



St. Patrick's NS

Covid-19 School Reopening Plan: Practical Implementations

Introduction

The health safety and well-being of our pupils, staff and wider school community are of paramount importance to the Board of Management. As such, this document outlines how the school will implement the Roadmap to reopening schools issued by the Dept. of Education and Skills.

The school has a responsibility to make every effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – children, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.

- Assuming it is in keeping with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills, it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week and for a full school day. This plan has been formulated to achieve that aim.
- It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the co-operation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread.
- As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented.

Infection Prevention Control Measures - To prevent Introduction

And Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

- Staff and pupils to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a test
- Staff and pupils not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - If they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of



COVID-19

- If they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;

Prior to school reopening

Staff

COVID-19 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 have 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; this will be communicated via email.

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 Board of Management.

Procedure for returning to work (RTW)

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Schools should request staff (verbally or in writing) to confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a Return to Work (RTW) form, which will be available as a Google Form or from the principal. A RTW form should be completed and returned 3 days before returning to work.

The principal will also provide details of the Induction Training for completion by staff 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.



Staff members at very high risk

There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified some people as being in groups who are defined as being at very high risk. This will be updated in line with public health advice.

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

- 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 immunosuppression 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 immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and are pregnant

The RTW form issued to staff will include a question pertaining to whether or not the staff member identifies with one of the above named categories. If a staff member identifies themselves within one of the above named categories, the Principal will contact them and DES procedures will be followed.

Parents

All parents will be provided with the following via Aladdin app Facebook page and website:

- a copy of Covid-19 School Reopening Plan: Practical Implementations
- a video outlining procedures and protocols for school reopening
- a video on correct procedures for hand hygiene to watch with their child(ren)
- a Google Form declaring if their child(ren) are not returning to school as they are very high risk

Parents/guardians can contact the school raising questions or concerns via email to BOM@stpatnswicklow.ie.

Pupils

Prior to returning, to school pupils should:

- have all personal belongings clearly labelled
- watch school video outlining procedures and protocol for school reopening



- watch video on correct procedures for hand hygiene

Lead Worker Representative (LWR)

A Lead Worker Representative will be appointed from the staff. The Lead Worker Representative 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.

In summary, the role of the Lead Worker Representative 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
- 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
- keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice
- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices 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
- in conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- conduct regular reviews of safety measures
- 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

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

In schools with less than 30 staff, a Deputy Lead Worker Representative will be appointed in addition to the LWR. The role of the Deputy LWR will be to deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent.

In schools with 30 or more staff and in all Special schools, an Assistant Lead Worker Representative will be appointed in addition to the LWR. The role of the Assistant LWR will be to:

- assist the LWR in their duties as set out above
- deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent



All staff, pupils, parents, 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.

What can a Lead Worker Representative Do?

The LWR may consult with, and make representations to, school management on any issue of concern in relation to COVID-19. These include issues in relation to:

- Cleaning protocols and their implementation
- Physical Distancing
- Implementation of one-way systems in the school to ensure social distancing including when entering and exiting the school
- Hand Hygiene facilities including their location and whether they are stocked and maintained
- Hand sanitising
- Staff awareness around hand hygiene in the school
- Respiratory hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- At Risk Groups
- Visitors/Contractors

Selection of Lead Worker Representative/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR

The school staff are entitled to select staff members for the LWR, Deputy LWR and Assistant LWR positions as appropriate. The LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR represents all staff in the workplace regardless of role and must be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts. In this regard, if a teacher is selected for the role of LWR, then the Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR should be selected from the non-teaching staff where feasible and vice versa.

The process for the selection and appointment of the LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR as appropriate should be arrived at by consultation and consensus at school level, through the seeking of volunteers to act in that capacity. Where there is more than one volunteer, all school staff should vote to select the LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR.

The employer will following selection by the school staff, formally appoint the LWR / Deputy LWR / Assistant LWR. LWR/ Deputy LWR will be required to confirm, prior to taking up the role, that they have completed the provided training and that they are fully aware of the requirements of the role.



Supports for the Lead Worker Representative/ Deputy LWR

The LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR shall be entitled to:

- Receive information and training in respect of their role;
- Be consulted by school management on the control measures being put in place by the school to minimise the risk of being exposed to COVID-19;
- Regular communication with school management on issues related to COVID-19;
- Be informed of changes in practice arising from COVID-19 response measures;

Where the LWR/ Assistant LWR is a teacher (including a postholder), the 10 Croke Park hours which can currently be used for planning on other than a whole school basis will be utilised by the LWR and Assistant LWR to carry out their duties in that role.

Where the LWR/ Assistant LWR is an SNA, 10 of the “72 hours” will be utilised by the LWR and Assistant LWR to carry out their duties in that role.

Where the LWR/ Assistant LWR is a Secretary or Caretaker, a re-prioritisation of duties by school management should be carried out to afford the staff member sufficient time to carry out their duties in that role.

Procedure for dealing with issues that arise

Where an issue of concern is identified by the LWR (or is notified to the LWR by a staff member), the LWR should bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the Principal. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

If agreement cannot be reached, the LWR may notify the Board of Management (Chairperson of the BoM in the first instance) of the issue. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the BoM. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

Ventilation



The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice '*Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools*'. The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather. The Department has also published guidance regarding on how these practical steps measures can be supplemented and enhanced by the use of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) monitors. We are currently awaiting our supply of monitors and will continue to follow the department guidelines on ventilation.

Entering the school building/ grounds

Staff

All staff members are required to sign in when entering the building. The pad is located at the front door. Staff are asked not to congregate in the staffroom.

All staff members are required to observe good hand hygiene practices upon entering the building.

All staff must observe social distancing and wear a mask where they cannot keep a distance of 2m.

Parents

- Parents/guardians will be required to drop their child at the gate and are asked to leave the area as soon as possible. A teacher will be on duty at the three entry points to the school
 - All adults coming to the drop off areas are asked to follow the current guidance on social distancing etc.
 - We ask for co-operation at the entry/exit points as it will mean that the numbers congregating in any one area will be minimised
 - No adults, other than staff members, should enter the school grounds.
- Meetings with school staff will be facilitated only where necessary and will be done by appointment only.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email or by phoning the school office.
- Children will enter classrooms at 8.50am and it is essential that all children be on time for school every day.
- Please ensure that school bags are packed with everything your child needs for the day.

Parental admission to the school building will be either by pre-arranged appointment or contact from the school to collect their child. Appointments can be made by contacting the school office at 0404 67415. In school appointment will only be facilitated in exceptional circumstances



- Parents who enter the school building are required to complete the sign in/out book located beside the secretary's office.

Pupils

Upon entering the school grounds pupils must proceed to their classrooms this year.

Infants-3rd will enter through the main door

4th to 6th will enter through the back door

The school gates will open at 8.50 to allow entry to classrooms. Teachers will be in classrooms to receive children and SET Teachers and SNAS will direct children to their rooms.

If a child arrives after 9am on the school grounds and their class has already entered the building, they must proceed to front school door and buzz for entry. They must wait there until a member of the school staff admits them. Under no circumstances are adults permitted to enter the building with their child

Children must proceed to their classroom immediately. Hand sanitiser is available at the entrance to the school and in all classrooms and must be used. Children must take their seat in their classroom. Coats are to be placed on the back of chairs and school bags under tables.

Children in the ASD Classes and MG LD Class: SNAs will also meet children at the entry gate

During the school day

Use of school library will not be permitted and classroom libraries will have strict guidelines.

Assemblies will not take place for the near future.

Children's coats must be kept on the back of their chairs.

2 windows must be open in classrooms at all times.

Teachers are responsible for the cleaning of their own workspaces and will be provided with cleaning products to do so. These products must be kept away from children, in the closed Covid box provided on a high shelf.

Nobody is allowed in Colette's office during the day and children are not to be sent to the office. Teachers are responsible for their own photocopying which must be done before or after school. Teachers must wipe down the photocopier after use. Max of 2 people in the office at any one time.

Children cannot bring a message from/to another class.

An internal phone system is available using Microsoft Teams. Teachers must log into their school email account each morning. All staff will be trained in Teams.



Exiting the school building

Staff

All staff members are required to sign out when exiting the school building. The sign in/out pad is located at the front main building door.

Parents

Parents who exit the school building are required to complete the sign in/out book located beside the secretary's office.

Pupils

End of School Day:

- Adults who are collecting children from Junior Infants to 2nd Class should wait in the lower playground area front gate.
 - Classes will be dispersed in intervals from 1.30pm for Junior and Senior Infants and from 2.30pm for 1st to 6th. Classes please ensure you do not enter the school grounds and please move towards the school gate to collect your child to avoid crossing the car park area.
 - Adults are asked to avoid congregating in groups, and to follow social distancing guidelines at all times.
 - The class teacher will bring the children to the playground area and release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them.
 - All children and adults will exit the grounds abiding by social distancing guideline and are asked not to continue to congregate in the area.
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- For children in 3rd – 6th Classes, the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately in order to minimise contact.
 - Each pod will exit the building and leave the grounds through the designated gates.
 - As stated above these classes will begin leaving at 2.30pm:

Parents of children who are walking or cycling must provide a written note to state if any changes to this arrangement we would kindly ask the parent to phone the office on the day in question.

Collection of Children during the School Day

All pupils must be signed out at the office by the person collecting the child when collecting a child early



If an adult must collect a child during the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

- Early collection will be facilitated at break times only:
 - Wait at the playground gate and the teacher on yard duty will assist you.
 - Alternatively, when the adult arrives at the school, they should phone the office to alert the Secretary that they have arrived. All absences can be keyed on Aladdin for early collection
 - It is essential that collections are restricted to break times as the doors and phone may not be manned at other times. We would ask parents not to collect older siblings when collecting younger siblings at home time unless they have an appointment or in case of family emergency, as this last hour of the school day is a critical learning time for the pupils in 1st to 6th Class
 - Please note: the break times for your class:
 - Small break 1: 10.50am-11.00am (Junior – 2nd Classes)
 - Small break 2: 11.05am – 11.15am (3rd to 6th Classes)
 - Big Break 1: 12.00-12.30pm (Junior- 2nd Classes)
 - Big break 2: 12.30 – 1.00pm (3rd to -6th Classes)
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

Parking

- All parents/guardians are asked to park carefully outside of the school grounds.
- All parents are asked to observe the entry/exit points. There is no pedestrian access through the yard.
- Your co-operation is essential here as it is our only way to avoid staggered drop off and collection times.

Notes about the School Day

- Pencil cases etc. will remain in school every day.
- All parents are asked to download the Aladdin App: It will also be used for permissions, notes etc. Homework will be assigned through SEE Saw there will be no homework Journal.



- No paper notes will be sent home. Communications will be via email, App notifications and text, and general reminders will be placed on social media. All parents must provide a working email address for communication
- Classes will develop home/school links using platforms like Seesaw and Google Classroom.
- Facebook will just be used as an information channel.
- Homework will continue through the SEE SAW platform

Physical alterations to the school building

Classrooms

All classrooms have been altered to ensure a full return to school in line with DES reopening schools. Children will be seated in pods of 4 to 8 children. Children will remain in these pods. While children are not 1m apart within their pods they are 1m distance from the next pod, this is in line with DES classroom layouts.

Excess furniture has been removed from classrooms to ensure a full return to school is possible.

Signage

Dept. of Education and Skills to issue signage to all schools. Signs will be placed around the school building and at wash points.

Hand Sanitiser

Hand sanitiser is available at all entry points and in classrooms.

Yards

Yards have been divided to maintain bubbles at break times. The yards have been divided into sections and each year group has their own section.

Break times

Staff

Yard times have been changed and there are now two of each break. Supervision will be broken into Staff Pods with teachers and SNAs

Small break 1: 10.50-11.am

Small break 2: 11:05am – 11.15am

Big Break 1: 12.00-12.30pm

Big break 2: 12.30 – 1.00pm



SNA breaks:

Small break: 10.35-10.45

Big break: 12.15 – 12.35 Group 1

Big Break: 12.40-1.00 pm Group 2

Using the staffroom

No congregation in staffroom in mornings or evenings

No more than 12 people in the staffroom at any one time. Social distancing to be adhered to. Table layouts are not to be altered.

The fridge is available for staff use and the dishwasher will be in use.

Pupils

Breaks will be staggered. There will be time allocated for eating in classrooms and for playing time. Each class will have a designated section of the yard to play in and will be supervised by teacher pods and SNAs. No food to be brought out onto the yard.

Curriculum

The initial settling back period will be especially significant for revisiting and consolidating and, in some cases, relearning curriculum content previously worked on either prior to the school closure period or as part of distance learning. It will be important to reinforce and consolidate pupils' learning from their previous class. Teachers might find it useful to work with the curriculum content, objectives and learning outcomes for the previous class level for at least the month of September in order to ensure that pupils are ready to commence new learning.

It will be necessary for schools to prioritise certain aspects of the curriculum when the new term begins. Schools will need to re-orientate their work with the curriculum especially during the initial weeks of the first term as they give greater time and attention to areas such as Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Physical Education (PE), Language and Mathematics. Gradually, as schools build comprehensive pictures of where pupils are in their learning, they will work towards more 'typical' curriculum plans.

SPHE and PE will be important in supporting pupils' wellbeing while language and Mathematics will be central in supporting pupils' overall learning. Mandatory aspects of SPHE such as *Stay Safe* and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) should be taught early in the year. Pupils should also continue to have experiences in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and the Arts; the use of cross-curricular or thematic approaches may be particularly useful in this regard.

Physical Education

Physical Education supports the development of skills and attributes such as physical movement and development, communication, self-esteem and confidence, all of which are



particularly important as pupils return to school. Pupils will have had varying opportunities for movement and physical activity over the past months. As the new school year gets underway, movement and activity through timetabled PE lessons (30 mins 3 times per week), along with activity throughout the day, will contribute positively to pupils' wellbeing.

The use of 'pods', the need for physical distancing, the cleaning and organisation of equipment, and the individual school environment will shape the PE learning experiences in the new school year.

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

Social personal Health Education

The wider physical, mental, emotional and relationship implications of social distancing, lockdown and possibly bereavement may be significant for some pupils. There should therefore be a focus on wellbeing as a foundation for learning. Teachers will play an important role in supporting positive interactions and routines for the children and in encouraging healthy behaviours as the pupils make sense of their new realities and come to feel safe and secure in their school surroundings.

SPHE is particularly important in responding to how Covid-19 has affected children in terms of their feelings, thoughts and behaviours. Learning experiences that support children to focus on their strengths, positive attributes and qualities to enable reconnection with the school community will assist in easing the transition back to school. SPHE curriculum content will also be useful in providing general and specific support to pupils who are finding the transition back to school difficult. While teachers will be best placed to consider what aspects of their SPHE programme should be prioritised or revisited in light of the particular context of their class or pupils, it may be pertinent to focus on some of the following Strand Units:

- Self-identity
- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection
- My friends and my family
- Developing citizenship

Particular attention will be given to:

- The importance of **personal hygiene** and how to wash hands thoroughly, coughing/sneezing according to the medical guidance, and how and when to wear face coverings/masks



- Supporting pupils in **managing their feelings, resolving conflicts** and coping with uncertainty, as well as new situations brought about by Covid-19 such as loss of a loved one
- Revisiting the **Stay Safe Programme or Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)**
- Allowing pupils adequate time to re-connect with one another and to (re)establish relationships with peers. **Co-operative games** and the incorporation of drama activities such as **role-play** and **improvisation** can support this process.
- Providing children with opportunities to talk about and make sense of their experiences.

Supporting pupils at “very high risk” to COVID-19

There may be some pupils for whom return to school at the end of August/ early September may not be appropriate because the relevant public health guidelines indicate they are at “very high risk”. Overall responsibility for ensuring that such pupils receive appropriate support to engage adequately with learning remains with the school in which they are enrolled. Regular and ongoing communication between school and home will be essential to support the pupil’s engagement with their learning and their continuous connection with their classmates and school community.

Additional supports will be provided for these pupils from within the staffing resources of the school. It may also be possible to utilise support from teachers who are assessed as ‘very high risk’ and who are available to work from home. Schools will have discretion to manage and redistribute their support resources in order to best meet the learning needs of their pupils, including pupils at ‘very high risk’ to COVID-19.

Under the direction of the school principal, the relevant support teacher should:

- Liaise with the relevant class teacher and Special Education Teacher (SET) where relevant regarding curricular content and classwork
- Access relevant learning resources including those produced by the class teacher as well as other externally produced resources such as those on *Scoilnet*
- Provide the pupil with individualised support for his/her learning; this may include devising of an individual support plan for the pupil in cooperation with the class teacher and, where relevant, the SET
- Increase the pupil’s autonomy, motivation and agency and wellbeing
- Improve the pupil’s capacity to become a self-directed learner
- Support the development of the pupil’s digital competence where necessary



- Avail of the communication / learning platform used by the pupil's school to ensure ongoing contact between the pupil and his/her school and to facilitate some engagement with his/her class teacher and classmates.

Cleaning

Cleaning schedule

The cleaners will follow the guidelines provided by the Department of Education and HSE. The School will be cleaned daily and common touch points will be cleaned throughout the day. Cleaners have completed Covid cleaning training

Respiratory Hygiene

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. Bins will be emptied at 12pm and at the end of the school day.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19

Hand Hygiene

Hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser can achieve hand hygiene (when hands look clean).

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins needs to be managed to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.

There is a requirement for access to hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands, for example playing outside or certain sporting activities, as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands.

Hand sanitiser dispensers are at exit and entry points of school and classrooms and care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risks of falls.

Water and soap is available at all sinks.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities are be provided in all toilets, kitchens and any food preparation areas.

Hand washing facilities are maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels will be checked twice daily.

Hot air dryers are an acceptable alternative for hand drying but must be regularly maintained. There is no evidence that hand dryers are associated with increased risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing are placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities.

Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean).



Frequency of Hand Hygiene

Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- on arrival at school
- before eating or drinking
- after using the toilet
- after playing outdoors
- when their hands are physically dirty
- when they cough or sneeze

Use of shared equipment and resources

Toys

All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis (weekly, for example). This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.

Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.

If cloth or soft toys are used, they should be machine washable.

Jigsaws, puzzles and toys that young pupils to those with special educational needs may be inclined to put into their mouths should be capable of being washed and disinfected.

All play equipment should be checked for signs of damage for example breaks or cracks. If they cannot be repaired or cleaned, they should be discarded.

Clean toys and equipment should be stored in a clean container or clean cupboard. The manufacturer's instructions should always be followed.

At this time soft modelling materials and play dough where used should be for individual use only.

Cleaning Procedure for Toys

- wash the toy in warm soapy water, using a brush to get into crevices
- rinse the toy in clean water
- thoroughly dry the toy
- some hard plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher
- toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up should be wiped with a damp cloth and dried



- In some situations, toys/equipment may need to be disinfected following cleaning for example: toys/equipment that pupils place in their mouths. Toys/equipment that have been soiled with blood or body fluids or toys where a case of COVID-19 has been identified

If disinfection is required: A chlorine releasing disinfectant should be used diluted to a concentration of 1,000-ppm available chlorine. The item should be rinsed and dried thoroughly.

Art

Pupils will have their own individual art and equipment supplies. Each child will have their own art pack (in a zip lock bag) containing scissors, glue sticks, colours, paintbrushes and other items of stationary) All children's' stationary must be labelled.

Electronics

Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between uses.

Musical Equipment/Instruments

To the greatest extent possible, instruments should not be shared between pupils and if sharing is required, the instruments should be cleaned between uses.

Library Policy

School library is closed and classroom libraries will be limited. Children should bring their own schoolbooks from home for Drop Everything and Read when possible.

Shared Sports Equipment

This will be sanitized and limited to equipment for each pod

Special Education

- In keeping with our Special Education Policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within the confines of specific class bubbles.
- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
- Where children from 3rd to 6th Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending



Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE will not be required to be worn within schools according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

This might include roles such as:

- assisting with intimate care needs
- 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 those who are in the very high risk category

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Masks

Cloth face coverings are not suitable for children under the age of 13 and anyone who:

- has trouble breathing
- is unconscious or incapacitated
- is unable to remove it without help
- has special needs to who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering

For staff, face coverings will be required medical grade masks for all staff will be required if physical distancing of 2m is not possible and practised appropriately. Wearing a face covering will conceal facial expression and make communication difficult, however staff safety is paramount.

The use of a visor alongside a medical grade mask in special classes and where there is a concern, regarding prolonged close contact and exposure to fluid/respiratory droplets.

Gloves

The use of disposable gloves in the school by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for intimate care settings. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves.

Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

Protocol in the event of a staff member or pupil displaying symptoms of COVID-19

Staff

- If a staff member develops symptoms of acute respiratory infection including cough, fever or shortness of breath ask them to go home immediately and contact their GP by telephone.
- They should remain 2 m away from others if possible.



- They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin.
- If tissues are not available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.
- If they can tolerate doing so and one is available they should wear a clean cloth face covering or a surgical mask.
- If they must wait, then they should do so in the isolation room or other area away from others mindful of the need to observe good respiratory and hand hygiene.
- If they need to use toilet facilities they should wipe contact surfaces for example taps clean and clean their hands after attending the toilet.

Pupil

If a child develops any symptoms of acute respiratory infection including cough, fever, shortness of breath or sudden loss of taste or smell while in the care facility, a staff member will need to take them to the place that is planned for isolation.

This will be the isolation room.

- Call their parent or guardian and ask them to collect their child as soon as possible.
- Remember the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so the physical separation is enough to reduce risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room.
- If a distance of 2m cannot be maintained then a staff member caring for a child waiting for pick-up should wear a cloth face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used, as the virus does not pass through skin.
- The staff member should be aware that it is essential to avoid touching its own nose, mouth or eyes while caring for a symptomatic child and to perform hand hygiene.
- If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or unless they are subsequently advised to by public health.

Supporting teaching and learning in the home where there is localised full school closure
In the event of a full school closure Seesaw will be the platform used to continue teaching and learning. Seesaw codes will be given to children on their return to school. In the event that a child does not return to school codes will be posted to their home address.



Ratification and Review

The Board of Management ratified this COVID-19 Response Plan on 12th August 2020. It has been shared with the entire school community to ensure that everyone is familiar with its contents before the return to school.

This plan will be reviewed regularly in line with health and safety guidance.

Signed:

Mrs. E. Kinsella	Mrs. L. Dempsey
Chairperson	Principal

Review version: reviewed and ratified at the BOM, meeting on 28th January 2021

Review Version reviewed as per Government guidelines 24th August 2021

Appendix 1

Key messages from our plan

Prior to school reopening

Staff

COVID-19 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 have 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

Parents

All parents will be provided with the following via Aladdin app, Facebook page and website: a copy of Covid-19 School Reopening Plan: Practical Implementations

- a video on correct procedures for hand hygiene to watch with their child(ren)
- Key department messages on Covid 19

The Board of management have agreed that the school will move to paperless communication to eliminate any risks and ensure smooth communication with all

Parents/guardians can contact the school raising questions or concerns via email to BOM@stpatnswicklow.ie.

Pupils

Prior to returning to school pupils should:

- have all personal belongings clearly labelled
- watch video on correct procedures for hand hygiene

Entering the school grounds

Parents

- Parents/guardians will be required to drop their child at the gate and are asked to leave the area as soon as possible. At teacher and SNA will be on duty at the three entry points to the school.
- All adults coming to the drop off areas are asked to follow the current guidance on social distancing etc.

- We ask for co-operation at the entry/exit points as it will mean that the numbers congregating in any one area will be minimised
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the school grounds.

Where possible we would ask children to walk or cycle and if parents could drop older children and allow them to walk on the marked path to the school.

Meetings

- Meetings with school staff will be facilitated only where necessary and will be done by appointment only.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email or by phoning the school office.
- School will start at 9.00am and it is essential that all children are on time for school every day.

Pupils

Upon entering the school grounds pupils must proceed to their classrooms this year.

Infants-3rd will enter through the main door

4th to 6th will enter through the back door

The school gates will open at 8.50 to allow entry to classrooms. Teachers will be in classrooms to receive children and SET Teachers and SNAS will direct children to their rooms.

If a child arrives after 9am on the school grounds and their class has already entered the building, they must proceed to front school door and buzz for entry. They must wait there until a member of the school staff admits them. Under no circumstances are adults permitted to enter the building with their child

Children must proceed to their classroom immediately. Hand sanitiser is available at the entrance to the school and in all classrooms and must be used. Children must take their seat in their classroom. Coats are to be placed on the back of chairs and school bags under tables.

Children in the ASD Classes and MGLD Class: SNAs will also meet children at the entry gate

Pupils

End of School Day:

- Adults who are collecting children from Junior Infants to 2nd Class should wait in the lower playground area front gate.
- Classes will be dispersed in intervals from 1.30pm for Junior and Senior Infants and from 2.30pm for 3rd to 6th. Classes please ensure you do not enter the school grounds and please move towards the school gate to collect your child to avoid crossing the car park area.

- Adults are asked to avoid congregating in groups, and to follow social distancing guidelines at all times.
- The class teacher will bring the children to the playground area and release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them.
- All children and adults will exit the grounds abiding by social distancing guideline and are asked not to continue to congregate in the area.

- For children in 3rd – 6th Classes, the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately in order to minimise contact.
- Each pod will exit the building and leave the grounds through the designated gates.
- The classes will begin leaving at 2.30pm:

Parents of children who are walking or cycling must provide a written note to state it any changes to this arrangement we would kindly ask the parent to phone the office on the day in question.

Collection of Children during the School Day

All pupils must be signed out at the office by the person collecting the child when collecting a child early

If an adult must collect a child during the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

- Early collection will be facilitated at break times only:
 - Wait at the playground gate and the teacher on yard duty will assist you.
 - Alternatively, when the adult arrives at the school, they should phone the office to alert the Secretary that they have arrived. All absences can be keyed on Aladdin for early collection
 - It is essential that collections are restricted to break times as the doors and phone may not be manned at other times. We would ask parents not to collect older siblings when collecting younger siblings at home time unless they have an appointment or in case of family emergency, as this last hour of the school day is a critical learning time for the pupils in 1st to 6th Class
 - Please note: the break times for your class:
 - Small break 1: 10.50am-11.00am (Junior – 2nd Classes)
 - Small break 2: 11.05am – 11.15am (3rd to 6th Classes)

- Big Break 1: 12.00-12.30pm (Junior- 2nd Classes)
- Big break 2: 12.30 – 1.00pm (3rd to -6th Classes)
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

Parking

- All parents/guardians are asked to park carefully outside of the school grounds.
- All parents are asked to observe the entry/exit points. There is no pedestrian access through the yard.
- Your co-operation is essential here as it is our only way to avoid staggered drop off and collection times.

Notes about the School Day

- Pencil cases etc. will remain in school every day.
- All parents are asked to download the Aladdin App: It will also be used for permissions, notes etc. Homework will be assigned through SEE Saw there will be no homework Journal.
- No paper notes will be sent home. Communications will be via email, App notifications and text, and general reminders will be placed on social media. All parents must provide a working email address for communication
- Classes will develop home/school links using platforms like Seesaw and Google Classroom.
- Facebook will just be used as an information channel.
- Homework will continue through the SEE SAW platform

All classrooms have been altered to ensure a full return to school in line with DES reopening schools. Children will be seated in pods of 4 to 8 children. Children will remain in these pods. While children are not 1m apart within their pods they are 1m distance from the next pod, this is in line with DES classroom layouts.

Breaks will be staggered. There will be time allocated for eating in classrooms and for playing time. Each class will have a designated section of the yard to play in and will be supervised by teacher pods and Snas