



## COVID-19 Policy Statement

**Boolavogue National School** is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan in conjunction with our Risk Assessment.

The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct handwashing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.



## **Boolavogue National School Logistics Plan**

### **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.

### **School Profile**

- 111 pupils on roll as of Sept 2021
- 5 Multi-grade class teachers, includes teaching principal
- 2 Special Education Teachers
- 4 SNA posts (1 full post, 1 on 0.83 hours, 2 on 0.5 hours)
- Part Time Secretary (19 hrs/week)
- 1 Cleaner (10.5 hrs/week)
- Part Time Caretaker (4hrs/week)
- Classrooms vary in size from 35m sq. to 56m sq.

### **Additional Challenges**

- Parking facilities around the school and village for parents are very poor - possibility of parents not maintaining physical distance outside of the school grounds, i.e. drop off, collection times.
- No classroom big enough for 5th/6th class - move classroom to the parish hall
- S.E.T room in prefab too small to maintain physical distance - move to the parish hall

### **Assumptions**

- School will reopen on August 25<sup>th</sup> for staff, and August 27<sup>th</sup> for all pupils. All children return to school and classes within a bubble system

- The day will include 2 x 20 minute breaks (with separate yard time for junior and senior classes)
- Within each class, the children will be divided into pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms.

Timetable for the school day
<p><b>9.10 – School opens to receive pupils and all staff in rooms/supervision positions</b></p> <p><b>10.30 - 10.50 – Break time (Juniors to 3<sup>rd</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>11.00 - 11.20 – Break time (4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>12.20 - 12.40 – Lunch time (Juniors to 3<sup>rd</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>12.50 - 1.10 – Lunch time (4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>2.00 – Infant classes finish</b> (<i>Junior Infants will finish at 12noon until Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September</i>) (Exit via the door adjacent to the classroom and collected at designated gates)</p> <p>*On wet days a one way system will be in operation for parents of infants. Enter via designated gates, collect child at the door adjacent to the classroom and exit via car park gate.</p> <p><b>2.50 – 1<sup>st</sup> class finish</b> (Exit via main door and are collected at the main exit gates)</p> <p><b>2.55 – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class finish</b> (Exit via main doors and are collected at the main exit gates)</p> <p><b>3.00 – 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class finish</b> (Exit via the door in their classrooms and collected at the main exit gates)</p>

**Please note:**

- A new break time routine, 20 mins x2.
- 5th and 6th class will relocate to the parish hall in order to ensure social distancing guidelines are adhered to.
- A S.E.T classroom will relocate to the hall.

## **Hygiene and Cleaning**

Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, at the door of each classroom. Small pump/pen dispensers are available for each staff member also. Soap (which emulsifies at low temperature) and water is available in all classrooms and toilets.

Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message. At a minimum the pupils will:

- Sanitise hands before entering the classroom
- Wash hands before eating
- Sanitise hands before going to yard
- Sanitise hands after time on the yard
- Wash hands if visibly dirty

In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be thoroughly cleaned at least once per day. Particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, tables/work surfaces, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area/classroom. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building. Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

Waste will be collected regularly from classrooms and other areas within the school.

Staff must use and clean their own delph and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.) Staff can use the items already in the school if they wish but must clean and store in individual area. Items cannot be shared. Staff are asked to have their own travel/thermal mug if they wish to have tea/coffee in their classrooms for morning supervision.

## **Changes to Classroom Layouts**

The DES guidelines recognise that a common-sense approach is needed in our Primary schools. To that end, every effort will be made to limit interaction within classrooms, to limit contact between class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities.

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class Bubble is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until the children go home at the end of the school day.

It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors so there is no requirement for children from Junior Infants to Second Class to maintain a physical distance within their Class Bubble.

Children from 3rd Class to 6th Class will be arranged in Pods within their Class Bubbles, with a

maximum of 6 pupils per Pod. As far as possible, each Pod will be at least 1 metre distance from the next Pod. All unnecessary furniture will be removed from these classrooms to create as much space as possible.

As previously noted, 5th and 6th class and a S.E.T classroom will be relocated to the parish hall in order to ensure physical distancing can be maintained at all times. Children in these classes will return to the school premises for break times.

### **Teaching and Learning**

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12<sup>th</sup>. Boolavogue N.S. Board of Management and staff would like to thank parents for their efforts to continue learning over the past number of months.

Teachers will not assign homework until the week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> of September to allow pupils, parents and teachers to adjust to various new school routines.

Each child will be at a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we need to take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2020/2021 school year. The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum guidelines for us, and have asked parents to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during the return to school.

In keeping with Department of Education Guidance, priority for teaching and learning will be placed on numeracy, English, Irish, physical education and SPHE. Using wellbeing activities and extra physical activity throughout the day will be very important.

Our usual practice is to provide support to pupils based on what is known as the Continuum of Support. This is a tiered system that provides Whole School and Classroom Support for all pupils, additional School Support for some pupils, and School Support plus extra targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff. These are promoting:

- A sense of safety
- A sense of calm
- A sense of belonging and connectedness to school
- A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy
- A sense of hope

From day one, it is important to address Covid with the pupils, reassuring the boys and girls about safety, reminding hygiene and coughing etiquette, social distancing etc. Some useful advice is available on:

<https://assets.gov.ie/71270/020b6865d1bd49429573570c195c05dd.pdf>

<https://www.unicef.ie/stories/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.crc.ie/talking-to-children-about-covid-19/>

### **Communication with school**

Boolavogue N.S. continues to pride itself on a good communication system between home and school. Unfortunately that system has to somewhat change for the foreseeable future. Parents will not be permitted to enter the school building unless collecting a pupil presenting with Covid 19 symptoms. We would urge parents to contact class teachers through your child's homework diary. Alternatively contact can be made by emailing or phoning the school office.

### **Contact Tracing Log**

All visitors to the school will be required to complete a Contact Log.

### **School Payments**

School payments are to be sent into school with your child. The exact amount of money is to be placed in an envelope clearly labelled with:

- Child's name
- Teacher's name
- Initiative name (e.g. book money)
- Amount enclosed stated

Children will not be sent to the Secretary's Office to deliver messages/money.

### **Learning Support**

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. For September, the focus will be primarily on in-class support (when suitable) and the pastoral care of our pupils. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within the confines of the minimum amount of class bubbles.

- 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 receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group. Only pupils from the same class bubble may be withdrawn together for SET purposes.

- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending
- Karen/Aishling
  - Carmel McCabe

### **SNA Deployment**

SNAs can rotate between areas/classes if needed, but this will be kept to an absolute minimum where possible. When rotation occurs (e.g., assisting child in 2<sup>nd</sup> class with medical needs) agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

- Emma/Sineád – 1<sup>st</sup> class
- Loyola – Junior & Senior Infants
- Caroline – 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class
- Éilís - 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class

### **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention.

The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile'.

A free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and staff members are encouraged to make use of the service when the need arises.

### **Staffroom**

All staff members should maintain a physical distance of 2 metres when they are not engaged in teaching e.g. when they are using the staff room and arriving to work. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, face coverings should be worn. Staff meetings will be held in larger spaces to facilitate physical distancing. The introduction of split breaks will ensure a maximum of 5 staff members in the staffroom/office at any one time.

All staff will use their own delph, cutlery etc and take home to wash.

All staff are asked to wipe down appliances (kettle, toaster etc) after use.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to keep the staff room clean and sanitised at all times.

*\*The staff room will relocate to the prefab for the duration that the prefab remains on school grounds.*

### **Office**

Staff should ensure to use the photocopier in the morning before 9.10 or in the evening after 2pm/3pm. The photocopier should be wiped down after each use.

The phone receiver should be wiped down with antibacterial wipes after each use.

All staff and visitors to the office should speak to Sabrina through the Perspex screen.

### **Entrance & Exit Points for Specific Classes**

***To facilitate pupils entering and exiting the grounds safely, we ask that no pupils be present on school grounds before 9.10a.m. From 9.10a.m to 9.20a.m, staff will be supervising on the school grounds. Over this period, pupils can enter the school grounds through their designated gate and proceed directly to their class, where their class teacher will be waiting for them.***

S.E.T's (and SNA's when appropriate) will supervise outside from 9.10am - 9.20am.

Parents/Guardians should drop children off at the school gates.

Doors will be numbered and gates will indicate specific classes. Teachers must escort the pupils to their exit gate each day.

Children who avail of the bus will be supervised by their class teacher until the bus leaves at 3p.m.

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Entrance Gate</b>	<b>Entrance Door</b>	<b>Exit Gate</b>	<b>Finish Time</b>
Mrs. Zara Gallagher	Junior & Senior Infants	Double gates beside the main gate	2	Double gates beside the main gate	2pm
Ms. Róisín Reville	1 <sup>st</sup> class	Main gate	1	Main gate	2.50pm
Mrs. Aoife Bennett	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> class	Main gate	1	Main gate	2.55pm
Mr. Willie Cleary	4 <sup>th</sup> class	Main gate	3 (new classroom 1)	Main gate	3pm
Mrs. Michelle Coleman/Mrs Amy Moloney	5th & 6th class	Main gate	4 (new classroom 2)	Main gate	3pm

**\*Parents of 5th and 6th class pupils will follow a one way system for drop off and collection times. We ask that parents walk with their child in through the main double gates onto the parish hall grounds, allow their child to enter the hall and then exit via the pedestrian gate. We ask parents to follow the same route at collection times.**

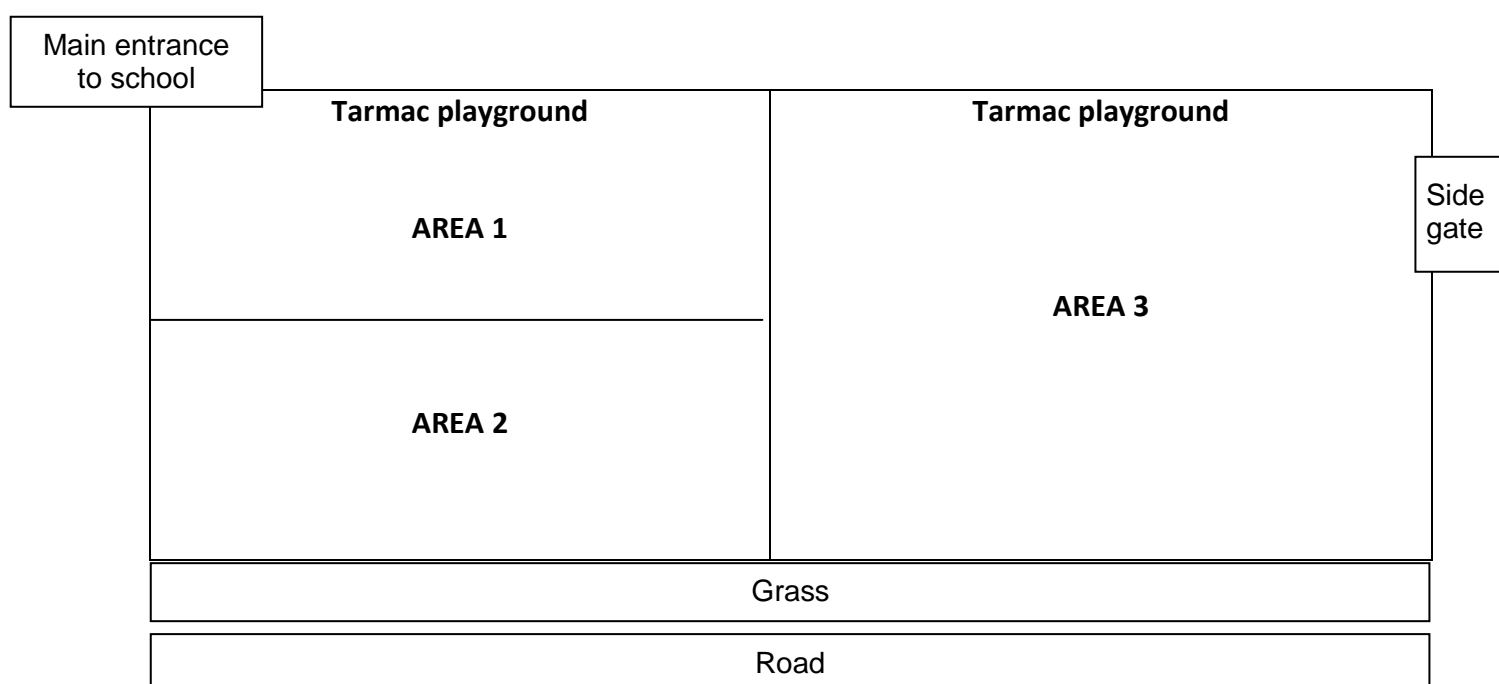
### **Yard/Break times**

Classes will be assigned specific areas for break times during which they will not mix with other



classes. Pupils from the same class can play freely with each other but physical contact will be kept to a minimum where possible. Each break will be supervised by one teacher and SNAs attached to the classes on yard. Teachers must escort their class to their designated yard. As previously noted, a new break time routine will be introduced whereby Junior Infants - 2nd class and 3rd - 6th class will have separate break times. All classes will have two 20 minute breaks.

- Areas:
1. Junior Infants
  2. Senior Infants/ 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class (will use both Area 1 & 2)
  3. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Class/ 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class



We will look at the option of rotating classes who access the grass during dry weather.

One teacher will be on yard for each break. Please familiarise yourself with the rota.

We will be required to put on PPE to apply any plasters etc. If handing a child an ice pack this is not necessary. Ice packs must be sprayed with disinfectant/detergent and cleaned after each use.

Please make sure children use the toilet before yard as they will need to use their own toilet if they leave the yard, they cannot go to another class' toilet. Usual procedures but we should try avoid as much movement/crossovers as possible. Pupil's will use assigned toilets during break times.

## **Toileting**

Junior infants - in the classroom

5th & 6th class - in the hall

There are two toilet blocks with sinks located off each end of the main corridor - one girls toilet and one boys toilet for class bubbles Senior Infants, 1st/2nd class and 3rd/4th class.

Boys toilet = 3 toilet cubicles - one cubicle will be allocated to each class bubble (5th & 6th will use same cubicle as 3rd & 4th during break times)

Girls toilet = 4 toilet cubicles - one cubicle will be allocated to each class bubble (also one for 5th & 6th to use at break times)

Only 1 child permitted to go to the bathroom at a time from each class bubble.

Children will be reminded to keep as much distance as practically possible if they meet a pupil from another class bubble on the corridor or in the toilet block.

## **Lunches**

Pupils will be given time to eat lunch in class as usual. Pupils should eat directly from their lunch boxes, not to use the surface of the table to lay their food on. Also, sharing of food is not permitted. The school will no longer fill water bottles for children. Lunch boxes and drinks bottles should be washed thoroughly at home, inside and out each day. **No food or drink will be brought out onto the yard.**

## **PE**

Where possible, PE should take place outdoors and use of equipment should be confined to the sets that will be distributed to class groupings. Staff members and pupils may take additional breaks outside during the school day. All classes are encouraged to participate in 'The Daily Mile'.

## **Personal Equipment**

- In so far as possible, it is requested that children from 1st to 6th Class will bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment. This should be kept in school and separate items should be kept at home for homework as necessary.
- 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 container which will hold each child's pencils, crayons, etc., and which will be labeled with their name.
- It is requested that children bring all purchased school books to school on Thursday 27th August and leave them in their classrooms.
- We ask that children do not bring unnecessary items into school, ie toys, own books.

**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.

**Library and Guided Reading**

Library books should be placed into a sealed box for 72 hours before going back into circulation (i.e. into the box on Friday and place back on shelves on Monday). Guided reading will operate on a similar basis. SET will support class teachers in the administration of guided reading.

**Visiting Teachers/Coaches**

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities such as GAA coaching, will be explored. However, it is not recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time.

**PPE**

The Department of Education advise that facemasks should be worn by all staff who cannot maintain a 2m social distance from pupils. The BOM are supplying all staff with disposable and reusable facemasks as well as a face shield. Gloves and aprons will also be provided for providing intimate care or first aid.

**Assembly**

Whole school assemblies will not take place, but may be held via Zoom using the classroom IWBs. Daily school assemblies will no longer take place on the corridor before dismissal times.

**Corridors**

Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions. We will keep to the left in the corridor. Arrows/footprints will be placed on the floors to remind pupils of this.

**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, Special Education Teachers may be required to cover for mainstream teachers in the case of their absence and a substitute teacher is not available.

**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 intercom 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
- Sabrina will sign the child out and record what adult is collecting the child
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

**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 the SET assigned to that child's class will provide suggested activities to support the child's learning at home and will be shared with parents.

**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

## **Illness and Absences**

### **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 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.

## **FAQ**

**What is happening with homework?** There will be no homework until 28th September. This may be reviewed.

**Can I send in a bottle of sanitiser with my child?** Yes, but please remind your child it is for personal use.

**Can my child wear a facemask?** Yes, if you want them to but they are not required to.

**Will staff be wearing facemasks?** Yes, at times i.e. where social distancing is not possible and for personal care.

**Will Parent Teacher meetings be taking place?** Currently they are postponed.

**What if I need to speak with my child's teacher?** Please contact Sabrina in the office to arrange a time to speak with your child's teacher.

**What happens if my child forgets their lunch or drinks?** The school will contact you so you can drop one to the school for your child.

**My child has hay fever and sneezes quite a bit, will he/she be sent home?** If your child has an underlying condition such as hay fever (as many of us have) please make sure the class teacher is aware. The symptoms we will be keeping an eye out for are:

- A fever (38 degrees Celsius or above)
- Ongoing cough
- Shortness of breath
- Loss or change to sense of smell or taste

**What if my child is sent home with a suspected case of Covid 19?** We would advise that you contact your GP/HSE for further advice. If a child is unwell they should under no circumstances be sent back to school.

**Are parents permitted in the school building?** No, unless collecting a pupil presenting with Covid 19 symptoms.

**Why are pupils not allowed onto the school grounds before 9.10am?** As there would be insufficient staff to guarantee physical distancing would be ensured, we cannot allow pupils onto the playground.

**My child is in a “pod” with some other children, can they still play with their other classmates at break time?** Yes, within their class bubble (see page 3).

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes in “pods”?** Yes. Due to our classroom sizes this is the most practical option for our school. Pods will be distanced as much as possible within the classroom and pupils will be distanced as much as possible within the pods.

**If my child falls on yard/gets a bump or cut?** Our first aid policy will be followed, but staff are required to wear PPE to apply first aid.

**Why can some of the classes not mix? They are playing soccer/GAA together anyway!** That may be the case for some of the pupils, but our procedures are governed by Dept. of Education Guidelines, which state that every effort must be made to limit the amount of contact between “bubbles”. We do not adhere to what other sporting /social organisations are using.

**Will teachers talk to the boys and girls about Covid 19?** Yes, from day one we will be reteaching cough etiquette, hand hygiene, reinforcing the idea of social distancing/reduced physical contact and chatting (in an age appropriate way) about Covid 19. The aim will be on reassurance and promoting calmness and safety.

**Will the children wear their uniform?** Yes, it is business as normal in relation to uniform. There is no guidance from the Department of Education or HSPC to the contrary.

**Will the school be cleaned during the day?** Yes, all staff will monitor their rooms and common touch areas.

### **Implementation and Review**

The whole school community are responsible for playing their part in implementing this plan.

This policy and logistics plan was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

A review of this plan will take place in September 2020.