



Ballyneale National School

Carrick-on-Suir

Co. Tipperary

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Plan to Re-open Ballyneale N.S. March 2021

Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make 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.

Assumptions

- All children will return to school on Monday March 15th and classes operate within a bubble system
- The school is split into 4 groups with each group having different play areas.
- Groups will be constituted of
 1. Junior and Senior Infant class,
 2. First and Second Class class,
 3. Third and Fourth Class,
 4. Fifth and Sixth Class

Timetables

Timetable for Group 1 Junior and Senior Infants Yellow	Timetable for Group 2 First and Second Class Red	Timetable for Group 3 Third and Fourth Class Blue	Timetable for Group 4 Fifth and Sixth Class Green
9.10 – Assemble in Yellow Zone in Yard	9.10 – Assemble in Red Zone in Yard	9.10 – Assemble in Blue Zone in Yard	9.10 – Assemble in Green Zone in Yard
9.20-Line up on yellow dots in yard	9.20-Line up on red dots in yard	9.20-Line up on blue dots in yard	9.20-Line up on green dots in yard
10.50 – Play time	10.50 – Play time	10.55 – Break time	10.55 – Break time
11.00 – Break time	11.00 – Break time	11.00 – Play time	11.00 – Play time
11.05 – Class resumes	11.05 – Class resumes	11.10 – Class resumes	11.10 – Class resumes
12.20 – Lunch time	12.20 – Lunch time	12.40 – Lunch time	12.40 – Lunch time
12.30 – Play time	12.30 – Play time	12.50 – Play time	12.50 – Play time
12.50 – Class resumes	12.50 – Class resumes	1.10 – Class resumes	1.10 – Class resumes
2.00 – Infant classes finish	12.50 – Class resumes	3.00 –Classes finish	3.00 –Classes finish
	3.00 – Classes finish		

Yard Supervision

Each class bubble will have access to the yards during their allotted break times as follows –

Junior and Senior Infants – Old Court

First and Second Class – New Court

Third and Fourth Class – Old Court

Fifth and Sixth Class – New Court

Yards will be supervised by class teachers, learning support teachers and SNA's working within those bubbles.

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

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.

Corridors

Briefly passing someone in a hall 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 corridor.

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

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.

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, as per our usual practice.

Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.

- In so far as possible, it is requested that children will bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment.
- It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.
- Children from third – sixth class may bring hand sanitiser to school in a labelled zip lock bag to minimise queueing/ congregating at the school hand sanitising stations.

Uniforms/Tracksuits

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.

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 after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

Photocopying

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

- 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 returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days
- Children who are generally unwell

Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class

If the school is notified that a person in your child's class has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19

- The parents of all children in the class will be notified
- Public health advice will be sought and followed
- Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

COVID-19 Related Absence Management

COVID-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

Teacher Absence and Substitution

If 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, it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes. In such circumstances, it may not be possible for the class to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

Substitute Teachers and SNAs

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.

Teaching and Learning

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since Christmas. 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 in 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 for the remainder of 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.

Hygiene and Cleaning

- 19 sanitiser dispensers and paper towel dispensers have been installed throughout the school
- Warm water and soap is available in all the toilets, and at each sink in the classrooms, staff bathroom and staff room.
- 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. 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.)

Staffroom

All staff members should 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. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, face coverings should be worn.

Staff meetings will be held in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing.

Staff members should bring their own cups, bottles, cutlery, etc. to school and avoid sharing utensils in the staffroom as far as possible.

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.