

Re-opening of Ballyfinane N.S. School

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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 return to school and classes operate within a bubble system
- The school is split into 2 groups with staggered starting and finishing times.
- Within each class from 3rd to 6th a minimum distance of 1 metre will be maintained between seating and pupils will be encouraged to maintain this distance both indoors and outdoors throughout the school day. Siblings where possible can sit together.
- The day will include **2 x 20 minute breaks.**
- Hand sanitiser will be available at five different points throughout the school. To minimise flow of foot traffic children will be encouraged to have their own bum bag with a supply of sanitizer.

Drop offs and Pick ups

- There will be three drop off and three pick up areas outside the school. These are
 1. Drop off 1 – left of the school car park
 2. Drop off 2- playground side of school car park
 3. Drop off 3 – front of the school

Drop off and pick up times will be staggered and it is important that you stick to these times to ensure social distancing during drop/pick up.

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- A text will be issued to all parents re their drop off/pick up times on Monday August 24th
- Please note due to cleaning schedules the school will not be open prior to your drop-off time

Entrance

- All children will independently enter and exit via the main school door.

Arrival at school

- We ask for co-operation with these times as it will mean that the numbers congregating on school grounds at any one time will be minimised.
- Children should remain in cars/with their parents outside of school grounds and not enter the school grounds until their allotted entrance time.
- The designated staff member on yard will invite the children to enter the building via the main school door and sit in their assigned named seat.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building unless by appointment and wearing a mask.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email/Aladdin app system.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
- As soon as we have the Aladdin app system in place you will be provided with details on how to contact staff members.

End of School Day

- Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait in your car at your assigned collection point. 1, 2 or 3 at you allocated times.
- When the school day for that class is over the following arrangements will apply –
 - Jun Infants and Senior Infants – Please collect from the roadside entrance or playground entrance 2. Times have been assigned to pupils.
 - 1st – 6th Class – the class teacher will allow each group to leave the classroom separately in order to minimise contact
- We ask all families to work with us on a smooth drop-off/collection. All children are to wait
- To ensure our pods and bubbles are maintained the school would ask parents to refrain from using the attached playground for the first 15 minutes directly after school pick-up. This is to ensure our school logistics plan remains intact and to free up the carpark for other parents arriving for collection.

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

- Where possible the adult should **email** the school first

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- If due to an emergency a child has to leave the school- the parent should park at the roadside entrance which is visible from both classes. As the office is manned three days a week from 9am-1pm please keep this in mind when ringing the school.
- The child will be brought from their class to the front door 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 so

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, if one is available. 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.

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 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

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- 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

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) suggested activities to support the child's learning at home will be shared with parents through the designated class email addresses.

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

Personal Equipment

- In so far as possible, it is requested that all 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.
- For all children in the school, the school will provide a personal storage box which will hold all stationery and school books. These will remain at school with alternative items remaining at home if required for homework.
- All children should have a bum bag and a supply of personal hand sanitizers.
- All items including school uniform must be clearly labelled with child's full name.
- Arrangements regarding books being brought to and from school for homework will be made in September.

Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, laptops and the equipment used for structured activities and play in Infant classrooms. Cleaning of such shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

Yards

The school yard will be broken into two sections. School yard/playground and Court area. A timetable will allow all children to play in each area throughout the school week.

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Yards will be supervised by class teachers, S.E.T. teachers and SNA's.

S.E.T.

In keeping with our Special Education Policy, special education 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 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.
- Where children from 3rd to 6th Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending.

PPE

Where social distancing cannot be observed staff at times may need to wear PPE gear. 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, 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.

PE

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment should be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings. If the PE hall is being used by class groupings, common touch points will be cleaned at intervals throughout the school day. Each class teacher has removable ground markings to facilitate outdoor socially distanced PE lessons.

Homework Club

The possibility of facilitating the homework club will be explored later in the school year. Due to the size of the room and cleaning regulations it is not possible to facilitate this at this time.

Kindest Regards

Catherine O'Shea
School Principal

Mike Carroll
Chairperson of the Board of Management