

# Response Plan for the reopening of St. Anne's N.S.

(Updated August 2021)

## Context

This Response Plan for the reopening of our school contextualises and supplements the contents of the following two documents available on the Department of Education and Skills website:

- Roadmap for School Reopening
- Covid19 Response Plan – updated version 4 – August 2021

Thus, this plan should be read in conjunction with the above-named documents in order to access and ascertain all the elements of the plan to safely reopen all primary schools in the country. This plan may be edited and revised and any significant changes will be notified to you.

**For ease of reference, a summary of the additions since the publication of our first Response Plan in February 2021 can be found in Appendix 1 below. References to sections of the Covid-19 Response Plan refer to the latest version from the DES website (updated Version 4, 30th August 2021).**

## Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make efforts to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – children, staff and parents. 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 cooperation 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.
- 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 will be split into 2 groups for the purpose of break times. The day will now include 2x20 minute breaks. Both Groups will have separate break and lunch times. Group A will constitute Junior Infants - Second and Group B will constitute Third - Sixth Classes. All individual bubbles (classes) will have their own designated playground space assigned to them that will change monthly. All playground spaces will be supervised by a teacher and supported by Special Needs Assistants.
- Within each class from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, the children will be further divided into pods (maximum 6 children), with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods. The children within this pod will work together, but where possible and feasible, will maintain the required distance from other pods, whilst inside in the classroom. The make-up of the pod will not change until such a time as the DES and HSE advise us that it is safe to do so.

## Staff Duties and Wellbeing

Section 10 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan outlines the duties of staff. Section 12 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan outlines the details regarding Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme.

### **Induction Training**

Covid19 induction training for all staff is still available. This training was developed by the DES (see Section 4.1 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for more details). In addition, all staff will complete the amended Return to Work (RTW) Form before returning to work (see Section 4.2 and Appendix 2 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for more details).

### **Lead Worker Representative (LWR)**

The LWR works in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of Covid19 and monitor adherence to these measures (see Section 4.3 and Appendix 3 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for more details).

The LWR for our school is Ms. Maria Moore and the ALWR for our school is Ms. Mary Dawson.

### **Signage**

The school will display signage outlining signs and symptoms of Covid19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene (see Section 4.4 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for more details).

### **Health & Safety Risk Assessment**

This has been carried out in line with Section 4.6 and Appendix 4 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan.

### **Control Measures**

- Know the symptoms of Covid19 (see Section 5.1 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan)
- Respiratory Hygiene (see Section 5.2 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan)
- Hand Hygiene: Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms in addition to soap (in all toilets) (see Section 5.3 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan)
- Physical Distancing (see Section 5.4 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan)
- For Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools, please see Section 7 and Appendix 9 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for more details. The school is investing in additional resources and new protocols regarding hygiene and cleaning of our school on a regular basis.

### **Timetables**

The school day will remain the same: 8.50am to 2.30pm for 1st - 6th classes & 8.50am to 1.30pm for Junior and Senior Infants. An additional timetable will exist for our new Junior Infants for the first 5 days of school (a separate email will issue to the parents / guardians affected).

### **Entrances & Exits Points**

A significant part of this response plan requires the cooperation of children and parents in order to ensure children enter and exit our school in an orderly and safe manner. Videos demonstrating where children will line up and enter the school will follow in due course, prior to school reopening. All classes will have an assigned line and dots (each a meter apart). We will now have a total of 7 entry and exit routes. Inside the building, there will be a one-way system in operation.

<b>Entrance / Exit Number</b>	<b>Entrance and Exit Points</b>	<b>Class Teacher &amp; Corresponding Line</b>
<b>1</b>	Front left of school (opposite small prefab)	Ms. Aivalikli - Line 7 Ms. Olson - Line 9
<b>2</b>	Front left of school (outside large prefab)	Ms. McManus - Line 10 Ms. Dawson - Line 12
<b>3</b>	Front left of school (outside single side door and before going down to Senior Yard)	Mr. Allen - Line 11 Ms. Bourke - Line 13 Ms. Kelly - Line 14

4	Back of School (right entry door from Senior Yard)	Ms. D'Arcy - Line 18 Mr. Hackett - Line 19
5	Back of School (middle entry door from Senior Yard)	Mr. Dunne - Line 15 Mr. McDonagh - Line 16 Ms. Tracey - Line 17
6	<b>ENTRY:</b> Back of School (left entry door from Senior Yard)  <b>EXIT:</b> Front left of school (outside single side door and before going down to the Senior Yard)  <b>EXIT:</b> Front Right of School (beyond staff car park at side entrance)	Ms. Faulkner / Ms. Hinds - Line 5; Ms. Rigby - Line 6 & Ms. Maguire - Line 20  Ms. Rigby - Line 6 & Ms. Maguire - Line 20  Ms. Faulkner / Ms. Hinds - Line 5
7	Front Right of School (beyond staff car park at side entrance)	Ms. Woods - Line 1 Ms. D. Elmes - Line 2 Ms. A. Treacy - Line 3 Mrs. Lennon - Line 4

#### Access to the School and Contact Log

Visitors (including parents and guardians) to our school will be restricted for essential purposes only and limited to those that have obtained prior approval from the Principal - Mr. John Fingleton. A detailed contact log will be maintained (see Section 4.7 and Appendix 5 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for more details). We would ask, where possible and feasible, for older children (from 3rd class up) to make their way to and from their lines independently of parents, in order to limit the number of adults on the premises at arrival and departure times.

Parents and Guardians (regardless of classes their children attend), who would prefer to stay with their child until their teacher collects them must ensure they stay with their child in their allotted place. We would ask all adults to wear a mask, where social distancing cannot be adhered to.

#### Arrival at school

- It is important for everyone's safety that your child is in their line and spot on time.
- Each child should line up at their designated line and dot with social distancing being observed at all times.
- The class teacher will invite the children to enter the building via their designated entrance point at the appropriate time.
- If your child is late, they must proceed to the Reception area, where they will be escorted to their classroom, when an adult is available to do so.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email or by phoning / emailing the school office.

#### End of School Day

- Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait close to the designated exit point, observing social distancing requirements. Please allow all children to return to their designated line and dot before approaching your child. The class teacher will direct the children to leave the line and their dot.
- When the school day is over the following arrangements will thus apply –

- Jun Infants – 6th Class - the class teacher will bring the children to their designated exit point and will release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them or allow the children to proceed home by foot or bicycle (as directed by the parent / guardian)
- This additional measure will apply for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class: the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately in order to minimise contact and proceed directly to their designated line

### **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 bell 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
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- Due to Covid19, no adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

### **Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19** (see Section 8 and Appendix 7 for further details)

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 that 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
- 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 special education teacher, where relevant) will share suggested activities to support the child's learning at home with his / her parents / guardians.

### **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 (labelled) 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.
- Although the school will have ample supply of hand sanitiser, we recommend the child could also have their own small hand sanitiser for use. This would avoid unnecessary gathering of children at sinks, etc. when the children's hands look clean (as per DES Guidelines). The sanitiser should be approved for use for children. We recommend that your child is given a bottle that is not full in order to limit any potential hazard(s) in its use.

### **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. A sanitisation unit or area may be used for this purpose.

### **Special Education Teaching** (see Section 9 of the DES Covid19 Response Plan for further details)

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal.

- 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 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group, where possible.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending, where possible.

### **PPE**

PPE will be worn by staff where it is not possible to maintain the required social distancing requirements, as per the latest advice from the DES and HSE.

**Teacher Absence and Substitution** (see Section 11 for details regarding Covid19 related Absence Management)

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, it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes, as was the case occasionally in previous years. 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 and guardians.

**PE**

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined, where practicable, 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.

**School Uniform and School Tracksuit**

For the initial weeks (or until the class teacher informs otherwise), please send your child to school as follows:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
School Uniform	School Tracksuit	School Uniform	School Tracksuit	School Uniform

**Extra-curricular Activities**

In order to maintain the integrity and purpose of the ‘bubble and pod’ system, the Board of Management has taken the difficult but prudent decision to defer the start of all extra-curricular activities. This decision will be reviewed by the Board of Management at the October Mid-Term and a further update will be issued at that point. The school will also not be renting out its facilities in the evenings or weekends, until at least the October Mid Term.

**Breakfast Club, Homework Club and After School Care**

Again, in order to maintain the integrity and purpose of the ‘bubble and pod’ system, the Board of Management has taken the difficult but prudent decision to defer the start of all clubs and after school care. This decision will be reviewed by the Board of Management at the October Mid-Term and a further update will be issued at that point. We deeply regret the significant inconvenience and difficulties this action may cause, but are doing it in order to minimise risk to the Department of Education’s ‘Bubble and Pod’ System.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Summary of additions to COVID-19 Response Plans required by 'Work Safely Protocol'**

#### **Sec 4.2 Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW) & Appendix 6 Checklist for School Management**

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Schools should request staff (verbally or in writing) to confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

#### **Sec 5 Infection Prevention Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

- Advise staff and pupils to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a test
- Advise staff and pupils not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
  - if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
    - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
    - If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel
    - Advise staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school

#### **Sec 5.3 Hand Hygiene**

- Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame

#### **Sec 5.4 Physical Distancing**

##### ***Ventilation – new section***

The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice '*Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools*'. The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

#### **Sec 8 Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19**

School staff should be encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contract tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

## **Sec 10 Staff Duties**

- Not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
  - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus;
  - If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school
- Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

**Sec 12 Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme** Information updated in this section.

## **Appendix 2 Pre-Return to Work Form COVID-19**

Number of questions increased from 5 to 7. Additional questions:

- Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?
- In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19?
- Other 5 are slightly reworded

## **Appendix 6 Checklist for School Management**

### **Staff**

- Have you requested confirmation that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following periods of closure such as school holidays
- Have you advised staff and pupils not to return to or attend school if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- Have you advised staff and pupils not to return or attend school if they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel
- Have you advised staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school

## **Hand / Respiratory Hygiene**

Have you told staff and pupils when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:



- When entering and exiting vehicles
- When entering and exiting school buildings

### **Physical Distancing**

- Have you advised staff of the Department's guidance to achieve good ventilation
- Have you checked any mechanical ventilation systems to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air is used

### **Appendix 7 Checklist for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19**

A nominated member of the school management team will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

### **Appendix 9 Checklist for cleaning**

Have you put in place a written cleaning schedule to be made available to cleaning staff including:

- Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as vending machines, coffee machines and door handles