

Kilcolman NS COVID-19 Response Plan for Safe Return to School 2021

A COVID-19 Response plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. This plan will detail the policies and practices that are necessary for our school to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol', the Department of Education plan for school re-opening and to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

Points to note:

- All children return to school and operate a bubble system. **Bubble 1**- Junior & Senior Infants, 1st & 2nd and **Bubble 2**- 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class.
- The school day will stay the same 9 -1.40 p.m. for Junior& Senior Infants, 9 -2.40 p.m. for 1st - 6th class.
- The day will include 1 x10 minute break and 1 x30 minute break for all children. Bubbles cannot mix outside.
- From 3rd to 6th, the children will be divided into pods, with a distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all classes and support rooms.
- Children will come to school with their hands washed. Sanitisation will occur on entry to the school. Children will wash/sanitise hands before and after eating, yard time, when their hands are visibly dirty, at home time and when they cough or sneeze.

Arrival at school:

This year we will be operating a one-way system to ensure that drop-off and collection of your children is as safe and efficient as possible. The main gate is the entry point marked ENTER, and the exit gate is the upper yard gate, marked EXIT.

- The school doors will open at 8.50am
- **All children** will enter through the main gate at the front of the school, maintaining social distancing as they do so.
- **Junior and Senior Infants, 1st and 2nd** will enter the school through the **side door** of the junior classroom.

- On the morning of 1st September, Ms. McGoldrick will greet the class at her side door entrance. Please enter at the entry point, main gate. Please exit using gate marked on upper yard.
- **Junior Infants will start at 9 am and go home at 12 p.m. for the specified dates in September.**
- **3rd, 4th 5th and 6th** will enter the main door and proceed to sanitise their hands on entry to classroom. Ms. Dennehy will greet the children at the main door.
- Unfortunately, parents/guardians are unable to enter the school grounds without prior invitation from the principal. We would ask that you would adhere to this policy.

Communication with teachers should take place by email or phone 023-8839460

End of school day

- Children will sanitise hands on leaving the classroom.
- **Infants** will leave at their normal time of 1.40. Each child will be stand at their designated cone/spot on the yard. Parents can enter the yard by using the main gate, marked Enter, and collect their child. Please exit at the Exit gate on upper yard.
- **3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class** will leave at end of day and line up maintaining social distancing outside the school. The teacher on duty will call family group(s) and wait for each group to exit the upper yard exit gate before calling the next family group.
- Parents/carers are asked to always observe physical distancing during entry and exit of the school and outside the school wall.
- Parents/carers are asked to wear masks where practicable.

Collection of children during the school day

- In the event of an appointment or early collection, please advise the school in advance to facilitate the collection of your child
- If your child needs to be collected or dropped off later, an e-mail should be sent to the school the previous evening, indicating the reason for collection/drop off as well as the time.
- When you arrive at the school gate, you should phone the school number to indicate you are waiting for collection/drop off.
- Drop-off of any forgotten items during the school day is facilitated by the use of a clear plastic, covered box at the main door. A text/ phone call can be made to the school number.

Yard

Children will remain in their bubbles at yard time.

Dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

Pupils should not attend school if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. If a pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following are the procedures that will be implemented:

- Parents/Guardians will be informed 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 always maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the child.
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask while in a common area with others and while leaving the school.
- An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will 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 facilitate them calling their GP.
- The child presenting with symptoms will be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and 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 general practitioner 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.
- The school will carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery.
- 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 diagnosed case of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE will 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 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. Please refer to the Guidelines for Parents information leaflet available here; <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/covid-19-schools-and-parents-resources/back-to-school-advice-for-parents.pdf>
- **A precautionary approach should be taken to illness.**

Please note the common and uncommon symptoms of Covid -19 (Delta Variant)

Know the Symptoms of COVID-19 In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19

It is important to know and recognise the symptoms of coronavirus (which includes the DELTA variant).

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
- Fatigue
- Aches and Pains

Other **uncommon symptoms** of coronavirus include:

- sore throat
- headaches
- runny or stuffy noses
- feeling sick or vomiting
- diarrhoea

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show.

They can be similar to symptoms of cold and flu.

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), self-isolate (stay in your room) and phone your family doctor straight away to see if you need a free COVID-19 test. Getting an early diagnosis means, you can get the help you need and take steps to avoid spreading the virus, if you have it.

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE Website. Symptoms may be subject to change so regular review of the HSE Website is advised. If you do not have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a COVID-19 walk-in test centre.

COVID-19 Tracker App COVID Tracker app is a free and easy-to-use mobile phone app that will:

- alert you if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)
- keep other app users safe by alerting them if you test positive for COVID-19
- give you advice on what to do if you have symptom

Pupil Absences

- **Please complete the Return to School Declaration form for all absences, regardless of the reason.**

Supporting the learning of children who cannot attend school:

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period, the class teacher (and/or the Learning Support teacher where relevant) will provide suggested activities to support the child's learning at home.

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

- Public health advice will be sought from the HSE.

Ventilation

Classrooms will be well ventilated with windows and doors open where practicable.

The main door will remain open, where practicable, in order to ensure fresh-air flow throughout the school day.

Carbon dioxide monitors are to be provided to classrooms. More updates to follow when these are made available.

Personal Equipment/Belongings

- In so far as is possible, it is requested that children will bring their own pens, pencils, rubbers etc. to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment. Lunch boxes and bottles should be clearly labelled with child's name.
- School uniform to be worn as normal.
- Book rental books are allocated to children at the beginning of the year and retained for the entire term.
- Coats will be hung on labelled hooks. No congregation of pupils will be allowed at cloakrooms/ coat hooks.

- Children will not be permitted to bring any items from home that are extra to their required materials and books.
- It will be necessary to share some items between classrooms, in particular, tablets. Each item/tablet and cover will be sanitised after use.
- Library books will be steam cleaned (disinfectant fogging) daily.
- Pupils will be provided with a plastic box for all their desktop items and books.

Learning Support

- Where children from a class receive support in the SET room, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- Where a group of children are to attend classes with SET, the old school classroom will be used. Children will be seated at a physical distance of minimum 1 metre. The tables/chairs will be wiped down and the room aired out after use.

PPE

- As recommended, all staff will wear masks.
- Sneeze guards (Perspex barriers) will be used by teachers on desktops where physical distancing is not possible.
- Staff administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE.
- Parents may request their child wear a mask; this particularly pertains to children in the senior room

Teacher Absence and substitution

If a teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for that class.

If, however a number of teachers are absent, difficulties may arise as 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 this is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

Cleaning

The school will be cleaned daily by BKR group, ensuring we adhere to the cleaning guidelines as laid out in the Return to School guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills.

Updates

We will strive to ensure that parents/guardians are informed in a timely manner of any changes that the Government may make with regards to the re-opening of our schools, any changes in public health advice or any changes that may occur to new routines we have set up in the school. We will use e-mail/text and the website as our main forms of communication.

