



# **Star of the Sea Primary School**

## **Response Plan for Re-opening of the School**

### **(Updated September 2021)**

#### **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 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.

#### **Role of Parents:**

The following are protocols that are put in place to safeguard the health and safety of all in the school community as we reopen the school. If the procedures are to work, parents and children must comply fully. The routines will be reviewed weekly and changes may be made where deemed necessary.

**Under no circumstances is a parent to bring a child to school if the child is exhibiting any symptoms of Covid 19-**

#### **The most common symptoms of Covid 19 are:**

- Cough - this can be any kind of cough, usually dry but not always
- Fever - high temperature over 38 degrees Celsius
- Shortness of Breath
- Breathing Difficulties
- Lack of smell/taste.
- If the child has been vomiting or has diarrhoea.
- If generally unwell

If the child has been in contact with any family member and or other person who has Covid-19 – HSE guidelines/advice must be followed

#### **Assumptions**

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system
- It is recognised that children Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> class are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors. However, all classes will divide children into Pods. Within each class from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, the Pods, where possible, are arranged with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between Pods.



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- Opening/closing times are not staggered but all pupils must enter and leave by their designated gate/door
- The school is split into 2 groups with each group having different break times. Groups comprise of one class from each stream.
- The day will include 2 x 20 minute breaks
- Hand sanitiser is available at all entry points and in all classrooms and support rooms  
Soap/paper towel is in all classrooms

#### 1. Arrival and Departure Procedures for Children and Parents:

##### **Your co-operation is asked with the following:**

- Parents must drop and go.
- Parents will not be allowed enter the school grounds and/or building without prior appointment.
- Parents are not to use the staff carpark
- At arrival social distancing is to be maintained by children and parents.
- Under no circumstances are parents and carers to gather in groups in the car park
- Be on time

All children to enter and exit through their assigned **gates and doors**.

<b>Classes</b>	<b>Gate</b>	<b>Door</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> classes	Side gate near building	Fire door entrance
1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Main side gate	Main entrance
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Main side gate	Far Fire Exit Doors

<b>Classes</b>	<b>Entrance Gate</b>	<b>Door</b>	<b>Exit Gate</b>
Junior Infants – Ms Mooney	Main side gate	Far Fire exit Door	Main side gate
Junior Infants – Mrs Deasy	Main side gate	Far Fire exit Door	Main side gate
Senior Infants – Mrs Daly	Main side gate	Main door	Side gate nearest building
Senior Infants-Mrs Hunter	Main side gate	Main door	Side gate nearest building



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#### Arrival:

- ❖ School opens at 8.30 am. There are no assigned times for drop-off as 3 entrances are in use.
- ❖ Children enter school grounds through designated gates
- ❖ Children proceed directly to the yard area
- ❖ At 8.50am, accompanied by their teacher, children go straight to their class from the yard
- ❖ Children will hand sanitise on entering the building or in their classroom
- ❖ On wet days children go directly to their classroom via their designated entry door where they will be supervised.

#### Departure:

- ❖ Hometime is Infants 1.30pm and Classes 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> 2.30pm (Junior Infants follow a different schedule for the first 3 weeks in Sept)
- ❖ Parents are asked to be punctual for collection time, not to gather in groups and to leave the school car park promptly.
- ❖ Parents will not be allowed on the school grounds.
- ❖ Infant classes and First classes will be accompanied to their assigned school gate by their teachers -parents wait in drop down/car park zone. This will be the collection procedure even on wet days so please ensure your child has a suitable coat with him/her.
- ❖ If delayed, let the school know in good time and your child/children will be accommodated.

#### Unscheduled Departure from School.

Early departures from school must be for a **valid reason**. We acknowledge that at rare times a child may have to be brought for an appointment during or before school finishes. Please let the teacher know in advance. Sign out your child at the office and he/she will be brought to you. Where possible collect before a schedule break/yard time (Break times information to follow). Please avoid other classes' home collection times.

#### 2. Pods

All classes Junior Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> are divided into 'PODS' of maximum 6 pupils. If and where possible the children in the Pods are kept 1m apart and each Pod is 1m apart from the next Pod. Each class then becomes a bubble whereby the bubble does not mix with other bubbles. For organisational purposes Pods are lettered A - E  
Children's names will be on their desk on the first day so that there is no loitering or gathering in groups as they enter the classroom.



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Class resources will be used by children within the pod and sanitised before their use by another Pod.

#### Personal Equipment

In so far as possible, it is requested that children will bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment. Parents should consider having a second set at home.

**NB** It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification. A strong tote/box is needed 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Classes. Teachers of younger children will advise parents of their requirements separately.

### **3. 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.

### **4. Break Times**

Break Times are now divided into 2 x 20 mins breaks. The school is divided into 2 Teams with a class from each stream in each Team. Class teachers will inform parents of their break times. The yard is divided into 8 sections and each class/bubble will play in their assigned section. Classes/bubbles will not be allowed to mix while in the yard. Classes will enter/exit through designated pathways. With the continued permission of Passage West Soccer Club, the Astro will be used for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> classes.

#### **Break Times**

**Team1: 10.20 am -10.40 am  
12.10 pm – 12.30 pm**

**Team 2: 10.50 am – 11.10 am  
12.40 pm – 1.00 pm**

### **5. Hand Hygiene**

Dispensers have been placed on all entry/exit points and in classrooms. Soap and paper towel are available in all bathrooms for hand washing

Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene:

Frequency of Hand Hygiene



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- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing outdoors;
- When hands are physically dirty;
- When you cough or sneeze.

#### 6. PPE Face Coverings

It is not recommended that children under 13 years wear face coverings. As a general rule staff will wear face covering in the classroom and school surroundings– either visor or mask, but in particular when a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from the children. Appropriate PPE will also be worn when administering first aid and intimate care.

#### Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. If a pupil presents as unwell while in school, 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 the designated support person. 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.
- The child will be advised not to touch any surfaces.
- 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 and any communal areas as soon as practicably possible.
- **NB Child/family confidentiality is essential and parents of the other children in the class will not be informed that a child presented as unwell unless the school is directed**



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**to by the Public Health Authorities.**

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.

Instructions re travel should also 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
- Have been instructed by the HSE to absent themselves from school
- 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 – Consultant's letter required.
- 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 due to Covid-19 related illness (including HSE recommendation to self-isolate/quarantine), the class teacher (and/or the learning support teacher, where relevant) will liaise with parents to support the child's learning at home.

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

'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 staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times' - *Covid-19 Response Plan for the Safe and Sustainable Operation of Primary and Special Schools Par.8 pg 25.*

At this point the school will follow public health advice.

#### **Learning Support**

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning 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 a bubble.

- 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.



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- Where children receive support in one of the SET rooms, where possible social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending

#### **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 and/or to adhere to Dept. of Education guidelines in relation to providing substitute cover for classes. However, during the year the situation may arise where it is not possible to provide a teacher to teach in the class. In that situation 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 that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

#### **PE**

Where possible, PE should take place outdoors and equipment should not be shared among pods. Equipment used must be cleaned prior to reuse by other classes.

#### **Additional and Extra-Curricular Activities**

For the foreseeable future, as social distancing cannot be maintained between pods, swimming, Drama with Mrs Ellis and Zumba dancing will not take place. The possibility of facilitating additional and extra-curricular activities with staff and external teachers will be determined by Dept of Education guidelines. It would not be recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time. Further updates will be provided as guidance is received.