



COVID-19 Logistics Plan for the Safe and Sustainable Reopening of Newtown Junior School

Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make every effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of the 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.
- This is a living document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents and new guidance from www.gov.ie, www.dbei.ie, www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie; www.education.ie or agreements with education partners as appropriate for primary and special schools.

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NEWTOWN JUNIOR SCHOOL

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How will school change for my child?

Whilst there will be some changes, the important thing to note is that many things will stay the same. The children will have teachers and a support team who care greatly about them and want to provide them with the best education possible. The children will cover the same subjects as before and have the same resources in the classroom as before. Lots of new resources are also being purchased to limit the need to share materials. We will incorporate fun activities throughout the week and will place a big emphasis on wellbeing to include lots of PE. The key changes are:

- Hand Hygiene – there will be a major emphasis on this throughout school. There are hand sanitisers throughout the building. As always, hot water, soap, paper towels will be available for handwashing.
- Physical distancing – the children will be encouraged to keep at least 1 metre apart where possible, particularly in the senior classes. Whilst indoors, children will mix primarily with their assigned group (Pods). At playtime, there will be outdoor mixing between Pods. Classroom Groups (Bubbles) will not mingle with another class group.
- Collect – each Class will now have its own individual Collect programme and we will no longer arrange indoor assemblies.
- Visors/Facemasks - Staff will wear these when a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.
- Personal Materials and Homework – Each child will keep his/her own items in an individual tray. No homework will be set for September so from 2nd September, each child only needs a lunchbag with lunch box and drink.

Classroom organisation - Bubbles and Pods

Within the Reopening Our School Plan, the Department of Education/Skills guidelines refers to classes as Bubbles and groups within classes as Pods. The aim of the system within our school is to minimize interaction between Bubbles. The creation of Pods within Bubbles is an additional measure rather than an absolute requirement.

Our Bubbles:

Bubble One: Mrs Long and Junior Infants

Bubble Two: Ms Stapleton and Senior Infants

Bubble Three: Mr Moran and First and Second Class

Bubble Four: Ms Macdougla and Third and Fourth Class

Bubble Five: Mr Busher and Fifth and Sixth Class.

The SET team (including SNAs) will also limit interactions with children from different bubbles.

Junior Infants to Second Class Bubbles

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 will be allocated to Pods and will be encouraged to interact primarily within the Pod but there will be interactions between Pods.

Third Class to Sixth Class Bubbles

Children from Third Class to Sixth Class will be arranged in Pods with a maximum of 8 pupils per Pod. These pods will remain in place for several weeks. All unnecessary furniture has been removed from the classrooms to create as much space as possible. Each Pod will be at least 1 metre distance from the next Pod. Children will be actively encouraged to mix only within their allocated pods whilst indoors. Last year's class teacher will liaise with this year's class teacher to organise the Pods. We will be trying to get the right balance between catering for friendships and ensuring the dynamic of the group is conducive to teaching and learning.

Communication between home and school

- Unfortunately, we can no longer have the incidental/informal chats with parents in the morning or at home time. We can arrange a phone call to discuss any issue that arises during the year.
- Visitors to the school are by appointment only. Visitors must complete a contact tracing form, sanitise on entry to the building, wear a mask during the visit and maintain a 2 metre distance from staff and pupils.
- Text a Parent will continue to be used for short general school communication. Please download the app to your phone as this is the fastest way to receive messages.
- Email will be used for additional communications.
- General Covid-19 updates will be posted on the Covid-19 section of our website.
- Please ensure that we have your current contact details. We will circulate our standard Contact Details Form at the start of term. During the year, if your details change, please inform us as soon as you make the change.

Arrival at school in the morning

General points:

- Children are not to congregate in front garden before 8:30 am.
- Parents/Guardians are asked to "Drop and Go" at school gates.
- There will be staff members (including Special Education Teachers, SNAs and the Principal) available outside and inside the building to receive the children and to help them to their classrooms.
- Pupils will be supervised in their classrooms by their Class Teacher.

- Adults are requested to maintain a distance of 2m from one another at drop off points.

Drop off Times: 8:30 to 8:45 as usual for all classes.

Class start Time: 8:45 am and doors will close at 8:45. On Monday 31st August start times for Junior Infants will be staggered in accordance with email issued to parents.

Children are requested to sanitise their hands on entry to the school building and on entry to the classroom. Sanitisers are located at all the necessary points.

Junior Infants to Second Class	Third Class to Sixth Class
<p style="text-align: center;">Access route to school:</p> <p>Enter school grounds via the small green gate and follow green arrows to enter school building via front door. Continue to follow green arrows to go direct to classroom to meet Class Teacher.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Access route to school:</p> <p>Enter school grounds via the new double gate and follow red arrows to enter school building via front double doors. 5th and 6th to go direct to class room. 3rd and 4th to continue to follow red arrows on ground to go direct to classroom to meet Class Teacher.</p>

Leaving from school at the end of the school day

General Points:

- **All classes will finish at the usual times save FIRST AND SECOND who will finish at 2.20**
- Parents/Guardians are asked to “Collect and Go”.
- Adults are requested to maintain a distance of 2m from one another at collection points.
- Children are requested to sanitise their hands leaving the classroom and on leaving the school building. Sanitisers are located at all the necessary points.
- To avoid waiting for older siblings, pupils in Classes 3rd to 6th may leave at same time as younger siblings in Classes 1st /2nd.

Arrangements for each class:

Junior Infants: Usual home time is 1:30 (for the first two weeks Junior Infants finish at 12noon). Children to be collected at front door as usual with parents to wait in front garden and to maintain a social distance from others.

Senior Infants: Usual home time is 1:30. Children to be collected from the double doors at the front of the school with parents to wait in front garden and to maintain a social distance from others.

First and Second Class: Home time will be **2.20pm**. Children to be collected at front door as usual with parents to wait in front garden and to maintain a social distance from others. Please collect on time and leave garden quickly to allow access for others.

Third and Fourth Class: Home time will be the usual time of 2.30. Children to be collected from the double doors at the front of the school with parents to wait in front garden and to maintain a social distance from others.

Fifth and Sixth Class: Home time will be the usual time of 2.30. Children will leave our school via the grounds of Newtown Senior School. They will be brought to the Newtown School front gate by the Class Teacher and from that point, they will be allowed to make their own way to meet parents. Parents are asked to park and wait outside Newtown School gates.

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:

- Where possible, please notify school in advance of the need to collect children. This can be done via phone call or email to the office;
- When the adult arrives at the school, please use the intercom at the front door of the school or phone the office to alert the office of arrival. If the office is closed, please use the intercom to contact the classroom direct;
- The child will be brought from his/her class to the door by a member of staff;
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out; and
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.

Timetables

This is a general outline for each class:

Timetable for Junior and Senior Infants	Timetable for First and Second Class	Timetable for Third to Sixth Classes
8:30 - 8:45 Drop off	8:30 - 8:45 Drop off	8:30 - 8:45 Drop off
8:45 Lessons start	8:45 Lessons start	8:45 Lessons start
10:15 Fruit break	10:15 Fruit break	10:30 Fruit break
10:30 Playtime	10:30 Playtime	10:45 Playtime
10:45 Return to class	10:45 Return to class	11:00 Return to class
12:00 Lunch time	12:00 Lunch time	12:30 Lunch time
12:15 Playtime	12:15 Playtime	12:45 Playtime
12:30 Return to class	12:30 Return to class	13:00 Return to class
13:30 Hometime	14:20 Hometime	14:30 Hometime

Fruit Break and Lunches

Children will eat their fruit breaks and lunches in their classroom under the supervision of teachers. Children will require a snack for Fruit Break, a lunch and a drink. Please remind children not to share their food or drinks with other children. Please label lunch bag, lunch box and bottle and ensure that they are washed in warm soapy water each evening.

Playtime Arrangements

The risk of virus transmission from contact with outside surfaces and play areas is low. Break times will be staggered to minimize interactions between bubbles. Children from Junior Infants to Second Class will be in one group with Third to Sixth in a second group.

A timetable has been drawn up to allow for access on rotation to specific areas of the garden for specific Bubbles at each playtime. Playtime will be supervised by staff working within the relevant Bubble.

Classes will be provided with a clearly labelled football and basketball for use during playtime. Children will be asked to sanitise hands on entering and exiting playground. Children will be asked to wash hands if hands are visibly dirty.

Class Bubbles have been allocated to specific areas for line up at the beginning and end of break. These areas have been selected to ensure that Bubbles do not mix on entry to playground or on exit.

School Uniform

There is no guidance to say that school uniforms should be washed daily and this is probably not practical for most families. Please follow our usual practice in relation to uniforms. We suggest that children should wear their school uniforms or tracksuits only for school related activities. Please ensure all items of clothing are clearly labelled.

Books and materials personal to each pupil

All classes: On Monday 31st please send in all your child's books and copies and a set of stationery for exclusive use in school. If the book lists mentions multiples of an item, please just send one of the items to school now. Your child can let you know when a replacement is needed. All items sent to school will remain in school. **Please ensure all items are clearly labelled.** We will encourage the children not to share items.

In the **Infant classes**, children will be provided with individual zip lock bags for regularly used items. The teacher will carefully store books in individual trays.

For children in first to sixth class, we will provide labelled plastic containers for each child. All the children's books and stationery items will be placed in these boxes which will be stored on each child's desk.

Shared Materials

Some classroom equipment needs to be shared including games, tablets and the equipment used for structured activities and for play in Infant classrooms. Sharing of equipment will be limited to sharing within pods. Items will be quarantined between use and cleaning of such shared equipment will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

Homework and school bags

Homework will be postponed until October therefore a school bag will be needed on the first day only to bring in school books and materials. Children should not bring a school bag on the following days until further notice. A lunch bag only will be needed. Setting of homework will be reviewed in late September.

Hygiene and Cleaning

Sanitiser will be available at all entry and exit doors and in all classrooms. **It would be helpful for children to bring own sanitiser to school for use at Fruit Break and Lunch time.**

Warm water, soap and paper towels will be available in all pupil and staff for hand washing.

Hand hygiene, correct respiratory etiquette (coughing into elbow and sneezing into tissues) will be promoted and encouraged. Parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message at home.

Opportunities will be timetabled throughout the day for pupils to clean their hands, apart from those times when they cough or sneeze or simply get dirty.

In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be cleaned at least once per day. Particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs, 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 and frequently touched surfaces.

PPE

It is recommended that primary school teachers and staff wear face coverings where a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. In these cases, our staff will wear face masks and/or visors. All staff will follow HSE guidelines on the correct way to use face masks and visors.

Perspex screens will also be on Teachers desks to enable them to work with individual children.

Staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves, face coverings and disposable aprons.

Ventilation

Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces. To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible, and will be opened while children are taking breaks in the playground. In Winter months, children may need to wear additional clothing in classroom to stay warm.

Toilets

Toilets are in communal areas so Class Bubbles will be assigned to toilets. Class teachers will ensure that only one pupil per Bubble is present at the toilets. Warm water, soap, paper hand towels and pedal bins will be provided in all toilets. Teachers will promote of good hand hygiene when using toilets. Please also promote this at home.

Corridors and Stairwells

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 observe our usual practice of keeping to the right when on the stairs and in the corridors. Markings on floors will assist children in following designated routes.

Teaching and Learning

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Distance Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Distance Learning presented for all families. Each child will be in a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure parents/guardians that staff will 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 has asked that we prioritise certain aspects of the curriculum during the initial weeks of the first term. Greater time will be given to areas such as Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Physical Education (PE) to support children's wellbeing. Language and mathematics will be central in supporting children's overall learning. Gradually as we begin to build a picture of where our pupils are at and we will work towards more typical curriculum plans.

PE

PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings. Swimming will be postponed for Term One.

Collect and House Clans

Collect will take place within each classroom. Each day will start and end with a moment of Silence. From time to time, outdoor socially distanced Collect may take place with the Junior Collect separated from Senior Collect. House Clans will operate as before save that Clan Meetings will not take place for now.

Support Teaching

In keeping with our Special Education Policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of withdrawal and in-class support. Special Education Teachers and SNAs can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

In the SET rooms no more than two children will attend at a time. If children attend in pairs, those pairs will be from the same Bubble. Perspex screens will also be provided to further protect pupils and staff. The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending. Resources for each child will be stored in an individual folder/tray/ziplock bag.

Members of our SET team are shared with another schools. Every effort will be made to reduce the number of days on which the teacher is shared. A record of their contacts will be maintained as they may be needed for contact tracing purposes.

Supporting the learning of children who cannot attend school for medical reasons

If a child is not able to attend school for medical reasons for an extended period of time, the class teacher's and/or the Special Education Teacher will suggest activities to support the child's learning at home. This will be done in consultation with Parents and in accordance with DES guidelines.

Dealing with a Suspect Case of Covid-19

Pupils should not attend school if displaying any 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.

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

- Parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as the teacher becomes aware that the child is displaying symptoms;
- 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. 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. Where a parent can collect a child, the parent will be advised to contact the GP;
- The school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist by calling their GP;
- The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover his/her mouth and nose with a disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided;
- If the child is 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; and

- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

The school does not have a role in informing the school community about Covid-19 cases. This would be a breach of confidentiality. It is entirely the role of the HSE to contact trace and inform people. It is also the role of the HSE and Public Health authorities to decide whether to close the school if there is a confirmed case. Our school will follow DES and HSE guidelines in this matter.

When should my child stay at home?

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 displaying Covid-19 symptoms – fever, breathing difficulties, new cough or loss of sense of taste; and
- Children who are generally unwell.

Guidance to pupils who have recently travelled abroad

It is a requirement for anyone coming into Ireland, from locations other than those with a rating of ‘normal precautions’ (“green”), to restrict their movements for 14 days, and this includes school staff, parents and children or other students coming from abroad to attend school in Ireland. Restricting your movements means staying indoors in one location and avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible

Updated: 27.08.2020