

# **Scoil Naomh Buithe, Tenure**

## **Back To School Plan**

### **Underlying Principles**

- The school has a responsibility to make every 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 that 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 children in each class or bubble will be further divided into groups or pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between the different pods.
- In each class from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, a distance of 1 metre should be maintained between desks and between individual pupils.
- It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors, therefore achieving this recommendation from Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> Class is not a pre-requisite to reopening the school.
- The school is split into 3 groups (based on corridors) with each group having different break times, lunch times and finishing times.
- All classes will begin school at the same time each morning (bell rings at 8.45am), with the exception of Junior Infants who will come to school at 9.30am for the first week and a half.
- The day will include a 10-minute break and a 30-minute break for each class.
- Gel hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all classrooms and support rooms, and spray sanitiser will be available for all pods. Also children are welcome to bring their own sanitizer if they so wish.

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### Timetables (September and October)

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	
8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.30 – Break time 10.40 – Class resumes 11.50 – Lunch time 12.20 – Class resumes 1.27 – School ends	8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.30 – Break time 10.40 – Class resumes 11.50 – Lunch time 12.20 – Class resumes 1.32 – School ends	<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> All children will eat in the classroom for 5 minutes <u>before</u> the first break, and eat again during the first 10 minutes of the second/lunch break. This ensures that they play outside for 30 minutes in total each day in their designated and larger play space.
First Class	Second Class	Third Class
8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.40 – Break time 10.50 – Class resumes 12.10 – Lunch time 12.40 – Class resumes 2.25 – School ends	8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.40 – Break time 10.50 – Class resumes 12.10 – Lunch time 12.40 – Class resumes 2.30 – School ends	8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.40 – Break time 10.50 – Class resumes 12.10 – Lunch time 12.40 – Class resumes 2.35 – School ends
Fourth Class	Fifth Class	Sixth Class
8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.55 – Break time 11.05 – Class resumes 12.35 – Lunch time 1.05 – Class resumes 2.25 – School ends	8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.55 – Break time 11.05 – Class resumes 12.35 – Lunch time 1.05 – Class resumes 2.30 – School ends	8.45 – Bell rings 8.50 – School starts 10.55 – Break time 11.05 – Class resumes 12.35 – Lunch time 1.05 – Class resumes 2.35 – School ends

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### Key to Entrances & Exits

Entrance and Exit Points	Number
Front door	1
Library door	2
Back left hand corner door (beside First Class)	3
Back right hand corner door (beside Sixth Class)	4
Basketball courts door (beside Fourth class)	5

### Entrance & Exit Points for Specific Classes

Teacher	Class	Entrance & Exit Point
Ms. Finnegan	Junior Infants	2
Ms. Seery	Senior Infants	2
Ms. Sheridan	First Class	3
Ms. Craven/Ms. Barron	Second Class	3
Mr. Byrne	Third Class	5
Ms. Joyce	Fourth Class	5
Ms. Carolan	Fifth Class	4
Mr. Woods	Sixth Class	4

### Arrival at school

- New protocols will require strict adherence and we ask for your full cooperation. Please do NOT congregate outside the school gates/walls. If you are driving it will be a case of **SET DOWN and GO**. To save time, please ensure that your child has their school bag and lunch with them in the car and not in the boot.
- If you are walking a young child to school please wear a face mask and do not delay as you say goodbye. **DROP OFF and GO.**
- To facilitate parents going to work there will initially be no staggered opening times but this will be reviewed at Halloween, or sooner if necessary, to check that social distancing is being observed outside the school.
- School gates will open at 8.30am. As children arrive they will line up suitably socially distant in their allocated group/pod marked by a corresponding coloured dot on the ground:
  - Junior Infants to Second Class will come in through the pedestrian gate and line up in their pods in the front yard.

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- Third Class to Sixth Class will come in through the vehicular gate and line up in their pods on the basketball court.
- All children should be in their "líne" before the bell rings at 8.45am.
- Each class will enter the building via their designated door. Any late comers, who arrive after their class has left the yard, will remain outside the school walls until all the classes have been safely walked to their classrooms. They will then be facilitated to enter the school building safely avoiding any cross over or engagement with pupils from any other classes or bubbles.
- The school bus will run twice a day arriving at 8:50am and leaving at 2:30pm. Note there will be no 1:30pm service this year. Please contact Pete the bus driver directly if you are interested 086 8522211.
- No adults, other than staff members, should come inside the gates in the morning or enter the building.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email, Aladdin or by phoning the school office.
- Please note that on a wet morning children will be directed to their classroom as soon as they arrive. They will still use their designated door to enter the building.

### **End of School Day**

- There will be a staggered discharging of all classes/bubbles (see class timetables above).
- Adults who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day should wait in their cars or outside the walls of the school well away from the gates until their child's class pick up time.
- 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 bubble/class to the front yard in their pods/groups and will release each individual child into the care of the adult who is there to collect them.
  - First to Sixth Class – the class teacher will take the bubble/class to their designated gate ensuring that the pods are suitably socially distant and then allow each pod/group to leave separately.
- Please note that on a wet afternoon:
  - The Infants will be released into the care of the adult who is there to collect them at the front door of the school.
  - First to Third Class will also be allowed to leave through the front door.
  - Fourth to Sixth Class will leave as normal.

### **Collection of Children during the School Day**

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day for any reason 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.

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- The child will be brought from their classroom, or the isolation station, to the adult by a member of staff.
- Dorothy will keep a register of all the children leaving during the school day. These children will leave via the front door.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.

### **First Morning**

All class teachers will be in their classroom from 8.30am onwards. On arrival at school, all children will be directed immediately to their classrooms. Covid restrictions mean that no parents will be permitted to take their children to the classroom, but rest assured that our three Special Ed teachers and our Junior Infant teacher will be available to help younger children to find and safely enter their classroom using their new designated entrance door.

Children will be placed in their colour-coded pods upon entry to the classroom. Last year's teachers have worked very hard to liaise with the coming year's teachers and to plan the best groupings for each pod, and therefore we expect few problems with the groupings.

Each pod will be clearly marked by colour on the classroom floor to prevent tables moving. Later on day one, all children will be brought to the yard and our new corresponding colour-coded dot system will be explained to them. The children in each colour-coded pod/group will line up on one of the correct colour dots for their group, and pods/groups will be suitably socially distant. The line-up and dispersal procedures will be practised many times until all children become familiar with it.

Note that wet mornings will always be as per first morning back.

### **Yards**

Each corridor of two or three classes/bubbles will have access to increased play space in the yards during their allotted break times as follows –

- Infant Yard – 2 classes (Junior and Senior Infants)
- Basketball court session one – 3 classes (First, Second and Third class)
- Basketball court session two – 3 classes (Fourth, Fifth and Sixth class)

Yards will be supervised by class teachers, Special Education teachers and SNAs who will mostly be working within those bubbles.

### **Uniforms/Shoes/Coats**

Many parents have asked about school uniform for the coming year. Neither HSE nor the Department of Education have advised against the wearing of uniforms, and therefore uniforms and school tracksuits will be required as normal.

However, children can alternate between uniform and tracksuit on a daily basis if you wish to facilitate washing.

Note that indoor shoes and shoe bags will NOT be required in the coming year. We hope that the children's normal shoes and runners will not unduly damage the floors.

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We have not yet decided on how best to deal with the children's coats, but they will not be hung together. If possible, we ask you to send a short jacket rather than a long coat with your child. This will help to ensure greater safety for the children should they need to keep their coats on the back of the chairs.

### Personal Equipment

- Insofar as possible, it is requested that children from First Class to Sixth Class 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 children in Junior and Senior Infants, the school will provide a heavy duty zip folder or container which will hold each child's pencils, crayons, playdough, etc. and which will be labelled with their name. This will remain in school. Children should have separate pencils and colours for home.
- For children in older classes more advice will be sent home next week after a full staff meeting.
- Children are not being asked to bring a hand towel to school for the drying of hands after handwashing. Instead, paper towels will be provided in all bathrooms and classrooms.
- In the current circumstances, some children may bring their lunch in a bag. If your child is taking a lunchbox to school please ensure that this is washed thoroughly every day. Please also provide sufficient drinks for your child.
- Arrangements on how best to manage the children's books and copies have not yet been finalised and will be discussed in detail when all staff meet next Wednesday. Following that meeting, **we will update you on what copies, etc should be sent into school next Thursday with your child.** As a staff, we would seek to minimise the unnecessary movement of items between home and school and to allow the children sufficient time to settle back into school, therefore please note that there will be **no homework for the first full week** at least.

### 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. Sharing will be kept to an absolute minimum, and cleaning of such shared equipment with sanitising wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

### 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

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### **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 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. This will be the central social space, and screens are available to protect the privacy of the child. 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. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises. The staff member will also wear a mask.
- An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents who can call their doctor and ensure the child continues 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. A register of all children's GP will be compiled when school reopens.
- The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissues 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 that family member to inform their GP by phone of their child's 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 call 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, and confidentiality is essential at all times.

### **Return to school form**

If a child goes home with a suspected case of Covid-19 the family member who collects them will be given a Return to School form. This should be completed,

sent in to school on the morning of the child's return and immediately given to the principal. This form will seek confirmation that the child, to the best of the parent's knowledge, is well and has no symptoms of COVID-19. It will also record whether or not the child's GP was contacted, as advised, and the outcome of that consultation.

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If a child has been off school and at home with a diagnosed case of Covid-19 the Return to School form will also need to be completed and given to the principal prior to the child's return.

### **Impact of a Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class**

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

- The parents of all children in the class will be notified.
- Public health advice will be sought and 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.

Note: We ask you NOT to give Calpol to your child any morning before they come to school.

### **Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school**

If, due to Covid, a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time the class teacher and/or a Special Education Teacher will provide suggested activities to support the child's learning at home. These will be shared with parents.

### **Teaching and Learning**

As a staff, we are mindful that the children have been away from school since March. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Distance Learning, and we recognise the challenges that it 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 teachers will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the coming 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 on their return to school.

### **Learning Support**

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided on a prioritised needs basis.

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The provision of support will be organised to minimise the number of bubbles that any one Special Education teacher will work with. Relevant parents will be contacted with more details at a later date.

- 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 Third to Sixth 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 sanitised in between different groups attending. Children from different bubbles/classes will not be taken together.

### **Teacher Absence and Substitution**

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 and no other teacher within the school is available to teach the class then it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes as would have been the practice in the past. Children will NOT be split among other classes/bubbles in the coming year. Therefore, occasionally the class may have to be supervised for the day.

### **PE**

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and the use of equipment should be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings. If shared school PE equipment is being used it must be sanitised both before and after each use. As it is expected that the PE hall will be used by different bubbles/classes, common touch points will be cleaned at intervals throughout the school day.

### **Extra-curricular Activities**

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities in the coming year is highly unlikely. However, should some occur it would not be recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time. The staggered finishing times will also make the scheduling of after-school activities problematic. Further updates will be provided in September.

### **Sanitiser/Sanitising units**

Wall-mounted sanitising units have been installed at each entrance to the school, in each classroom, in each Special Ed room, in the PE/assembly hall, library, kitchens, staffroom, offices. In addition, each member of staff will be given a sanitiser spray bottle and each pod will also have a sanitiser spray bottle.

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### **Personal Protective Equipment**

Visors will be provided for and worn by all staff members. Masks will be added when staff members are in very close proximity to children e.g. whenever a teacher is moving around a classroom and checking work (as children will remain in their groups/pods at the tables).

We appreciate that many people have different personal preferences re masks. Some staff members may prefer to use their own cloth masks, but there will be a supply of disposable masks available to staff in case people have forgotten their cloth masks or choose not to wear a cloth mask.

Staff taking part in personal care etc. will always have access to disposable masks. Disposable aprons, gloves etc. will also be available for staff engaging in personal care with a child.

Staff who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves and face masks.

Masks or visors must always be worn when teachers are moving around the school and where 2 metre physical distancing cannot be guaranteed.