

Scoil Bhríde

Clara Co Offaly
Roll No: 13118U



Dear Parents/ Guardian

Following the publication of the Department of Education and Government guidelines for reopening schools we are now planning for a full return to school for all on Monday August 31st.

While everyone wants schools to operate as normally as possible from the end of August this year, it is recognised by all that it will be a different environment to how schools operated in March of this year.

We have in place a Scoil Bhríde Covid-19 Response Team and a Covid- 19 Response Policy and Plan and have been looking at all aspects of returning to school safely based on all of the Government and HSE Guidelines.

We have enclosed a copy of our Response Plan and Policy for your information.

There will be a number of organisational changes in the school for the health and safety of all and that will require a **personal responsibility on each individual** to make things work for the good of all within the school community.

All of our decisions have been made in consultation with the Board of Management and parents for the health and safety of all and to keep Scoil Bhríde Covid-19 free.

It will not be possible to eliminate totally 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 our school and the consequent risk of its spread.

The responsibility for this rests with each individual stakeholder in the school, staff, pupils, parents, school management and school visitors, by ensuring that:

- **Those who have symptoms or suspect they have the virus stay out of the school**
- **By maintaining best practice in terms of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette in school, and**
- **By minimising social contacts and respecting physical distancing practices.**

Here are some of the changes that we have made to date for the return of the pupils within the school. There will be more to follow as our plan evolves and possibly changes along the way as we monitor how everything is working out.

Morning arrival.

- Pupils from First to 6th classes will arrive at their normal time between 9.10am and 9.20 am each day and go directly to their allocated point in the school yard to await collection by the teacher. When the bell rings all pupils will be asked to line up and

observe social distancing in their designated school yard. Yards will be colour coded and this information will be sent out later when this work has been done.

- On wet mornings pupils will be brought into the school from 9.10 am onwards as before by on duty staff.
- Junior and senior Infants arrive at 9.30 am from now on and go home at and go to the Junior Infants door where they will be met by their class teachers. It will no longer be possible for parents to come into the classroom. We ask parents not to come in to the school grounds before 9.30 and to please observe social distancing while there. Both Infant classes will go home at 2.10pm from now on.
- The class teacher will invite the children to enter the building via their designated entrance point. (See table below) When the first class has entered the designated entrance, the teacher of the next class will invite the children from the next class to enter the building. Youngest class group will go first.
- **From now on parents/guardians may only come to the green side gate at the side of the school and drop children at this point. Here they will be met by a staff member on duty. The exception will be for our Junior Infants and Senior Infants who may be brought to their school door at the appointed time.**

Entrances & Exits

Entrance and Exit Points	Class
Junior Infant door	Junior Infants/Senior Infants
Main Yard Door where all pupils previously lined up.	Room 3 and 4
Junior Infants Door	Room 5 and 6
Side Door (near the green gate)	Room 1 and 2
Main Front Entrance (Secretaries office)	Sunrise Pupils

In School

- Teachers will sanitise pupil's hands at their designated entry door on arrival and a routine of hand washing and sanitising will be established from day 1.
- Pupils will go to their designated classroom with their teacher and be seated in their allocated pods/groups in the classroom. They will remain within these pods all day both in class and in the school yard, as this is the recommendation for contact tracing purposes. These class pods have yet to be finalised by their teachers.
- Classrooms have been allocated according to class numbers and to accommodate social distancing where we have been advised to do so.
- Junior infants to 2nd class will operate in class groups or pods within their classrooms and in the school yard with no social distancing but we will encourage them to observe all the safety recommendations within their pods.
- From 3rd to 6th classes pupils will be seated in pods in their classrooms and where space allows these pods will be 1 metre from each other. Where it will not be possible to observe 1 metre distancing in a classroom the entire class /bubble will be 1 pod and will operate that way for the entire school day. All schoolwork and play will happen within these pods.

School Uniform

- Pupils will dress in their school uniform as normal. Parents should consider having a 2nd top/cardigan /jumper so that they can be washed frequently.

School Books and Bags

All pupils are asked to bring the following to school on day 1. Most of these will remain in school.

- 1 school bag big enough to hold everything.
- Only the books purchased from the school booklist, covered in plastic so that they can easily be sanitised.
- Copies listed on the booklist.
- A5 plastic wallet which will replace all pencil cases and must be left in school. This will hold all the stationery from the booklist eg pens/pencils/rubbers/glue/colouring pencils, crayons markers etc. **This wallet will be the one and only type of pencil case allowed at school as it can be easily sanitised.** Pupils are advised to have a spare set of for home use. Our aim will be to reduce the amount of books etc. that the children bring in and home each day. We will have spare material at school also.
- Any other material suggested by their teacher from the book list.
- Pupils will not need a homework journal, as homework will be sent home either through Seesaw or our new Aladdin Connect system.
- It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.

Please ensure that all clothing and personal items are labeled so that there can be no confusion over ownership.

NO OTHER ITEMS, BOOKS, STATIONERY OR TOYS CAN BE BROUGHT IN TO SCHOOL UNLESS REQUESTED TO DO SO IN WRITING BY THE TEACHER.

Sanitising Gel

- Pupils may bring in their own sanitising gel but this will not be necessary as sanitising will become a regular part of the school routine and gel will be provided by the school.

School Break and Lunchtime

- From now on there will be 2 x 20 minute breaks for break and lunchtime and these will be staggered to allow for physical distancing in the school yard. Juniors to 2nd will form group A and 3rd class to 6th Group B. Pupils will be given full details of these changes when they get to school.

School Lunches

- School lunches will continue to be supplied by our school lunch provider Bradbury's. We will be sending out information about this later. Pupils who do not take school lunches will bring their own lunch. This must fit in their school bag, as there will not be any space to store it in the classroom.

PUPILS MUST BRING THEIR OWN DRINK CONTAINER SPOONS AND FORKS, AS WE WILL NOT BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE ANY OF THESE OUT AT SCHOOL IN FUTURE.

All pupils will take home all personal rubbish in their bag each day.

- **All classrooms have been cleared of a much furniture and equipment as possible to ensure maximum space. This will ensure that it is easier to clean and sanitise classrooms each evening.**
- We will operate a clean desk policy for everyone. Pupils will store all schoolbooks in a tray or on a shelf in the classroom each evening and take home and bring in a minimum amount of books each day.

School Visitors

- From now on there can be no walk in visits to the school. All school visitors must make a prior appointment either by email or phone call and remain in the porch on arrival until a staff member can meet them.
- We will also request that all school visitors maintain 2metre distancing between themselves and school staff at all times.

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 wishes to call in to the school, they should either phone or email the office to inform the school. On arrival they will use the intercom at the front door of the school to alert the secretary that they have arrived.
- The child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- **No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do.**

End of School Day

- Adults remain outside the side gate with the exception of the Junior and Senior Infant parents. Parents of these classes must wait in designated waiting point assigned to the class.
- When the school day for that class is over the following arrangements will apply
- Junior Infants and Senior Infants - the class teacher will bring the children to their designated entrance/exit point and will release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them.
- 1st-6th Class – the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately through designated exit points, as per morning routine. The teacher will accompany the entire class to the front of the school for collection.
- **Covid-19 will impact on many activities in the school, Aistear, Art, IT, Music, Choir, Library work, and Sports. While we will be striving to return to as much normality as possible we will have to minimise sharing of equipment and increase cleaning and**

sanitisation. All of this will take time and planning and we will have move forward slowly and follow all recommended guidelines.

Seesaw.

We have purchased a 3 year deal with Seesaw so that we can use it regularly for homework from now on or in the event that a pupil must remain at home due to a need to isolate or otherwise.

Pupils and parents used seesaw very effectively during the Lockdown and we will continue to use it as a learning tool when we get back to the classrooms.

Dealing with a Suspected Case.

As Health Guidelines state no one should attend school if they are displaying symptoms. If there is a suspected case in any family HSE guidelines state that the household must isolate until testing has been done and results received.

In the event that there is a suspected case the school has set up an isolation room and will follow protocol to manage the situation.

As well as the changes to school routines there will be specific emphasis on the **Well-Being** of our pupils as we work through the re-opening process. Specific supports will be available for children who are worried about coming back to school and for those who are finding it difficult to adapt to all that has happened over the last six months.

All of our **Support Teaching Staff** will be working with these children in the first few weeks to help them to settle in and hopefully allay any of their fears.

For the first month our main aim will be to ensure that everyone settles in well, that we establish safe routines and that we create awareness for all about how we can keep everyone within our school community safe and protected from the virus.

We will also be assessing where each child is and curriculum planning to ensure that any learning gaps are covered.

Parents who have concerns about their children's health and wellbeing will be encouraged to contact the school when we open so that we can support you and them in any way we can.

For now you can all begin the process of preparing for a return to school and we will work together to make it a positive experience for all.

Yours Sincerely,

Nora Kavanagh and Staff

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