

# **ST. CONAIRE'S N.S. SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN**

## **PARENT INFORMATION**

**PARTIAL SCHOOL REOPENING MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021 &  
AFTER**

Board of Management, Principal and Staff of  
ST. CONAIRE'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

## **ST. CONAIRE'S NS COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN**

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Please Note: This is a plan designed to adapt our school to Covid-19. It may be reviewed as required by circumstances.

This plan was reviewed and adapted in line with current DES guidelines, February 24<sup>th</sup> 2021.

## **1) Introduction**

As a school community, we look forward to re-opening St. Conaire's NS. on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 on a full-time basis in keeping with public health and Department of Education and Skills guidelines. Our school will operate under new norms and as a school community we will have to adapt quickly to new and revised practices and procedures, many of which are detailed in this policy.

St. Conaire's NS has a duty of care to make every effort to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all members of our school community. It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the co-operation of all members of the school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of Covid-19 being introduced to St. Conaire's NS. This is an all-day, every-day challenge for staff, parents, pupils, and management. All members of the school community, irrespective of circumstance, are expected to adhere fully to the procedures we have put in place to minimize the risk posed by Covid-19. 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. As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all stakeholders will enable the school to reduce the risk of infection as much as possible.

Each and every individual must play their part. We all have an obligation to do what we can to ensure the safety of our school community. Breaches of procedure by any individual will not be tolerated. Covid-19 poses a serious risk to us all. It is an onerous task opening the school, but the real challenge is to keep it open. Ní neart go cur le chéile.

## **2) Aims**

Through the implementation of the practices and procedures as outlined in this policy our school community aims to:

- Do everything practical and possible to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our school.
- Reduce the likelihood of the spread of Covid-19, insofar as possible, within our school if introduced.
- Detail for all members of our school community how our school will reopen for all students on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August and what the operation of our school will look like to be sustainable in a COVID-19 context.
- Balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning.

### **3) School COVID-19 Policy**

#### **COVID-19 Policy Statement**

St. Conaire's NS. 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.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Conaire's N.S. on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Signed on behalf of the board of Management by

Chairperson: *Martin Moore*

Date: August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Date: February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

#### **4) Know the Symptoms of Covid-19**

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

#### **5) Control Measures – To Prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID 19 in St. Conaire’s NS.**

As a school community we must do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our 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 the Covid-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents and visitors, as far as possible, within the school environment. These control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an on-going 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.**

### **Practices and Procedures**

#### **5.1) Promoting Awareness:**

- All members of our school community will actively promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms
- School staff are encouraged, in line with the additions required to the school’s response plan, to download the HSE Covid-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting. (February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 addition)
- Signage informing members of the school community of Covid-19 and the need for social distancing are displayed at all access points to the school.
- All members of the school community will embed in pupils the need for appropriate respiratory hygiene and hand hygiene

- Staff members will thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.
- The cloths will be washed and replaced daily.

## 5.2) Attendance at School

- **Travel from abroad: if any pupil has travelled to a country not on the Green List published by the government, they must not attend school until 14 days after their return, as passengers from any location not on this list are asked by the government to [restrict their movements](#) for 14 days.**
- Members of the school community who display symptoms of Covid-19 **MUST NOT ATTEND or VISIT OUR SCHOOL** and should immediately phone their doctor and follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Members of the school community **MUST NOT ATTEND OR VISIT OUR SCHOOL** if they have been identified by the HSE as a contact for person with COVID-19 and must follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.
- Staff and pupils must not attend school if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- Staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school must promptly bring this fact to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, as appropriate.
- Pupils returning to school on March 1<sup>st</sup> or after must have a signed Declaration of Wellbeing for their return to school. This will be distributed to parents/guardians on Aladdin.
- Staff are required to cooperate with any Public Health personnel and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in the school. (February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 update)
- Staff will be required to undergo any Covid-19 testing that may be required in the school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health. February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 update)
- Staff and pupils must know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school as detailed in Section 8 of the DES Guidelines.
- Everyone entering the school building must perform hand hygiene using hand sanitiser provided at each entrance.
- **Visits to the school by all persons other than staff and pupils will be by appointment only.** Appointments must be arranged in advance through the school office, by phone on 061 364694

or by e mail at conaires@gmail.com . **The only entry to the school for adults is through the door opposite Theresa's office where you must press the buzzer for access.**

- Each visitor to the school will be required to complete a Contract Tracing Log, irrespective of the duration of the visit.
- Each visitor to the school will be required to wear a face covering irrespective of the duration of the visit.
- The only exceptions to this are:
  - On Monday 31<sup>th</sup> August and Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 Junior infant starting time will be moved to 9.30 a.m. in order to allow parents accompany pupils to school .Parents may enter the yard but must meet the teacher at the door of the classroom
  - The children in Senior Infants may be accompanied to the entry door of the school by a parent for the first two mornings. Under no circumstances are parents to enter the school building with their child. There after the children should part from their parent at the school gates.
  - In the case of pupils with additional educational needs where the school advises that the pupil be accompanied, ONE parent/designated person can accompany pupils in these instances for assembly and dismissal. Parents/designated persons MUST practice physical distancing of 2m.
- Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between staff and all visitors to the school.
- Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between all adults when on school grounds.

### **5.3) Respiratory Hygiene**

All members of our school community MUST practice and actively promote good respiratory hygiene both at home and at school as this will help protect people around us from viruses such as flu and Covid-19.

#### **Good respiratory hygiene entails:**

- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- Disposing of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.
- Pedal bins have been purchased for all rooms/toilets. These bins will be emptied at regular intervals throughout the day.

### **5.4) Hand Hygiene**

All members of our school community MUST practice and actively promote effective hand hygiene at home and at school.

- Staff and pupils must understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.
- Hand sanitisers are installed, with appropriate signage, at each entry point, at the entrance to each classroom and at appropriate locations throughout the school.
- Posters are displayed at each hand washing station throughout the school showing effective hand washing technique.
- HSE guidelines on handwashing are available at:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

- All persons entering the school building must perform hand hygiene using the hand sanitisers provided.

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

### **Frequency of Hand Hygiene**

Pupils and staff **MUST** perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing outdoors;
- After certain sporting activities when equipment may be used
- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.

**Safety note: Alcohol-based sanitizer must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.**

### **5.5) Physical Distancing**

- Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19.
- Physical distancing will be usefully applied in our school allowing for some flexibility when needed. It will be applied in a practical way that recognises that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing in our school will look different across the various ages and stages of learning.



- It is 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, especially 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.
- **All adult visitors to the school, as scheduled by appointment, MUST maintain a 2m distance from school staff.**
- Our school community is committed to the two principles of physical distancing, namely, increasing separation and decreasing interaction as a means of minimising the risk of the introduction of Covid-19 to our school.

#### 5.6) Increasing Separation

To minimise contact between pupils, insofar as possible, the school will operate the following procedures for arrival and dismissal. SOCIAL DISTANCING MUST BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES.

**Arrival and Departure:** Pupils living east of the school are advised to enter and exit the school grounds via the Cronan Gate, while pupils living West of the school should enter and exit the grounds via the back gate near Wolfe Tones car park. Pupils from first to sixth classes should enter the grounds by themselves and go straight to their classrooms via the following doors:

Arrival and Dismissal Points	Classes
<b>Door 8</b> at the School Assembly Hall	Ms. Bulfin (6 <sup>th</sup> class) Mr. McNamara (6 <sup>th</sup> class) Ms. McNerney/Mrs Glynn (5 <sup>th</sup> class)
<b>Door 3</b> at the Cronan side of the school	Múinteoir Olivia (Senior Infants) Múinteoir Irene (Senior Infants) – <b>*collect from door 6 at home time (between staffroom and Múinteoir Róisín's room)</b>

<b>Door 6</b> beside Múinteoir Roisín's Room and Staffroom	Ms. Moore (1 <sup>st</sup> Class) Ms. Finucane (1 <sup>st</sup> Class)
Teacher's own <b>Classroom Door</b>	Múinteoir Noelle Door 4 (Junior Infants) Múinteoir Roisin Door 5 (Junior Infants) Ms. Ní Mhuiris Door 9 (2 <sup>nd</sup> class) Mr. Glynn Door 10 (4 <sup>th</sup> class)
<b>Door 8</b> Beside Theresa's office at the back of the school	Ms. Quinn Door 8 (2 <sup>nd</sup> class) Ms. Greene Door 8 (5 <sup>th</sup> class)
<b>New Building</b> Classroom Door 11 (fire door) Main door of New Building Door 12 Classroom Door 13	Mr. O' Connell Door 11 (3 <sup>rd</sup> class) Ms. Faherty Door 12 (4 <sup>th</sup> class) Mr. Pilkington Door 13 at side of building (3 <sup>rd</sup> class)

## **DOORS WILL BE CLEARLY NUMBERED.**

### **Arrival Times:**

All gates will open at 8.40 a.m. Please do not drop any pupil before 8.40 a.m. Please observe social distancing requirements at all times.

From March 1<sup>st</sup>, Junior and Senior Infants will have staggered departure times from 1:05 pm, 1:15 pm, 1:25 pm and 1:35 pm.

**All staff will be in their classrooms or their designated supervision point at 8.40 a.m. to ensure the smooth return to school for all our pupils.**

All classes from 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> will finish at 2.35pm. The class teacher will accompany the class to their exit door. Children will be encouraged to depart promptly.

### **Parental responsibilities on arrival and collection:**

- **Parents must arrive on time for dropping off and collecting their child. The doors will be closed once the bell goes.** Late entrants will have to enter the school via the front door opposite Theresa, our secretary's office.

- Only parents 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 can drop off and collect children.
- Any parent 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)
- Parents must not congregate in groups or stand around chatting.
- Parents must ensure their child remains at their side at all times and that their child does not interact with other children.
- Under no circumstances are parents to linger outside the school gates after the child has been handed over but are to leave immediately.
- The junior and senior infants will go home at the normal time exiting through different doors.
- At arrival and departure times, social distancing is to be maintained by children and parents.
- Under no circumstances are parents and carers to gather in groups while waiting for the bell to sound
- Parents/visitors who enter the school grounds must wear a face covering

## **6) Decreasing Interaction: 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.

### **Junior Infants to Second Class**

It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors so there is no requirement for children from Junior Infants to Second Class to maintain a physical distance within their

Class Bubble. However, we have still divided these classes into smaller groups for added protection (Pods)

### **Third Class to Sixth Class**

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

**The teacher's desk will be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks.**

### **Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants**

Staff members (particularly Support Teachers and SNAs) 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, 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 (class)

- 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.

### **Corridors and Stairwells**

- Adults briefly passing each other in a hall are very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if they do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.
- We will observe our usual practice of keeping to the right when on the stairs and in the corridors.
- No pupil is allowed in the corridors of the building unless accompanied by a teacher or SNA.

### **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 allowed.

### **Ventilation**

- 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. All staff will be made aware of Department of Education and Skills guidance on good ventilation practices – this has been shared on Aladdin on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The document is available at the following link: [Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools](#)

**Signage:** Social distancing signs have been erected in the grounds, at the main gates and at the entrances to both buildings. We have also put social distancing signs on the corridors and outside both offices and staffroom

### **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.
- Please make sure your child is self-sufficient i.e. they can open/peel any lunch/drink you pack for them. Please avoid any drinks that require a straw. Drinks with straws are not permitted in junior or senior infant classrooms as the children require help to open them and teachers will not be in a position to offer this help during the pandemic.
- Please provide your child with a reusable drink bottle rather than a plastic bottle and make sure that your they have enough drinks to last them throughout the day as we will not be in a position to refill drinks bottles.
- Children will eat their lunches at their desks. No food will be allowed onto the yard.

### **Break times:**

- To avoid overcrowding on the yard break times will be staggered.
- The classes will be divided into Group A (Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> class) Group B (3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>)
- Break Times:

Group A: Junior Infants to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Group B: 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Class
For both breaks classes go to the <u>yard first and eat afterwards</u>	For both breaks classes <u>eat first and go to the yard afterwards</u>
<b>Small break</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10:45-10:55 Go to yard</li> </ul>	<b>Small break</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10:50-11:00 Wash hands &amp; eat</li> <li>• 11:05 -11:15 Go to yard</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10:55 – 11:10 Wash hands &amp; eat</li> </ul> <b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12:30 -12:50 Yard</li> <li>• 12:50 - 1:10 Wash hands &amp; eat</li> </ul>	<b>Lunch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12:40 – 1:00 Wash hands &amp; eat</li> <li>• 1:00 – 1:20 Yard</li> </ul>
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- **Yards:**

The entire yard will be used for each group when they take their breaks. This will allow us to ensure that all class bubbles have their own distinct yard space and that class bubbles will be able to stay apart to the extent that this is practical. Each class will be shown their designated yard space on their first day back to school and the teachers will be emphasising to the children the importance of not leaving their designated yard space.

- No footballs/basketballs/hurleys etc are allowed in school and no ball games will be allowed before, during or after school

#### **Books, Copies, Pencils, Hand sanitisers, etc.**

- Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, etc. and they must not be shared with other pupils.
- **Pupils should have a separate pencil case for use at home that doesn't come into school and another one for school that will not be brought home.**
- Hand sanitizer is available in each classroom and corridors

#### **Uniforms/Tracksuits**

There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms or tracksuits should be washed every day and this is not practical for most families. However, 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 **for school related activities only.** Uniforms or tracksuits should be taken off straight after the child arrives home from school for the day. They should not be worn in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

#### **Office**

- We request that Parents/Guardians use epayments as much as possible to minimise the amount of cash that needs to be handled.
- All visitors to the school must fill in a Contact Tracing Log.
- Pupils must not be sent to classrooms, the secretary or principal's office to deliver messages.
- As far as possible, staff members should minimise their entry to the office area

### **Photocopying.**

Along with Theresa our secretary only one other person will be permitted in the office at any given time. Any staff member who uses the photocopier must sanitise their hands before and after use. Theresa will be responsible for the safe sanitization of the photocopier.

### **ICT**

A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common devices. Devices must be cleaned after use and before they are returned for charging

**Postbox:** A post box has been installed outside the main door of the school to minimise the amount of people entering the building

### **Extra-curricular activities and swimming**

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities such as dancing; choir, homework club, etc. will eventually be explored. However, it is not recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time. For the foreseeable future all these activities are suspended.

### **Substitute Teachers and SNAs**

The sequence for covering all teacher absences will be in accordance with DES circular 0045/2020. A copy of the Covid-19 Response Plan will be provided to each substitute teacher/SNA. Substitutes will be required to complete a *Return to the Workplace* form before they enter a classroom and will be asked to confirm that they have engaged in the online Induction training.

If, we are unsuccessful in obtaining a substitute teacher after exhausting all options, we may be required to send the children home as we are not allowed to mix class bubbles. This will only be done as a last resort and in the interests of health and safety.

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

Physical Education lessons will take place outside when the weather allows. Teachers will organise lessons that require very little if any equipment. Staff members and pupils will be encouraged to take additional breaks outside during the school day. While these breaks are taking place all windows in the classroom should be opened to allow for ventilation. All PE equipment if used must be sanitised after use.

**Wet Days:** teachers must provide activities for pupils to engage in their respective pods during break times.

**Toilets during break:** teachers must ensure the pupils go to the toilet before break time and before they go out onto the yard.

### **Staffroom**

- All staff members must maintain a physical distance of 2 metres when they are not engaged in teaching e.g. when they are using the staff room and arriving to work.
- Staff meetings for the most part will be held remotely or in small groups if deemed necessary
- Staff members should bring their own cups, bottles, cutlery, etc. to school and avoid sharing utensils in the staffroom as far as possible.
- Due to staggered break times a max of 14 people will be in the staffroom at break times.

### **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 at 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.



**Homework:** No written homework will be assigned for September to reduce books transitioning from home to school. **Therefore, schoolbags will not be required for the month of September.** Children will be requested to bring a lunch bag only. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

**Incoming Junior Infants.** To allow parents space and time to introduce their child to school we will bring them in at the later time of **9.30 a.m.** for the first two mornings, Monday Aug 31st & Tuesday September 1<sup>st</sup>. They will go home at **12.00 p.m.** on these two days. Parents when dropping will bring the pupils to the external classroom door (Doors 4 and 5) where their teacher will be there to meet them. **From Wednesday Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> they will start at the normal time of 8.55a.m. and finish at 12.00 noon. This will continue until Friday Sept 11<sup>th</sup>. From Monday Sept 14<sup>th</sup> onwards Junior Infants will go home at the normal time of 1.35 p.m.**

#### **Other Parental Responsibilities:**

- Parents who have chosen to purchase their child's books outside of our school bookshop must ensure that all of the child's books/copies/stationery are purchased, labelled with the child's name, and in school for Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August as books and stationery cannot and will not be shared.
- 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 all **/lunch boxes/water bottles** are sanitised using alcohol wipes before being placed in the child's schoolbag.
- Water bottles are to be filled at home every morning.
- Pencils to be paired at home and copies ruled. Encourage your child to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth).
- **Lunches.** Make sure your child can open /close their lunch box/drinks bottles. Regarding food please make sure they can open or peel any food that you send in. Please pay particular attention to yogurt cartons, oranges etc. Please do not send in drinks with straws in infant classes. Teachers will not be able to assist anymore in any of these activities. As we will not be in a position to refill water bottles please ensure your child has enough drinks for the day.
- Please ensure clothing items such as jumpers, coats and hats are clearly labelled with your child's name and your child can open/close their own coat and tie their own shoes. **If they are unable to carry out these tasks, it is imperative that you teach them prior to starting school.**

#### **Supporting the Learning of Children at Very High Risk who Cannot Attend School**

If a child at **very high risk** 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.

### **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.

### **The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Hygiene and Cleaning**

- Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom and support room, at the entrances to both offices and staffroom
- Soap is available in all the toilets.
- Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.
- In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be thoroughly cleaned at least once per day. We have increased our contract cleaning hours to enable this. Particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, 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 should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.
- Waste will be collected regularly from offices and other areas within the school.
- Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

- All staff will be wearing a face covering or a visor as per Department guidelines
- Any staff (Teachers and SNA's) involved in intimate care will need to wear PPE

**Medical Grade Masks:** The school has sourced medical grade masks in the EN14683 category and these are available to all teachers and SNAs working with children with SEN by necessity of having to be in close contact with those pupils. (Updated February 24, 2021)

## 7) Illness and Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

- We love to see all our children at school every day. However, under the current circumstances, parents/guardians must keep children at home if they display any Covid-19 Symptoms. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>
- Staff must not attend school if they display any symptoms.
- A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building. This is the former Resource Room at the top of the stairs in the Senior Classroom Block. The secondary isolation area in the event of more than one case will be the school hall.
- If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following procedure will be implemented:
  - ✓ The pupil will be accompanied to the isolation area. A distance of 2 metres will be maintained. The person accompanying the child must wear a face covering.
  - ✓ If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by telephone. **To help us in this regard, parents are asked to make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times.**
  - ✓ Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal and go to the isolation area.
  - ✓ A face covering will be provided to the staff member/child who is symptomatic.
  - ✓ The staff member or child who is symptomatic should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.
  - ✓ If the staff member/child is well enough to go home, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.
  - ✓ Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.

- ✓ If the staff member/child is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- ✓ The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.
- ✓ 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 are essential at all times.
- ✓ It is important to remember that any of us can get sick or unwell, and if we do, we need understanding and support from those around us. It is essential that anyone who feels unwell makes that known to the Principal/Deputy Principal as soon as possible.

## **8) Wellness:**

### **COVID-19 Related Absence Management**

COVID-19 related absences will be managed in line with DES circular 0049/2020 and other agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

### **Pupil Wellness:**

The Stay Safe programme will be taught in all classes at the start of the school year.

Increased emphasis will be placed in all classes on SPHE / PE and outdoor activities.

### **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention.

The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile'.

A free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and staff members are encouraged to make use of the service when the need arises.

**Please Note:** This plan will be amended if the Board of Management feels it necessary in order to ensure the continued Health and Safety of all the school community. Any changes or updates will be notified to parents using the Aladdin Connect channel and other media if required. This is a living document and is likely to change when and if circumstances change.