

# Plan for The Re-opening of Scoil Mhuire Junior

## Children and Staff who should not attend school

Children and Staff in any one of the following categories should not attend school –

- Children and staff who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children and staff who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children and staff who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children and staff 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 and staff with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children and staff who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days
- Children and staff who are generally unwell

## Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make an 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.

## Procedures

- All children will return to school and classes will operate within a bubble system, interaction between children from different bubbles will not happen during school time; staff movement between bubbles will be kept to a minimum.
- In keeping with DES and HSE Guidelines children from Junior Infants to Second Classes are not expected to socially distance from their peers; we will minimise interaction as much as possible, maintaining as much distance as possible between children and their peers and staff and to maximise use of the spaces available to us. Classroom furniture and the teacher's desk will be spread out as much as possible within the room and excess furniture will be removed where necessary.
- The school has 18 separate entrances and therefore the need for staggered start times is not deemed essential.
- All children will enter and exit school through their classroom doors. All children must sanitise their hands prior to entering their classroom. Hand sanitiser will be provided at all entry points and also inside every classroom.
- All staff have been allocated doors through which they enter and exit the building.
- All will walk on the right hand side, following floor markings, throughout the building.
- The school is split into 4 groups for yard time, each group containing a whole class level, Group 1 Second Classes, Group 2 First Classes, Group 3 Senior Infants and Group 4 Junior Infants.
- The school has two yards, one to the front and one to the back of the building. Only one class group (Junior In/Senior In/1st/2nd) will be present on each yard at a time and each class bubble will have a separate section on the yard in order to ensure children from different bubbles do not mix.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms.
- All class bubbles have separate sinks and hand-dryers; all sinks are now either push tap or lever tap and soap is available at all sinks.
- In keeping with health and safety advice, individual hand sanitisers for children are not permitted.
- An enhanced cleaning regime has been put in place.

## **Arrival at school**

- School doors will open at 8.45am and children will be supervised.
- The school day starts as usual at 8.55am.
- Children should not arrive earlier than 8.45am.
- Children will not be allowed to play on the school grounds before and after school. If children arrive before 8.45am they will not be allowed to enter the school and they will have to line up at their class doors.
- The Parents Room will remain closed to groups until further notice.
- Ground markings will indicate spaces for adults to stand to ensure social distancing.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building through the classroom doors at any time.

## **Breaktimes**

- There will be 1 class grouping on each yard at any one time: Junior infants, Senior Infants, 1st, 2nd.
- Each yard will be divided into 4 spaces to ensure class bubbles do not mix on the yard.
- There will be increased supervision on the yard.

## **End of School Day**

Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait in the vicinity of the classroom exit on the ground markings provided.

## **Collection of children during the school day**

- If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, the parent should report to the main office. The details on the sign-out sheet will be filled in by staff only. The glass window shall remain closed at all times.

- Adults will not be admitted to the building unless wearing a face covering and should use the hand sanitiser provided.
- We would ask that adults wear a face covering at all times in the school yard.

### **Shared areas**

- Children will not circulate throughout the building unless absolutely necessary.
- The general office is out of bounds for children.
- Only specified staff members should enter the office.
- The staffroom will be limited to 7 in the seating area and 1 in the kitchen area at one time. Please see Covid 19 Staff Break Time Policy.
- The photocopying room will be limited to one staff member at a time. It is out of bounds for children. Staff members should use the hand sanitiser provided. Laminating and book covering equipment can be removed from the room for prolonged individual use.

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

- Adults will be asked to limit conversations with the teacher at the classroom door to essential messages only. The adult will be asked to remain 2m from the teacher.
- In general, communications between parents and teachers should be carried out by phone call, email or Aladdin Connect.
- Face to face meetings cannot be facilitated for the foreseeable future.

## **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:
  1. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and asked to come and collect the child.
  2. The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area by a member of staff. (Room 26 / Science Room / New Build private room) 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. The staff member will wear PPE, mask, visor, gloves and apron.
  3. 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.

## **Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in the School**

If the school is notified that a person in the school community has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19, public health advice will be sought and followed.

## **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 a special educational needs teacher, will support the child's learning at home.

## **Individual Equipment**

The school will provide each child with an individual pack containing pencils, colours etc. The pack will be labelled with his/her name.

Each child will be provided with a basket in which will be stored his/her books, copies, library books, whiteboard, etc.

## **Shared Equipment**

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared. Cleaning of such shared equipment will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

### **1. Shared equipment within the classroom bubble:**

- Library books:

Each child will be given a selection of books for a period of time for his/her own individual use. After use, they will be kept out of circulation for a minimum of three days.

- Shared resources (eg maths equipment):

Where individual items are used (eg clocks), they will be stored out of use for 3 days before being used by another child or each item will be cleaned after use by the teacher.

Resources can also be stored for the period of use in a child's individual basket.

Where resources are shared by more than one child at a time (eg 2D shapes), they will be cleaned thoroughly after use.

- Individual whiteboards:

Whiteboards will be assigned to individual children or cleaned after every use if being shared.

- Toys:

Soft toys will not be used for the foreseeable future.

All other toys will be cleaned weekly by teachers.

Sharing of toys between groups of children will be kept to a minimum.

- Interactive whiteboard:

When children are using the interactive pen, the pen will be wiped after each child's use.

- Shared playdoh/modelling materials will not be used.
- Distribution and collection of all resources will be carried out by adults only.

## **2. Shared equipment between different class bubbles:**

- PE and Science Equipment equipment will be assigned to a class bubble for a set period of time and either remain out of circulation for 3 days or cleaned thoroughly by staff members after use.
- School tablets will be covered with a protective screen and will be disinfected after use by the adult who has finished with them.
- Lift-off equipment will be assigned to each class bubble and will not be shared between bubbles.

## **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 interaction with only one class bubble at a time.

Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher/SNA in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.

The tables and chairs in Special Education Teacher's rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending and children will have individual work packs.

## **Physical Education**

Where possible, PE should take place outdoors. If the PE hall is being used by class groupings, all windows must remain opened.

Hand sanitiser should be used when entering and leaving the PE hall.

Common touch surfaces will be cleaned daily.

## **Teacher Absence and Substitution**

In the event that a 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, a member of the SEN Team will be asked to teach the class. It is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classrooms. In exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible for the class to attend school that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

## **Extra-curricular Activities**

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities will be explored. However, it would not be recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time.

## **Off-site events**

School swimming lessons will be suspended for the foreseeable future.

No other off-site activities will take place for the foreseeable future.

## **Staff meetings**



Staff meetings will be held using a combination of whole-staff meetings in the PE hall, small group meetings and video conferencing.

## **PPE**

While it is not envisaged that PPE will be worn by staff in general, staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves, face masks and aprons if appropriate.

All adults who can not maintain a 2m distance will wear a face covering.

## **Restricted Access**

Access to the building is for essential personnel only.

All adult visitors to the school must wear a face mask and use the hand sanitiser provided at the entrance point.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 14/08/2020.

The policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as further directives from the DES and HSE are received and as the working of specific details become a reality when children and staff return to school.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson Board of Management