / guardians / carers and pupils will happen in advance of schools reopening on issues such as COVID-19 awareness and to help minimise the risk of introduction and spread of the virus in schools.

4.2) Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, and after any absence of more than three days, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available electronically or from the Principal. A RTW form should be completed and returned **3 days** before returning to work.

The Principal will provide details and links to the **Induction Training (Training for Reopening Schools; DES)** for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at **very high risk**.

People at very high risk (extremely vulnerable):

The list of people in very high risk groups include people who:

- are over 70 years of age – even if fit and well
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immune suppression drugs
- have severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immune suppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE.

4.3) Lead Worker Representative

The protocol provides for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in each workplace. The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and school management.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 Response Plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, pupils or others, they should contact the LWR who will engage with school management.

Role of the Lead Worker Representative

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;

- Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and pupils being exposed to COVID-19;
- Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- Monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Names of Lead Worker Representative/s:	Contact details:
Ms. Michelle Doyle and Ms. Sandra Eastman	office@scoilmhuireleixlip.com

- All staff, pupils, parents / guardians / carers, contractors and visitors have a responsibility, both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

4.4) Signage

Signage has been displayed throughout the school.

- Posters in classrooms promoting good hand hygiene
- Posters in classrooms promoting good respiratory hygiene.
- 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)
- Main door sign indicating protocols for visitors/parents / guardians / contractors etc.
- The signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- One-way directional signage in hallways.
- Appropriate signage is located in all classrooms, meeting rooms, staff rooms, offices, toilets, and circulation areas.

4.5) Making Changes to school layout

- We will change the layout of our classrooms to facilitate social distancing.
- We will remove all excess furniture from the classrooms
- We will create an extra staffroom
- We will assign staff toilets
- We will install half doors at both offices
- We will create a first aid area with the use of Perspex dividers
- We will divide the building into 4 sections with 4 corresponding doors - Red, Green, Yellow and Blue.
 - Each section will have a corresponding door.
 - The Red door - at the front of the school, facing the road
 - The Green door - the Main door
 - The Yellow door - our Infant door
 - The Blue door - the door at the back of the school facing the grass.

4.6) Health and Safety Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in our school has been completed.

We will also review and update our emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan.

The school's risk assessment will be updated to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan.

First Aid/emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure will continue to apply. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, the school will call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

4.7) Access to School and Contact Log

Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents / guardians / carers will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal. The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools and centres for education to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace.

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. Staff, parents and guardians are responsible for providing their most up to date contact information details.

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found here:

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-work-safely-protocol>

5) Control Measures - To Prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents / guardians / carers and visitors as far as possible within the school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents / guardians / carers and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

Staff should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

We will be implementing the following reminders through our signage, communications and updates to minimise the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into our school:

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms;
- Advise staff and pupils that have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;
- Advise staff and pupils not to attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as contact for a person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;
- Advise staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the Principal (or deputy Principal if the Principal is unavailable) promptly;
- Ensure that staff and pupils know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school;
- Advise everyone entering the school building that they need to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- Advise all relevant parties that visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement with the Principal and should be received at a specific contact point;
- Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

5.1) Know the Symptoms of COVID-19

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.

5.2) 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.
- Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.
- Staff and pupils are advised to bring their own supply of tissues, but there will be supplies in each Classroom and staffroom.

5.3) 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.
- Sanitising equipment will be installed throughout the building:
 - at each entry/exit door
 - in each classroom
 - in offices
 - along the corridor
- Teachers will also have hand sanitiser available within the classroom for regular application to pupils' hands
- Supply and availability of hand sanitiser will be monitored and topped up throughout the day by the Cleaning Team and care will be taken to ensure any spills caused by the liquids are cleaned to prevent the risk of falls.
- Supplies of paper towels will be provided beside the hand washing stations with pedal bins to store the used towels.
- Children will be encouraged to also bring their own hand sanitising gel to school.

- Please practise hand washing with your child (remember you must wash your hands for 20 seconds – please watch hand washing videos provided - sing Happy Birthday in your head 3 times!)
- Posters displaying hand washing techniques will be laminated and placed on walls over the washing facilities promoting effective hand washing.

5.4) Physical Distancing

Physical distancing can be usefully applied in primary and special school settings allowing for some flexibility when needed. It must be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing will look different across the various ages and stages of learning.

It is also recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from pupils and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the pupil i.e. if a child sustains an injury and requires first aid. `

Staff will maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m. They will also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

- Increasing separation
- Decreasing interaction

Increasing separation

To maintain physical distancing in the classroom, we will implement the following:

1. Reconfigure class spaces to maximise physical distancing
2. Utilise and reconfigure all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing

Decreasing interaction

In primary schools a distance of 1m should be maintained between desks or between individual pupils. It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors. Therefore, achieving this recommendation in the first four years of primary or special schools, is not a pre-requisite to reopening a primary or special school for all pupils.

Where possible work stations will be allocated consistently to the same staff and pupils rather than having spaces which are shared.

Pupils and their teachers will be structured into Class Bubbles (i.e. a class grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible) and discrete groups or “Pods” within those class Bubbles.

- The school will follow the guidance from the Department of Education & Skills when looking at the potential options for each room layout which are in accordance with the public health advice The recommendations for social distancing are:
 - 1 metre between adults
 - 1 metre between children indoors (from 3rd to 6th)
 - 2 metres between adults and children
 - 1 metre between pods
- **Pods and Bubbles**
 - A group of 5/6 children is now referred to as a ‘pod’
 - A collection of pods will be known as a ‘bubble’

- Every class is classed 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'
- 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'.
 - Each child in the 'pod' will have individual containers for crayons, pencils etc. These will be provided by the school. Children will work together with the other children in their pod.
 - In 3rd - 6th classes, in line with Department of Education guidelines, the children will all 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. We have had to remove all extra 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) will be marked out.
 - Each child will have a basket under their table where they will store their books. These will be provided by the school. They will also have individual containers for colours etc.
 - Entry to the school in the morning
 - Entry to the school grounds will not be possible before 9.10am.
 - Children can arrive to the school anytime between 9.10 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 9.10am.
 - 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 will stagger 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.
- **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)	
	* * *			
* Scoil Mhuire building *				

○ 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.

Additional measures to decrease interaction include:

- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) will be discouraged.

- Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it will be organized to the greatest degree possible to minimise congregation at the shared resource.
- Visitors to the school
 - We will be 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 marked 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.
 - 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.
- Staff and pupils will avoid sharing personal items.
- Pupils will be encouraged to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth).
- Where teaching and learning involves the use of equipment, the contact surface of the equipment will be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged. Before equipment is used by any pupil, the pupil will wash and sanitise their hands. At the end of the activity, the equipment will be wiped down with disinfectant wipes. The child will re-wash and sanitise their hands again before moving onto the next activity.
- Coat racks will not be used so children will store their coats in their empty bags (their books will be in their baskets).
- Staff members who move from class bubble to class bubble will be limited as much as possible, and if this is to happen, the same staff members will cover an allocated set of bubbles.
- **Staff and pupils who display symptoms of Covid 19 should not attend school**, they should phone their doctor and follow HSE guidance on self isolation.
- **Staff and pupils who have been identified by the HSE as a contact** of a person with Covid 19 should not attend school.
- We suggest that in the morning before they leave for school, parents ensure that their child's hands are washed and take their child's temperature.

Please don't send your child to school if they are unwell.

- **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. It is a requirement for anyone coming into Ireland, from locations other than those with a rating of ‘normal precautions’ (“green”), to restrict their movements for 14 days, and this includes school staff, parents and children.
 - Restricting your movements means staying indoors in one location and avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible.

Staff

- A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing between staff. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much distance as is possible will be observed and guidance on face covering should be observed.
- The staff has been assigned into four Pods to encourage physical distancing.
- There will be two staff rooms and assigned staff toilets.
- Physical distancing will be observed between staff members within the staff room through the use of individual tables and staggered breaks.
- Staff meetings will be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces where physical distancing can be facilitated.
- Staff can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible.
- Staff members will be asked to keep their mobile phones on during school time to enable prompt contact with office.
- Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.

5.5) Use of PPE in Schools

- The updated advice from the HPSC to the Department of Education has recommended that face coverings should be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents / guardians / carers, essential visitors or pupils. The Department of Education and Skills has accepted this recommendation. Accordingly, it is now a requirement for face coverings to be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents / guardians / carers, essential visitors or pupils.
- PPE will also need to be used at certain work activities or work areas. These might include roles such as:
 - Performing intimate care
 - Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
 - Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised as people in ‘very high risk’ groups, or may be living with people who are in a ‘very high risk’ category;
 - Administering first aid
 - Parent Teacher meetings
- Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

- Masks/Face Coverings

- Cloth face coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact.
- In certain situations, the use of clear visors may be considered, for example staff interacting with pupils with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.
- All staff wearing face coverings will be reminded to not touch the face covering and to wash or sanitise their hands before putting on and after taking off the face covering.
- In childcare and educational settings, the implementation of mandatory face-covering usage is challenging, as it is known that children will have a lower tolerance and ability to use the face covering properly, and use of face-coverings by teachers and staff caring for very young children may cause undue stress to the children.
- It is not a requirement that children attending primary school wear face-coverings.

- Reception Areas / Office

- A half door will be installed on the Principal and Secretary's office.
- Perspex shield will be installed on the desks in the Principal and Secretary's office.
- Only one person may enter the Principal's office/Secretary's office at their invitation only.
- Meetings should be held over the phone, in a larger area or outdoors.

- All staff are being provided with a sanitising box that includes a supply of:

- Disposable face masks
- A Visor
- Disposable aprons
- Bottle of hand sanitising gel
- Disinfectant wipes
- Bottle of cleaning product
- Tissues
- Gloves (Disposable latex gloves are not required generally within the workplace for infection prevention and control purposes according to current guidance. They are available for administering First Aid and for cleaning purposes)
- Kitchen towels (for cleaning)

- Bottles of hand sanitising gel are available in the classroom for use by staff and pupils. Where practical, the teacher will distribute the sanitising gel to the pupils.

6) Impact of COVID-19 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. In inclement weather, 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 will be 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 shared equipment will be cleaned / sanitised between uses 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 will be provided to 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.
- All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Staff will be asked to clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day and at intervals throughout the day.
- There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.
- Staff must bring in their own eating and drinking utensils (plates, cutlery, drinking vessels) in an appropriate container. Staff are responsible for cleaning any item that they bring to work (e.g. keys, bags, mobile phones) and to avoid leaving them down on communal surfaces or they will need to clean the surface after the personal item is removed
- Sufficient cleaning materials and PPE will be available to allow for increased cleaning.

- Cleaning staff will be instructed to wear kitchen gloves (rubber gloves) and disposable aprons when cleaning and are aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before and after wearing gloves.
- System in place for the disposal of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a rubbish bag. Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person suspected of having Covid-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection.
- System in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use.
- System in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use.

Cleaning/Disinfecting rooms where a pupil/staff member with suspected COVID19 was present

- The room should be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.
- Once the room is vacated the room will not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.
- If a pupil or member of staff diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a staffroom, play area or if they used the toilet facilities, then the areas will also be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant as soon as is practically possible.

8) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

- **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.
- **If staff/pupils display symptoms** 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 child develops a fever and symptoms such as outlined in HPSC guidance whilst in school:
 - They should be immediately isolated in a pre-identified place within school, with good ventilation and preferable an outside window opened.
 - The school should contact their parent or guardian and ask them to collect their child as soon as possible.
 - The child should be cared for appropriately by a staff member whilst they are waiting to go home.
 - The staff member supervising the child should wear a mask. Use of gloves is not essential, but staff members may wish to use them. If a staff member has helped someone with symptoms, it is essential they avoid touching their nose, mouth or eyes whilst caring for them, and undertake hand hygiene.
 - If any child presents extremely unwell, from whatever potential cause, 112 and an ambulance should be called. NB we do not expect this to happen in relation to Covid-19.
 - After the isolation space is vacated, it should be cleaned and contact surfaces disinfected.
 - The staff member assisting with the child does not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves, or are later advised to by public health.
- **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 be used for suspected cases of Covid-19.
- If a staff member displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following are the procedures to be implemented:
 - 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.**

9) Special Educational Needs

Additional considerations for those with Special Educational Needs

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or appropriate to implement. The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection and **where symptoms are present, children should not attend school.**

Similarly, staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or symptoms of respiratory illness.

Hand hygiene

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.

Equipment

Some children may have care needs (physical or behavioural) which requires the use of aids and appliances and/or medical equipment for example toileting aids, moving and handling equipment, respiratory equipment. Where cleaning of aids and appliances is carried out in the school it is recommended that a cleaning schedule is provided, detailing when and how the equipment is cleaned and the cleaning products to be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

10) Staff Duties

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties.

The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play.

In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the Scoil Mhuire COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- Must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.

- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Not return to or attend school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances.
- Adhere to the procedure outlined above if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

11) **COVID-19 related absence management**

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education. (Circulars 49/2020 and 54/202)

12) **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

Support for staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team. An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for individual staff members in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by *Spectrum Life* under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile'.

Under the EAS, employees have a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc.

Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home).

A bespoke wellbeing portal and app which offers access to Podcasts and blogs on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition is also available. In addition, online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided. As part of the services provided by *Spectrum Life* a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. They will also be providing a series of webinars and presentations to promote staff wellbeing in schools as schools reopen and during the upcoming school year.