

Scoil Mhuire Ruan

Ruan, Ennis, Co. Clare
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School Roll no: 19442N

30.08.2021

A thuismitheoirí, a chairde,

Beatha agus sláinte chugaibh. As our return to school is fast approaching, our preparations for reopening are progressing well. While you are making the final preparations for your child's return, we would like to bring your attention to our Covid-19 Response Plan.

We will continue to monitor this plan and amend where necessary.

Scoil Mhuire Ruan **Covid-19 Response Plan**

Guiding Principles

- Scoil Mhuire Ruan is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all our pupils and a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff.
- We have developed the following Covid-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan.
- This plan is in keeping with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills.
- 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.

Day to day procedures

- It is intended that Scoil Mhuire will reopen for every child on Tuesday 31st August.
- Our Junior Infants will be visiting the school on Monday 30th August.
- Each of the classrooms will be regarded as bubbles. From 3rd – 6th class, the children will be further divided into pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods. Where possible, but only where possible, the 1 metre distance between children within each pod may be kept.
- Classes will begin at the usual time of 9.20am, however, the school will be open to receive children from the earlier time of 9.05am each morning. Children will go directly to their rooms. Parents are

not to enter the school yard unless by prior arrangement. (Please see Arrival at School section for further details.)

- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all rooms and support rooms. While hand sanitiser will be readily available in all classrooms and at entry/ exit points throughout the school, any child wishing to have their own bottle of sanitiser throughout the day in their bag is welcome to do so. **This bottle should be labelled with the child's name and is for their personal use only.**
- Children may **only use hard plastic containers as lunchboxes and plastic drinks bottles**. These must be washed daily. No non-plastic carrier bags, material-covered lunchboxes or metal drinks bottles are allowed in school.
- Hand washing/Sanitising will take place regularly throughout the day
 - On arrival at school
 - Before eating
 - After using the toilet
 - After a cough/sneeze
 - After playing outdoors
- We would kindly ask that ahead of their return, you reinforce correct hand washing techniques and cough etiquette with your child
- Warm water and soap will be available in all toilets for hand washing.
<https://childrenshealthireland.ie/connolly/how-to-wash-your-hands-properly/>
- All classrooms will have windows open at a minimum for two 15 minute periods per day to improve ventilation and minimise risk. This is recommended in line with good practise.
- CO2 Monitors – We await delivery of our CO2 monitors from the Department of Education. We expect to have them in place in all classrooms by mid September.

Lead Worker Representative.

Ms. Assumpta Lyons has been appointed as the Lead Worker Representative. The deputy Lead Worker Representative is **Ms. Carmel Scully**. Assumpta and Carmel are currently undergoing training. Their role is to liaise with the in-school management team and to monitor compliance with the school's Covid-19 response plan.

Break times

Break times for all class bubbles as follows:

- **First Break, 20mins:**
10:50-11.10
- **Lunch Break, 20mins:**
12:40 – 1.00

Each class bubble will have their own defined area on the school yard during break times.

Entry and Exit Points

Arrival at School

- In line with government Covid-19 guidelines and for the continued protection of our pupils' health and safety and that of our wider school community, **all children travelling to school by car/ vehicle must enter at GAA pitch entrance**. This is the **only** drop off point.
- We ask parents to drop off their children as they enter the GAA grounds.
- In line with government guidelines, social gatherings are not encouraged.
- Children arriving by bus and those walking to school from home will enter the school grounds by the main gate.
- The morning drop off/admission time has been extended to allow for social distancing and hand sanitisation on entry.
- School grounds can be entered by pupils from 9:05am.
- Children must go directly to their assigned classroom where a staff member will meet them. There will be no playing in the yard before school to avoid children in different class groups mixing.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the school grounds unless by prior arrangement. For those with prior arrangements, face coverings must be worn.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by homework diary, Aladdin or by phoning the school office. The school secretary, Patricia, is available daily. The school contact numbers are (065) 6837301 and (086)7813627.

Doors

All class bubbles will enter and exit the school through their own specified door.

- Infants will enter to the far side of the school using the door at the gable end of their classroom.
- First and Second Classes will use the main school door as their entrance.
- Third and fourth Classes will use the middle front door.
- Fifth and Sixth Classes will continue to use the first front door.

End of School Day

The following arrangements will apply at the end of the school day

- Collection for all class bubbles is from the small gate at the GAA pitch entrance
- Junior and Senior Infants – At 2pm, the class teacher will bring the children to the small GAA gate and will return the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them. Those attending playschool will be escorted to the playschool building.

- Junior Infants will have an earlier collection time of 12.30pm until 10th September. Collection will be from the small gate at the GAA pitch entrance.
- 1st – 6th Class - the class teachers will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately to their designated point in the yard to await collection from the small gate at GAA pitch entrance.
- Children who travel home by bus will be accompanied to the bus.
- Children will sanitise their hands at the exit points as they leave the building.
- Those children who are walking home will leave the school grounds once all vehicles have departed and it is safe for them to do so.

Parents are asked to wait in their car for the collection of all children. No adult is to enter the school grounds except by prior arrangement.

Collection of Children during the School Day

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, having given prior notice to the school, the following arrangements will apply:

- When the adult arrives at the school, the child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

- Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 (high temperature or fever, cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties, loss of smell, taste or distortion of taste). Further information is available at www.HSE.ie. 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 on the numbers provided. If a member of staff cannot contact the parent/guardian then the backup person listed by the parent will be contacted. (Please ensure all contact details are up to date.)
- 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. Another member of staff will be asked to step into the classroom to supervise the class in the teacher's absence maintaining social distancing. **Compassion, care and reassurance will be shown/ given to the child at all times.**
- A mask may be provided for the child presenting with symptoms.
- 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 if needed.
- The child presenting with symptoms will 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 bin provided.

- Parents will be advised to inform their GP by phone of their child's symptoms.

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.

Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school

If a child is not able to attend school for a period of time, suggested activities to support the child's learning at home will be shared with parents by the class teacher (and the support teacher where relevant).

Children who should not attend school

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school –

- Children displaying any symptom of Covid-19 (high temperature or fever, cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties, loss of smell, taste or distortion of taste). Further information is available at www.HSE.ie
- 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 should follow HSE guidance
- Children who are feeling unwell

Please refer to Isolation quick guide for parents and guardians of children older than 3 months and up to 13 years of age – Version 2.3 17.08.2021. This was emailed to all families on 30th August 2021.

Impact of a Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class

If the school is notified that a person in your child's class has a confirmed case of Covid-19:

- The parents of all children in the class will be notified
- Public health advice will be sought and followed

Personal Equipment

- To further reduce the risk of spreading the virus, we ask that every child **has two pencil cases** - one for **home use** and one to be **left in school.**
- It is further requested that all items in the school pencil case have the child's name on them for ease of identification.
- When covering books and copies, contact/ plastic covers are recommended as they can be wiped regularly and easily
- Under no circumstances will children be allowed to share drinks and food. Unidentified/unclaimed drinks bottles or lunchboxes will be discarded.

School Uniform

- With regard to school uniforms, our advice is that there have been no issues from a public health perspective regarding school uniforms; therefore the normal policy for this remains unchanged.
- The uniform consists of a navy trousers/ skirt/ pinafore with pale blue t-shirt and navy jumper with school logo. No leggings or expensive branded clothing.

Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including iPads, laptops, class readers and the equipment used for structured activities and play in Infant classrooms.

Cleaning of all shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

We ask that children do not bring any personal toys to school.

School Cleaning

School cleaning hours have been increased to 3 hours daily cleaning of the whole school after school. Cleaning will be in line with Department of Education and Skills guidelines.

Teacher Absence and Substitution

In the event that a 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, it may be necessary for a member of the Special Education Team to supervise the class on that day. This will avoid the necessity for class groups to remain at home if their teacher becomes ill and a substitute cannot be found.

School Staff

It is recommended that teachers/ staff wear a face covering when a physical distance of 2 metres from the staff or children cannot be maintained.

Visiting Teachers/Others

- **Requests for work experience for TY students:** Unfortunately these placements will not take place in the first term as we endeavour to minimise the risk of infection within the school and adjust to our new circumstances. It is hoped that these students may be accommodated later in the year if conditions improve.
- **Visiting teachers and coaches** may visit the school and they shall be given clear guidelines about social distancing/sharing equipment and children will remain in their own bubbles for such activities.

The BOM and School Staff are looking forward to welcoming all our pupils and parents back to school for the 2021/2022 school year on Tuesday, 31st August. We are satisfied that we have control measures in place to ensure that this will be a safe re-opening and we thank you for your continued co-operation and support,

Le meas againn oraibh,

Ms. Niamh Ní Chonghaile
Principal

Ms. Linda Hannon
Chairperson, BOM

Mr. Michael O'Neill
Deputy Principal