



St. Brendan's Boys' N.S.

Covid19 Response Plan

**Practices and Procedures for Reopening and
Operating Our School Safely**

updated on the following dates

26/08/2021

7/09/2021

27/09/2021

22/11/2021

01/12/2021

17/01/2022

As a school community we are continuing to navigate our way through what has been the most challenging time in the history of modern Irish education. As we look forward to re-opening our school on 1st September we need to work together to keep everyone safe.

Our school will continue to operate as we did last year. As a school community we will have to continue with to new and revised practices and procedures many of which are detailed in this plan. **The Health, Safety and Well-being of all members of our school community is of paramount importance to us all.**

Procedures have been put in place in line with HSE and Department of Education and Skills advice and guidance and are subject to change as new advice or the changing needs of our school dictate.

It cannot be emphasised strongly enough that all members of the school community must adhere fully to the practices and procedures put in place to ensure all of our safety. Any instances of non-compliance will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management. Covid-19 poses a serious risk to us all.

Through the implementation of the practices and procedures as outlined in this policy our school community aims to:

- Do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our school.
- Reduce the likelihood of the spread of Covid-19, insofar as possible, within our school if introduced.
- Detail for all members of our school community on how our school will reopen for all students from the 1st September and what the operation of our school will look like so as to be sustainable in a COVID-19 context.
- Balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning.

In order to minimise contact between pupils, insofar as possible, the school will operate based on 4 Zones for arrival and dismissal. The Zones are:

Zone 1: Ms. Smyth's 5th and 6th class and Ms. Fox's class 6th Start 8.50 a.m. Finish at 2.30 p.m.

Zone 2: Mr. Blake's class 3rd and Ms. McCarthy's 2nd class Start 9. 00 a.m. Finish at 2.40 p.m.

Zone 3: Ms. Glynn's 4th class and Mr. Mulhall's 5th class Start 9. 10 a.m. Finish at 2.50 p.m.

Zone 4: Ms. Murray's 1st class and Ms. Seoighe's class 1st and 2nd Start 9.20 a.m. Finish at 3.00 p.m.

Zone 5: Ms. Regan's 3rd and 4th Start 9. 00 a.m. Finish at 2.40 p.m.

All of the classes in the Blue zone will enter and leave the building using the door in the left corner of the yard. **(Door 1)**

All classes in the Red zone will enter and leave the building using the far door (**Door 2 nearest to the field**)

Ms. Regan's classroom is on the right at the bottom of the steps.

Assembly and dismissal of pupils

- **Parents/ Minders are asked not to enter the school grounds and to leave the area outside the school gate promptly**
- When pupils are dropped at the designated time they must proceed to their line on the yard
- Please observe social distancing and follow the arrows and signs
- **Pupils must arrive as close to class starting time as possible. No pupil should be on school grounds before 8.45 a.m.**
- Pupils **WILL NOT** be permitted to congregate/play in the school yard on arrival/dismissal.
- Where families have pupils in multiple classes with different drop off times, they may be dropped at the earlier drop off time and proceed directly to their classroom.
- Where families have pupils in multiple classes with different collection times, pupils in later dismissal groups may be dismissed with siblings in earlier groups.
- Parents **MUST ENSURE** that appropriate arrangements are put in place for assembly and dismissal of pupils.
- Walking or cycling to school is encouraged

Break Times for Classes

The guidelines recommend that we decrease interaction as much as possible. Due to the outside space in our school we are fortunate to be in a position to decrease, insofar as possible, interaction between pupils in different classes. Break times for classes will be staggered and separate play areas will be allocated to classes as detailed below.

Each class will have two twenty minute breaks:

Ms. Regan's class and 4th, 5th and 6th

1st break 10.30 a.m. to 10.50 a.m.

2nd break 12.30 p.m. to 12.50.p.m.

1st, 2nd and 3rd classes

1st break 11.00 a.m. to 11.20 a.m.

2nd break 1 p.m. to 1.20 p.m.

The field and yard will be divided to allow each class have its own area and these will rotated

- In the guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) each class is referred to as a 'Bubble'.

- Children in 1st and 2nd class are not required to be physically distant from each other.
- The children from 3rd to 6th will be further divided into pods or groups with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods. There will usually be 4 to 6 children in a pod.
- A 2-metre distance will be observed by the class teacher, where possible. Teachers will wear face coverings where the 2-metre distance cannot be observed.
- 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. The Department is to supply us with CO2 monitors with a view to ensuring that the best ventilation practices are in operation.
- Where a Special Needs Assistant is supporting a child, she will wear a face covering when she is sitting near the child.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry/exit points, outside and inside all class and support rooms and in the isolation room. We will revise training in hand washing and cough and sneeze etiquette in the first days back at school

Visitors to School

- Visits to the school by all persons other than staff and pupils will be **by appointment only**.
- Appointments must be arranged in advance through the school office, by phone on 091 841217 or by email at office@stbrendansbns.com
- Each visitor entering the school will be required to complete a Contact Tracing Log irrespective of the duration of the visit
- Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between staff and all visitors to the school.
- Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between all adults when on school grounds.
- Visitors with pre-arranged appointment **MUST wear suitable face coverings**.

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;

- Parents/Guardians should inform the school in advance if, for a particular reason, they need to collect their child outside of normal school hours.
- When the adult arrives at the school, for a pre- arranged appointment they should either phone the office or use the buzzer 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.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so or by appointment.

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 (Delta Variant)

Symptoms of Covid-19:

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste
- Fatigue
- Aches and pains

Uncommon symptoms include:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Feeling sick or vomiting
- Diarrhoea

If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following are the procedures which will be implemented:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area 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 may be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. The child should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.
- The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover his mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bin provided
- An infra-red non-touch thermometer may be used to take the child's temperature. A call will be made to the parent/guardian so the child can immediately be brought home. **Parents must be aware that an appropriate adult must be available to bring the child home promptly.** Parents should call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
- 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.

The Lead Worker Representative

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with implementing infection prevention control measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

An Assistant Lead Worker Representative is also appointed in addition to the LWR in our school. The role of the LWR will be to deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent.

The role of the Assistant LWR will be to:

- assist the LWR in their duties as set out above; and deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent

<i>Name(s) of lead worker representative:</i>

Brid Lawless

Eileen Mannion (Deputy LWR)

Infection Prevention Control Measures

To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

Staff and children should not attend school if:

- diagnosed with Covid-19

- if in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19 or is awaiting a test result (if fully vaccinated follow current HSE guidelines)
- if a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- if directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- recently returned after travelling abroad (please see gov.ie for list of mandatory quarantine countries and rules that apply)
- if generally unwell.

Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school

If, on medical advice, a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, suggested activities to support the child's learning at home may be shared with parents by the class teacher (and/or the special education teacher, where relevant).

Child's Personal Equipment /School Books and Copies

- All children should bring their school bag with pencil case, colours, books (if they have them) and copies. **Pupils are allowed to bring their school bags to and from school on a daily basis.** The teacher will distribute books which are being rented.
- All items should have the child's name on them

Tissues: All children should have a packet of tissues in their school bag. The teacher will also have tissues available.

- **Lunches:** All lunch containers and drink containers/re-usable bottles should be washed at home every night. Children should be able to open their own containers and bottles.
- **No toys or equipment** to be brought to school from home.

School Books:

- A safe system will operate for the management of books and copies within the classroom

Shared Equipment

- By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, laptops, and equipment used for learning activities.
- 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.

Special Education

In keeping with our Special Education policy, 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 particular bubbles.

- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers will 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 special education rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending

Special Needs Assistants

- Due to the number of SNAs allocated to our school by the Department (access is not one-to-one), SNAs will be deployed across different bubbles within the school.
- When this occurs, all HSE guidelines will be followed.

Physical Education (P.E.)

- All PE classes will take place outdoors for the month of September. Any equipment used will be cleaned after the class. All classes will be encouraged to take additional movement breaks/classes if the weather permits.

Homework

- There will be no homework until Monday 13th September as pupils settle back into school routines.

Extra-curricular Activities

- There will be no extra-curricular activities, including after school Homework Club.
- Further updates will be provided in late September.

Uniform

- Uniforms should be worn each day and washed regularly.
- To lessen groups of children congregating in the cloakroom the boys will **not** be asked to wear slippers in class.

PPE

PPE will be provided to all staff members. All staff are required to follow the latest guidelines from the Department of Education in relation to PPE. Medical Grade Masks, in the EN16483 category are provided for all staff and teachers in special schools and special classes and those staff by necessity that need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care

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.

Curriculum and Wellbeing

- We will be following the advice as contained in ‘*Curriculum Guidance for Primary Schools: Teaching, Learning and Assessment 2021 – 2022*’ as published by the Department of Education, August 2021.
- There will be a focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Well-being (including physical well-being) for the first few weeks, in particular.

This updated plan was noted by the Board of Management at a meeting held on 26th August, 2021.

It will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as any new guidelines issue or as the need arises.

Signed: Monsignor Cathal Geraghty, Chairperson, Board of Management

Update September 7th

Five CO2 monitors have arrived. 3 are being shared between the classes

Ms. Fox and Mr. Mulhall, Mrs. Glynn and Ms. Smyth and Ms. Murray and Ms. Seoighe

Mr. Blake, Ms. Regan and Ms. McCarthy each have one.

Update September 27th

Public Health advice is that children who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in schools, childcare facilities, sports, and social settings, will not have to restrict their movements or get a COVID 19 test.

Update November 22nd

A child does not need to [restrict his movements](#) or get a COVID-19 test if they have no symptoms and they are a close contact of someone in any of the following:

- Primary school
- Childcare or early learning service
- Sports activity
- Social event

If your child is a close contact of someone with COVID-19 in a [household setting](#), and **does not have symptoms**, they need to [restrict their movements](#) and get a COVID-19 PCR test.

If your child is a close contact of someone with COVID-19 in a [household setting](#), **and has symptoms**, they need to [isolate](#) and get a COVID-19 PCR test. They need to do this even if they are fully vaccinated or had a positive test in the last 9 months.

You will get a text message with a link to a website where you can provide your child's details. When you have done that, you will get a text message with appointment details for your child's free COVID-19 PCR test.

Update December 1st

Children from 3rd class up are advised to wear face masks.

Children who are close contact of a case in school, may be asked to use antigen tests, supplied by the HSE, as an additional tool. If any stage a child develops symptoms of COVID-19 or an antigen test is 'positive' they should be isolated at home and parents should arrange a PCR test for them.

January 17th All rooms now have CO2 monitors