

The following Response Plan is a live document and will be reviewed and revised as guidance is issued and as the need arises. Board Members, Parents, Staff and pupils will be made aware of any changes as they arise.

The aim of this Covid-19 Response Plan is to minimise the risk of Covid-19 for staff, pupils, families and the wider community while recognising the importance of education for the health and wellbeing of pupils and society as a whole.

This document focuses on the practical steps that we can take as a school community to minimise the risk of the introduction of infection into schools while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time.

### **Physical Distancing**

We are constantly working on upgrading our procedures and routines within the school to ensure that there is as much Physical Distancing as is possible in our building. We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

**Increasing Separation.** This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. While DES guidance does not require pupils from Junior Infants to Second Class to social distance we have attempted to maximise the layout of the Junior classroom so that pupils are sitting 1m apart. From 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class a revised layout has been devised to ensure pupils sit at least 1m apart.

Our whole school will be referred to as a bubble. Within the bubble, children will be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children (normally 4/5) who will sit and work together. Pods will enable pupils to do group work and benefit from peer assisted learning in a safe environment. Pods will be used for Aistear, group work, discussion, project work, oral language activities etc. Pupils within a pod may share Art and Craft materials during Art lessons.

### **Ventilation**

Department of Education guidance 'Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools' will be adhered to.

Increased ventilation measures will be in place. Classroom windows will be partially opened when classrooms are in use. Windows will be opened as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (eg. Breaktime, lunchtime (assuming not in use) and at the end of the school day). While additional heating will be on, staff and pupils are advised wear additional layers of clothing as classrooms may be colder than we are used to. We will make every effort to strike a balance between good ventilation and a comfortable working environment.

### One Way System

We will be operating a One-Way System through the school.

The Front Door will be for entry to the school building only.

The Side Door will be for exit from the building only.

### Cleaning

Our school will be cleaned daily. Our cleaner has completed the DES return to school induction training on the requirements for cleaning schools and has been provided with a checklist and all the necessary cleaning materials.

The interior of the school will be fogged with disinfectant daily by our cleaner after the cleaning routine has been completed. Toys and play items in the junior room will also be fogged on a regular basis.

### Safe School Attendance

While all children will be welcome at school, we would remind parents that, where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms, they should not be sent to school.

#### **Children who should not attend school**

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school -

- Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who display any signs or symptoms of Covid-19. Contact the family doctor to arrange a test.
- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children who have travelled from other countries - parents should consult and follow latest Government advices in relation to foreign travel.
- Children who are generally unwell

Staff and pupils are advised to co-operate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and to follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the 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 learning support teacher, where relevant) will share suggested activities with parents to support the child's learning at home. (see Remote Learning Plan)

**Common symptoms of coronavirus include:**

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms of coronavirus (which includes the DELTA variant). They are:

- a fever (high temperature - 37.5 degrees Celsius or above).
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change in your sense of smell or taste - this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
- Fatigue
- Aches and Pains

**Other uncommon symptoms of coronavirus include:**

- sore throat
- headaches
- runny or stuffy noses
- feeling sick or vomiting
- diarrhoea

Symptoms may be subject to change so regular review of the HSE Website is advised.

Upon arrival at school children's temperatures will be taken using an infrared digital thermometer in an effort to detect and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Parents should wait until it has been confirmed that their child can proceed into their classroom. Children with a temperature of 37.5 or above will be sent home.

Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: -

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html#>

**Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**

Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following are the procedures will be implemented:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by a member of staff. The staff member will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic child at all times
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
- An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
- The school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist them by calling their GP.
- The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with

the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided

- If the child is well enough to go home, the school will arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible, and advise them to inform their GP 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, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick child is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

### **Hygiene Procedures**

Teachers will revise specific lessons to help make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and sanitisation and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. Teachers will continue to remind and reinforce this message. We would be grateful if parents could also emphasise safe hygiene procedures with the children at home.

Please ensure your children have washed their hands thoroughly before leaving home in the morning.

Children will be asked to sanitise their hands in the morning before entering the school. They will wash/sanitise their hands on entering the classroom, before eating, after breaks, after using the toilet, after coughing/sneezing, before and after Aistear and as required.

Seven hand sanitising units are available for use. Soap dispensers and disposable paper towels are available in all classrooms, toilet areas and the office. Cloth reusable towels will not be available.

### **Visitors**

If at all possible, we request you not to come into the school building unless it is absolutely essential. We appreciate that dropping off our Junior Infant pupils to their classroom is essential for the first week or so, but for other pupils please drop off in the school car park.

If you wish to speak to one of the teachers, please phone the office and we will arrange to call you back at a time suitable to you and us. If you must meet us in person, we would ask you to make an appointment through the office so that a suitable time and space can be made available.

Only essential visitors will be admitted to the school with prior approval from the principal.

All visitors, including parents, will be asked to complete the Contact Tracing Log for Visitors.

### 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 side door by a member of staff.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

### Drop-off and Collection Routines

We would ask all parents to familiarise themselves with the following drop-off and collection routines for the safe delivery and collection of pupils from school.

It is imperative that

- There is no congregating in the school car park. Adults do not come within 2m of each other
- parents do not try to have meetings with members of staff in the playground at drop-off and collection times - meetings between parents and teachers can only take place by prior arrangement.
- all parents adhere to the drop-off and collection plans as outlined below

#### **Drop-off Plan**

Pupils may be dropped off from 9.10 am to 9.25 am. We would ask that all pupils arrive at school by 9.25am so that we have 5 mins before teaching begins for hand washing.

#### **Collection Plan**

Our Staggered Collection Plan will be as follows:

<b>3pm Pick Up</b>	<b>3.05pm Pick Up</b>
Moffett Family	Greacen Family
Lang Family	Mc Cullagh Family
Mc Guirk Family	Mc Kee Family
Gilliland Family	Gray Family
Niblock Family	

### **Breaktimes**

Our whole school will take their breaktimes together as normal. All pupils will be asked to wash/sanitise their hands prior to eating. Classroom windows/doors will be opened to allow ventilation of the classrooms. All pupils will be asked to wash/sanitise their hands before returning to the classroom. Teaching Staff will sanitise their desk / work station at each break. Windows will be opened during breaktime for ventilation purposes.

### **Lunch**

We have installed 4 picnic benches and when the weather permits, we will bring the children outside to eat lunch. This will give them a longer fresh air break and allow for ventilation of the classrooms. Picnic benches will also be sanitised after use.

We are asking all pupils to bring their wrappers and lunch waste home in their lunchbox to help keep our school litter free and in an effort to reduce visits to the bin which potentially could become a congested area at lunchtime.

Each pupil should bring their own named water bottle. Water bottles may be refilled at breaktime or lunchtime. We can no longer give pupils cups from the office.

Classroom windows will be opened during lunchtime for ventilation purposes.

### **Learning Support**

In keeping with our Special Education Policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal.

- 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 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class receive support in the SET room, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs in the SET room will be wiped clean in between different groups attending.

### **Tin Whistle**

Tin whistle tuition will resume for pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> class upwards every Thursday. During the lessons the classroom will be well ventilated and distance between the pupils will be maintained.

### **School Uniform**

Pupils should wear their normal school uniform to school every day. We recommend that, on colder days, children wear an additional layer of clothing under their school polo shirt to help them stay warm during class as windows will be open.

### **Stationery / Pencil Cases**

Each pupil should bring the stationery items they require in their pencilcase on a daily basis. All items should be clearly named. All pencils should be sharpened and ready to help prevent unnecessary trips to the bin. All pupils should have their own colours. Every pupil should have a named glue stick. This year gluesticks will be collected and stored in school. We will send home a note when a gluestick or any other stationery item needs to be replaced.

**Under no circumstances will pupils be permitted to share, lend or borrow stationery items from other pupils.**

If a pupil forgets an item, they should just let the teacher know and we will provide what they need. We will not be cross, anyone can forget!

### **Homework**

Homework pack given on Monday. Written homework can be returned the following day to the Homework Return box. Spelling and tables workbooks can be returned on Friday. Reading books should be brought in daily and will be changed as necessary. All books will be placed in quarantine for 72 hrs prior to being corrected or re-issued.

### **Cloakrooms**

Pupils will be asked to put their jackets/coats, gloves, scarves etc in their schoolbag during the school day. Alternatively pupils may put their coat in a plastic bag on a hanger in the cloakroom. Pupils will not be permitted to hang their coats on the back of their chair as this is a potential trip hazard.

Each pupil with football boots should bring a named shoebox in which they will be stored in the cloakroom.

The cloakroom must be kept tidy at all times.

Only one family will be permitted in the cloakroom at a time.

### **Shared Learning Resources**

An individual pouch with playdoh will be provided for each pupil in Infants. Toys in the Junior room will be fogged on a regular basis. I-pads, laptops and net books will be cleaned after each use. Games will be placed in quarantine after use. Each pupil will have their own named textbooks which will be stored in their basket, they will not need to share books. Library books can be borrowed but must be placed in the Returned Library Books Box rather than to the library shelf, where they will be in quarantine for at least 72 hours. Pupils in the Junior classes taking part in Aistear will be asked to wash their hands before and afterwards.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays in Drumacruttin a rather special and we refuse to allow COVID-19 to spoil our fun!!

We cannot allow parents to continue to send in cakes, buns and traybakes on birthdays, however, the staff will provide birthday treats. We will put together a birthday treat box with a selection of mini bars and mini packets of sweets for the children to help them celebrate their special day with their friends!

### **PPE**

Teaching staff have been advised by DES to wear face coverings where 2m social distancing cannot be maintained during the school day. All staff have been provided with medical grade face masks, staff may also wear a visor with the mask. Staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves and face masks.

### **Teacher Absence and Substitution**

In the event that teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class. If a substitute teacher is not available we will make every effort to cover the class using the staff in the school.



## Summary

- Pupils will be organised into pods.
- We will operate a one-way system through the school.
- Children should not come to school if they have respiratory symptoms or are generally unwell.
- Pupils' temperatures will be taken upon arrival at school.
- Parents should wait until they know whether their child can proceed to their classroom before driving off.
- Any pupil with a temperature of 37.5 or higher must go home.
- Pupils and staff displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 during the school day will be placed in isolation and then go home. A member of staff will accompany and stay with a child displaying symptoms.
- Hand washing and sanitisation will become a very important part of our school day. Please practise good hand washing procedure with your child.
- Visitors will only be admitted with the prior approval of the principal.
- Parents must make an appointment to talk to or see their child's teacher.
- All visitors, including parents, must complete the Contact Tracing Log for Visitors.
- Children must be signed out if they need to leave during the school day.
- Please adhere to our Drop-off and Collection routine.
- The interior of the school will be fogged daily, when cleaning is complete.
- Shared Learning Resources will be placed in quarantine and/or fogged regularly.
- Pupils should bring home their lunch waste.
- Pupils should bring a named water bottle.
- SET room will be wiped clean between different groups attending.
- Tin whistle lessons will resume for pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> class upwards.
- Pupils should wear their normal school uniform daily.
- Pupils should bring everything they need in their pencilcases daily.
- Homework and reading books will be placed in quarantine before marking.
- Each child should store their own coat, hat, gloves, scarves etc in their own schoolbag or a named bag on a hanger in the toilet area.
- Pupils with football boots must bring a sturdy, named shoe box in which to store footwear.
- Pupils and their classmates will get a birthday treat, provided by the school, on their birthday.
- Staff will wear appropriate PPE when listening to reading, when 2m social distancing cannot be observed, when administering First Aid and when supervising a child in isolation.
- If a teacher is unable to attend school every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher.
- Classroom windows will be partially opened during classtime and fully opened during break and lunch time for ventilation purposes.
- CO2 monitors will be installed in the classrooms to help monitor ventilation.