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St. Patrick’s NS Covid-19 rEsponse Plan

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***St. Patrick’s National School***

***Covid-19 Policy Statement***

St.Patrick’s National School 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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***St. Patrick’s National School***

***Covid-19 Planning & Procedures for Returning to School***

***2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School***

The BOM of St. Patrick’s NS 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.

***2.1 Underlying Principles***

* 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 completely 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.

***2.2 Induction Training***

All new 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.

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.

**Department. This will be made available to all schools and staff in advance of school reopening.**

A national information campaign to support parents 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.

***2.3 Procedures for Returning to Work (RTW)***

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a Return to Work (RTW) form, which is available online or from the principal. A copy is attached also at Appendix 1.

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.

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*. This will be updated in line with public health advice.

*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 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 advice for this group is available from the HSE. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, which will be in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, will be updated by the Department of Education following consultation with management bodies and unions and a circular will issue to all schools.

***2.4 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.

*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;
* 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of lead worker representative: | ***Fiona Boyle*** |
| Name of deputy lead worker representative: | ***Jennifer O’Reilly*** |

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.

***2.5 Signage***

Schools will be required to display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

The Department will provide printed posters to schools, with age appropriate key health messages – hand washing, sneeze and cough etiquette etc.

Schools can then arrange to display the posters in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets.

Note: Signage is under development by the Department. This will be made available to all schools and staff in advance of school reopening.

***2.6 Making Changes to the School Layout***

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID19. Further information on how physical distancing can be used in the school environment is found in Section 3

**Changes to Classroom and School Layout and to School Routines**

The DES guidelines recognise that a common-sense approach is needed in our Primary schools. To that end, every effort will be made to limit interaction within classrooms, to limit contact between class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities.

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class Bubble is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until the children go home at the end of the school day.

**Doors and Windows**

Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces.

To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible, and will be opened while children are taking breaks in the playground.

Windows should be opened when children are singing as a group.

***2.7 Access to the School***

Access to the school building will be in line with agreed school procedures.

Arrangements for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents with 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.

***2.8 Contact Log***

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 should be maintained. The school will maintain a log of staff and pupil contacts. The contact log is available at Appendix 2.

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found at <https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-worksafely-protocol>

St. Patrick’s NS will ensure that all records and data will be maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts.

***3. Control Measures – To Prevent the Spread of Covid-19 in St. Patrick’s NS***

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. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student-student, teacher-teacher and teacher-student and must be managed in all settings.

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 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 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 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.*

*3.1 To Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19* St. Patrick’s NS will:

* Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms (details at Section 3.2);
* 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 a contact for 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 promptly;
* Advise staff, parents/guardians that if they have travelled to a country that is not on the green list, that they are obliged to notify the Principal upon their return and adhere to all Government guidelines.
* Ensure that staff and pupils know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (details at Section 6);
* Inform everyone entering the school building to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
* Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement and will be received at the main entrance door
* Maintain a Physical distancing (of 2m) between staff and visitors where possible.

***3.2 Know the Symptoms of Covid***

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. They are:

* High temperature
* Cough
* Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
* Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste
* Fatigue
* Aches and pains

Other uncommon symptoms of coronavirus include:

• sore throat

• headaches

• feeling sick or vomiting

• diarrhoea

***3.3 Respiratory Hygiene***

All members of the school community must 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.

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

***3.4 Hand Hygiene***

Staff and pupils should understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands. St. Patrick’s NS will promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the schools on how to wash your hands. Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).

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

Access to hand washing facilities will be provided 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 will be deployed at exit and entry points of schools and classrooms and care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risks of falls.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities will be provided in all toilets, and any food preparation areas. Hand washing facilities will be maintained in good condition and supplies of soap will be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them. Hot air dryers will be used in all toilets as 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 will be placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities. Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean). Evidence of effectiveness is best for alcohol based hand rubs but non-alcohol based hand rubs can be used too. When hand rubs/gels are being used in school care will be taken to ensure that pupils do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic. Children from infants to 2nd class should not have independent use of containers of alcohol gel.

***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.

The Department has arranged for a drawdown framework to be established to enable schools purchase hand-sanitisers and any other necessary PPE supplies for use in the school.

***3.5 Physical Distancing***

Physical distancing will be usefully applied in St. Patrick’s NS, 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. Care will be taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at times.

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.

However, where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m. They should 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

Further information will be provided in our Logistical Plan

***3.6 Use of PPE in St. Patrick’s NS***

Full 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.

For staff, face coverings, will be used when physical distancing of 1m cannot be maintained. Wearing a face covering will conceal facial expression and make communication difficult.

The use of a visor as an alternative may be considered 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.

***4. Hygiene and Cleaning in School***

The specific advice in relation to school cleaning is set out in the HPSC advice and will be covered in the induction training. This advice sets out the cleaning regime required to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected cases of COVID-19.

St. Patrick’s NS will be cleaned once per day and take particular care of the hygiene arrangements for hand washing and toilet facilities. Additional cleaning if available will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building. Staff will thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day. Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

There should be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

***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 should not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.
* Disinfection only works on things that are clean. When disinfection is required it is always as well as cleaning.
* Person assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household gloves and a plastic apron.
* Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine based product (household bleach).
* Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.

Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.

If a pupil or staff diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a canteen, play area or if they used the toilet or bathroom facilities, then the areas should be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant (as outlined in the HPSC interim health advice) as soon as is practically possible.

***Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities***

***Choir/Music Performance***

Choir practices/performances and music practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher level of risk and special consideration should be given to how they are held ensuring that the room is well-ventilated and the distance between performers is maintained.

***Sport Activities***

Schools should refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07253-return-to-sport-protocols>

***Shared Equipment***

*Toys*

All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis for example weekly. 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. When purchasing toys choose ones that are easy to clean and disinfect (when necessary). 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.

*Art*

Where possible pupils should be encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies.

Electronics – Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between use and consideration could be given to the use of wipeable covers for electronics to facilitate cleaning.

*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*

Where practical pupils should have their own books. Textbooks that are shared should be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Pupils should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

*Shared Sports Equipment*

Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

***5. Dealing with a Suspected Case of Covid-19***

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The following outlines how a school should deal with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the Staff room, behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

* If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately;
* Isolate the person and the Principal will accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times.
* Remember that the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room;
* If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;
* Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms if one is available. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
* Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;
* Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation if they cannot immediately go home. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should 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.
* If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used;
* If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
* Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
* Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved – (details at Section 7).
* 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.

***St. Patrick’s National School***

***Covid-19 Logistical Plan***

***The following plan is in place from 27th August 2021 and may be reviewed and updated at any given time***

**Assumptions**

* All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system
* The school is split into 4 groups or bubbles, with each classroom being a separate bubble.
* Within each class from 3rd to 6th, the children will be further divided into pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods whenever possible.
* Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms
* If your child displays symptoms of Covid-19 **do not** attend school, phone your doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;
* If your child/ family have returned from a country that is not on the green list please follow government guidelines.

**Usual School Hours**

9.20 – 2.00p.m. Infants

9.20 – 3.00p.m. First to Sixth

***6.1) Arrival & Dismissal***

**Drop Off and Collection**

* ***To help with reducing the amount of traffic around the school gates, children are asked to walk/cycle/scoot to school if it is at all possible.***
* Only parents/ family members or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 14 days where advised are allowed to drop off and collect children.
* Any parent/ family member/ carer who is in a high risk category should not drop off or collect children in order to protect themselves. (This of course is at the discretion of the individual parent/carer/grandparent’s discretion)

***Morning****:*

* All class teachers will be in their classrooms by 9.20a.m.
* All parents travelling by car must access the school by the **Community Centre Car Park** **only**.
* Parents are asked to ‘drop and go’ in the car park anytime between 9.20a.m. and 9.30a.m. **No parking will be allowed**.
* No child may leave their car until the reach the designated drop-off point.
* Children will make their way without delay, to their assigned door, outlined below. They will then walk directly into their classroom.
* Unfortunately, it will not be possible for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before/after school. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, the children may not come onto the school grounds before the school doors open at 9.10a.m.
* If for any reason, you need to accompany your child to the school gate, please park and remain in your car until all other children have entered the school and then present yourself to the staff member at the school gate.
* Children traveling by school bus will enter the school via the main front gate and then proceed to Entrance 1.

***Afternoon:***

***(Special arrangements will be put in place for Junior Infants for the first few days of the school year)***

* ***2p.m***. Class teacher will bring Junior & Senior Infants to the school gate. Parents are asked to drive in to the Community Centre car park, ‘pick up and go’ until 2.10p.m. No parking will be allowed.
* ***3.00p.m***. Children traveling by school bus will exit the school via Entrance 1 and the main front gate.

Class teachers will bring First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes to the school gate. Parents are asked to drive in, ‘pick up and go’. Supervision will be provided until 3.10p.m

* Parents who walk to the school to collect children are asked to maintain a social distance outside the school gate.

**This system will apply rain, hail or shine so please make sure that your child comes to school prepared for the weather!**

**Summarised Timetable for Drop Off and Pick Up**

9.10 All staff to be present to support arrival of pupils

9.20 Class teachers to be in their classrooms

SETs, SNAs and Principal to support arrival of pupils

9.20 – 9.30 Arrival of pupils – Stop, Drop, Go system. No adults to enter the school yard. Children to go straight to their classrooms line/ classroom upon arrival.

2.00 Stop, pick up, go – Junior & Senior Infants

3.00 Stop, pick up go – First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Teacher** | **Class** | **Entrance & Exit Point** |
| **Ms. O’Reilly** | **Infants** | **Entrance 3 – Yellow Entrance** |
| **Ms. Pierson** | **1st & 2nd Class** | **Entrance 2 – Blue Entrance** |
| **Ms. Sheridan** | **3rd & 4th Class** | **Main Entrance – Red Entrance** |
| **Ms. Boyle** | **5th & 6th Class** | **Entrance 4 – Orange Entrance** |

**6.2) Breaktimes**

The DES guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

* Each class bubble will have their own designated play area in the school playground, which they will access in turn from their own exit door.
* For the 11am break, pupils will eat at their desks from 10.50am-11am while tuition continues and play outdoors from 11am-11.10am.
* For Lunch break, pupils will eat in their classrooms from 12.30 – 12.40 pm and play outdoors from 12.40 – 1pm.

**6.3) Collection of Children during the School Day**

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply

* When the adult arrives at the school, they should either phone the office or use the intercom at the front door of the school to alert the office that they have arrived
* The child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff
* No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

**6.4) Lunches**

Parents must make sure that children bring their lunches to school to avoid adults having to come to the school during the day. Please remind your children not to share their food or drinks with other children.

Children will eat their lunches at their desks. In order to reduce the queuing at sanitising stations, we ask that pupils from 3rd-6th class bring a small bottle of hand sanitiser with their name on it, to leave on their desk which they will use to sanitise their hands before eating. These bottles will be refilled by the school. The teacher will administer sanitiser to pupils from Infants to 2nd class. Pupils may also, if they so wish, bring a packet of sanitising wipes to wipe their table before eating.

**Other Responsibilities for Parents**

* Parents must ensure that their child has his/her own hand sanitiser (3rd – 6th) and box of tissues which are **labelled** coming to school. (Please buy boxes of handkerchiefs as opposed to the small packets)
* Parents are to ensure that their child knows and uses the protocols around coughing/sneezing/use of tissues/hand sanitisers prior to returning to school.
* Parents must ensure that their child knows that they must use their own books, pens, pencils, etc. and as far as possible should not share with other pupils.
* Water bottles are to be filled at home.
* Pencils to be paired at home and copies ruled.
* Children are to go to the bathroom **before** they leave home for school daily.
* Children are to wash their hands  **before** leaving for school

**6.5) Uniforms**

There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms or tracksuits should be washed every day and this is probably not practical for most families.

We will follow our usual practice in relation to uniforms and tracksuits. Uniforms should be worn every day, except on P.E. days, or when otherwise requested by teachers. Children’s uniforms must be clean and washed regularly as a child may have coughed or sneezed into their sleeve as per coughing protocols.

As a school we strongly advise that children should wear their school uniforms or tracksuits **only for school related activities.**  Uniforms or tracksuits should be taken off straight after the child arrives home from school for the day. They should not be worn in shops, during after-school activities, etc.

**6.6) Children who may have symptoms**

* **Any child who is unwell with a fever, has a cold, influenza or infectious respiratory symptoms or is displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus is to stay at home**.   
  The child’s parent should contact their GP and seek their guidance on referral for coronavirus testing.
* Temperature testing will take place as is currently the practice for children who may be unwell. Parents will be contacted immediately and must remove the child if the temperature is over 37.5C.

**6.7) If there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in school.**

* The school will be contacted by local Public Health staff of the HSE to discuss the case. They will identify people who have been in contact with the person and advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken.
* An assessment will be undertaken by HSE public health staff.
* Advice on the management of children and staff who came into contact with the person will be based on this assessment.

Symptomatic people should self-isolate and arrange to get tested for COVID-19. Confirmed COVID-19 cases should continue to self-isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days and should not return to school until they are advised that it is safe to do so. Close contacts of a confirmed case (their partner/family member should be notified and go home if at work and restrict their movements for 14 days. They should not attend work during that time.

**6.8) Children in High Risk Groups**

Parents should seek advice from their GP/Specialist if they think their child is in a high risk group. They must make an informed decision if it is safe for their child to return to school on August 28th/31st . They should inform the principal of the advice given.

The Minister of Health recently announced that the flu vaccine will be available free to all children aged between 2 and 12 in the coming weeks. The vaccine will be given as drops on the tongue. We are awaiting further information on this and will let you know as soon as we get an update. It is more than likely that the vaccine will be given in the schools so as to avoid thousands of families descending on GPs.

**6.9) Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants**

Staff members (particularly Learning Support Teachers and SNA) can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

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 as far as possible, within the confines of a bubble.

* 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.
* The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending.

**6.10) Physical Distancing**

The DES recognises that the extent to which decreasing interaction is possible in a primary school will depend on the school setting and a common-sense approach is required recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between pupils.

**Junior Infants to Second Class**

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, is not a pre-requisite to reopening a primary or special school for all pupils.

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**Third Class to Sixth Class**

Children from Third Class to Sixth Class will be arranged in Pods within their Class Bubbles, with a maximum of 6 pupils per Pod. As far as possible, each Pod will be at least 1 metre distance from the next Pod.All unnecessary furniture will be removed from these classrooms to create as much space as possible.

**Corridors**

Briefly passing someone in a corridor is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions. We will observe our usual practice of keeping to the left when in the corridors.

**Additional Measures to Limit Interactions**

Children will go straight to their classrooms from the yard and will not congregate in the corridors or hallways.

While we will all be delighted to see each other again**, hand shaking and hugging will not be permitted**.

**Office**

Our school has set up online banking to minimise the amount of cash that needs to be handled. Parents/Guardians are asked to co-operate in helping to keep school staff safe by arranging for online payments through the school office.

Children should not be sent to the Secretary’s Office or to the Reception area to deliver messages.

As far as possible, staff members should not enter the Office area and should speak with the Secretary at the Reception area.

**Photocopying**.

Any staff member who uses the photocopier should clean it down after use with the wipes provided.

**ICTs**

A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICTs. Devices should be cleaned after use and before they are returned to the charging trolley.

**Physical Education and P.E. Equipment**

Physical Education lessons will take place outside when the weather allows. Staff members and pupils may take additional breaks outside during the school day.

**6.11) Teaching and Learning**

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.

Each child will be a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure you that staff will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2020/2021 school year.

The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum guidelines for us, and we ask you to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during the return to school.

**Supporting the Learning of Children who Cannot Attend School**

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, the class teacher (and/or the Special Education Teacher, where relevant) will provide work to support the child’s learning at home and this will be shared with parents/guardians.

The majority of parents have already provided an email address at which the school can contact them to support Home Learning. This will be especially important if the school, or parts of the school have to close due to HSE advice. Parents, if you have not already done so, please email [gownans@gmail.com](mailto:gownans@gmail.com) and you will be added to the Contact List for Home Learning.

**6.12) Wellbeing of the School Community**

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff.

These are promoting:

• A sense of safety

• A sense of calm

• A sense of belonging and connectedness to school

• A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy

• A sense of hope

Our usual practice is to provide support to pupils based on what is known as the Continuum of Support. This is a tiered system that provides Whole School and Classroom Support for all pupils, additional School Support for some pupils, and School Support plus extra targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

**APPENDIX 1**

**St. Patrick’s NS**

**Pre-Return to School Questionnaire COVID-19**

This questionnaire must be completed by staff at least 3 days in advance of returning to work. If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to school.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Questions** | **YES** | **NO** |
| 1. | Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu like symptoms now or in the past 14 days? |  |  |
| 2. | Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days? |  |  |
| 3. | Have you been advised by the HSE that you are you a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? |  |  |
| 4. | Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time? |  |  |
| 5. | Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time? |  |  |
| 6. | Have you been advised by your doctor that you are in the very high risk group?  If yes, please liaise with your doctor and Principal re return to work. |  |  |

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test. Please note: The organisation is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 2**

***St. Patrick’s NS***

***Contact Tracing Log***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of School** | *St. Patrick’s National School* | | | | | **School Contact Person** | | *Kate Crossan* | |
| **Address of School** | *Loch Gowna,*  *Co. Cavan* | | | | | **For Queries only:**  **Phone No** | |  | |
| **Email for** | |  | |
| **Name of Visitor** |  | | | | | | | | Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal?  Yes 🞏 No 🞏 |
| **Date of Visit** | \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_ /\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | **Time** | **Entry  to school** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ am 🞏 pm 🞏 | | | | | **Exit  from School** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ am 🞏 pm 🞏 |
| **Visitor Status** | Contractor 🞏 | Parent 🞏 | | Other 🞏 Please complete: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | |
| **Contact details of visitor** | Company Name  (if applicable) |  | | | | | | | |
| Address |  | | | | | | | |
| Contact No. |  | | | Email Address | |  | | |
| Reason for Visit |  | | | | | | | |
| **Who the visitor met (separate line required for each person the visitor met)** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Name of Person visited** | | | | | | | | | **Length of time spent with each person in the school** |
|  | | | | | | | | |  |
|  | | | | | | | | |  |
|  | | | | | | | | |  |