

Re-Opening Plan for St.Brigid's N.S. Annacurra

Section1 Key Message

- The Board of Management of St. Brigid's N.S. Annacurra, have made every effort to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of all the school community- pupils, staff and parents.
- The plan is informed by the Departments of Health, Education and Skills
- This plan was formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise its duty of care to all
- This plan aims to ensure that all children return to school for all five days of the week and for the full day. This assumes that this is in line with the Guidelines from the dep at the time of opening
- It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the cooperation of all the members of the school community it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced into the school and minimise the risk of its spread
- As well as the co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure that the plan can be implemented.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a0bff-reopening-our-primary-and-special-schools/>

Section 2 Covid 19 and Basic Precautions

COVID – 19 is a new illness that can affect the lungs and airways and is caused by a new virus called the Coronavirus.

Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets. To infect you, it has to get from an infected person's nose or mouth into your eyes, nose or mouth. This can be direct or indirect (on hands, objects, surfaces). If you come into close contact with someone who is shedding the virus and who is coughing or sneezing or if you touch - with your hands - surfaces or objects that someone who has the virus has coughed or sneezed on, and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes without having washed your hands thoroughly you may contract the virus.

As COVID-19 is a new illness, we are still learning about how easily the virus spreads from person to person and how to control it, so it is important to keep up to date and make sure you are using the most up to date guidance available. This information is available from the following links:

- HSE-HPSC: <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>
- HSE Hub: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
- Department of Health: <https://www.gov.ie/en/news/7e0924-latest-updates-on-covid-19-coronavirus/>

COVID-19 can be a mild or severe illness. Severe illness is much more common in older people (especially older than 70) and in people vulnerable for other reasons. Severe illness is much less common in children and young adults in good health. (See below)

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.
- Symptomatic people appear to be most infectious for other people in the early days after symptoms begin. Infection can also spread from people in the day or two before they get symptoms and it can spread from some people who get an infection but have no symptoms or such mild symptoms that they take little notice of them (asymptomatic spread). People are no longer infectious for other people 14 days after they have developed symptoms.

Best practice for Parents and Pupils:

- In order to prevent the spread of the virus-
- if you have been in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms
- If you have coughed or sneezed
- if you were in contact with someone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing)
- if you have been on public transport,
- if you have been in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)
- if you have handled animals or animal waste
- If you move from one room to another room or from inside to outside areas
- If you have physical contact with a child from another group other than their own group
- if your hands are dirty
- when you arrive and leave buildings including your home or anyone else's home
- After using the toilet
- Before having a cigarette or vaping before and after eating
- Before and after preparing food
- Before and after eating your own food – breaks/lunches
- After assisting a child to use the toilet or using the toilet themselves
- After contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, spit, vomit, blood, faeces)
- After cleaning tasks

You must - Wash your hands with soap and water (which is the best method to get rid of germs) and or use a hand sanitiser

You must -Practice good respiratory hygiene: that is, when coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – discard tissue immediately into a closed bin and clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

You must - Maintain social or physical distancing: that is, leave at least 2 metres (6 feet) distance between yourself and other people where possible, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.

Must not engage in handshaking or hugging

Must avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth – if you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself
Keep your hands in good condition. Moisturise them often. Any basic product that is not perfumed or coloured is OK.

The staff will complete multiple lessons on correct hygiene, lining up, the importance of hand sanitising, staying within their pods/bubbles etc. with the children during the first weeks back in school.

Section3 Pupil Illness

Role of Parents:

It is important that parents have a clear understanding of the benefits and risk of childcare and that it is not possible to guarantee that infection can be prevented in any setting either in a childcare centre, school or in the home.

The following are protocols that are put in place to safeguard the health and safety of each other. Parents are expected to abide by them and failure to do so may result in a parent being instructed to remove a child from the school building/yard, and or to leave the school premises themselves. If serious breaches of safety measures occur, the board and or the police may be informed or called if needed.

- **Under no circumstances is a parent to bring a child to school if -**
- **if the child is exhibiting any symptoms of Covid 19-**
- **If the child has a temperature, is sneezing, coughing, who has been vomiting or has diahorrea.**
- **If a child has been outside of the country in the 14 days prior to August 31st h, they are not to attend school but must isolate**
- **If the child has been in contact with any family member and or other person who has Covid or who has been notified to get a Covid Test**

The school will operate a zero-tolerance approach to the above and request to keep a child in from the yard cannot be facilitated as adequate supervision has not been granted by the Department. Temperature testing may take place at the discretion of the principal if a child is unwell. Parents will be contacted immediately and must remove the child if the temperature is above 37.5c

It is each parent's responsibility to ensure the school office has up to date contact details.

Section 4: Arrival and departure procedures for children and parents:

- **Parents must arrive on time for leaving in and collecting their child.**
- Only parents or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 14 days where advised are allowed to drop off and collect children.
- Any parent who is in a high- risk category should not drop off or collect children in order to protect themselves. (This of course is at the discretion of the individual parent/carer/grandparent's discretion)
- Staggered arrival times will be put in place for 8.50am and 9am. (See below)
- Unfortunately, it will **not be possible** for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before/after school. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, the children may not come onto the school grounds before the school doors open at 8.50.

Morning:

- Class Teachers will be in their classrooms by 8.50 am.
- Parents are asked to walk their child to the gate at the ***church carpark only*** at *allocated time*. Front entrance cannot be used
- **Surnames K to W drop off time 8.50 am**
- **Surnames A to J drop off time 9am**
- **ASD Classes start time 9.10**
- Children will go directly to their classrooms on arrival. Other staff members (including Special Education Teachers, SNAs and the Principal) will be available outside and inside the building to receive the children and to help them to their classrooms.
- Each class has a separate door for entrance and exit throughout the school day

Arrangements for Junior Infants 31st August to 14th September

- Junior Infants arrival time **9.20am** –until 14th of September
- Junior Infant collection time **12 o clock-** until 14th September
- Parents may accompany Junior Infants to Infant Entrance only (*as per diagram*) at **9.20am.** until 14th of September

- Enter via church carpark steps to classroom
- Parent will **not** be allowed to accompany child into the classroom
- **Parents must arrive on time for leaving in and collecting their child.**
 - Class Teacher will bring **Junior Infants** to the school gate- *opposite the car park*. Parents must wait in their cars until the Class Teacher and children arrive. Parents may proceed to the designated collection area while maintaining social distancing and collect their child. *-an additional waiting area will be allocated in the carpark to allow for social distancing while collecting*

From 14th September: Junior infants will enter and exit as per School Plan

Evening Collection

Junior and Senior Infants

- 1.40p.m. Class teacher will bring **Junior and Senior Infants** to the school gate- *opposite the car park*. Parents must wait in their cars until the Class teacher and children arrive. Parents may proceed to the designated collection area while maintaining social distancing and collect their child. *-an additional waiting area will be allocated in the carpark to allow for social distancing while collecting*

First to Sixth Class

- Parents must wait in their cars until the Class Teacher and children arrive. Parents may proceed to the designated collection area in church car park while maintaining social distancing and collect their child-*an additional waiting area will be allocated in the carpark to allow for social distancing while collecting*
- Collection time for Ms. Traver's Class is 2.30pm
- Collection time for Ms. Snell is 2.35pm
- Collection time for Mrs. Gahan and Ms. Carey will 2.40pm. These children will exit in their Class Bubbles
- Older children may walk directly to their cars
- If parent is collecting additional child/children- they must accompany first child to the car and return to collect additional child/children
- Cars must **not** leave the carpark before **all children from all classes** have been collected to ensure a safe departure for all.

- **At arrival and departure times of children, social distancing is to be maintained by children and parents.**
- **Under no circumstances are parents and carers to gather in groups while waiting for children**

No parent will be allowed within the school building.

- ***A box for forgotten items will be placed at the front gate-please ring the office to let the teacher know***
- ***Staff will not be available to speak to parents at drop off pick up-***

Should a matter of urgency arise for parents, they must phone the office and make an appointment

Section5: Internal Organisation

General Principles.

Junior Classes

- In Junior Classes (Infants to 2nd) the school will implement a **Pod/Bubble/Team** approach as per Department Guidelines.
- Pupils seated at the same group will form a **Pod**.
- Pods will be seated 1m apart. Pods will comprise of 4 or 5 children.
- Children within the Pods will rotate following school holidays when deep cleaning of classrooms has taken place
- The full class will form a **Class Bubble**.
- Classes will be in a **Team** with the class opposite to allow for supervision at Break Times
- Interaction between classes outside of the bubble is not to take place.
- Furniture will be removed from the classroom where possible so as to provide additional space.
- All staff will reconfigure their classrooms in line with Departmental Guidelines
- Equipment/Resources should not be shared between Pods unless thoroughly cleaned
- Resources that can be easily cleaned will be used and toys and materials that are difficult to clean e.g. dress up clothes or soft toys during this temporary Covid-19 emergency will not to be used.
- Pupils will hand sanitise before and after using any materials
- All children should have their own wipeable pencil case containing stationary items as per booklist
- Individual packs containing other art and craft items will be supplied by the school

Third Class–Sixth Class:

- Classrooms have been reallocated and seating arrangement reconfigured to allow for social distancing.
- The full class is called a Class Bubbles and interaction between classes outside of the bubble is not to take place.
- Equipment/Resources should not be shared between pupils unless thoroughly cleaned
- Pupils will hand sanitise before and after using any materials.
- Pupils will not be allowed to share materials/resources.
- Each Class Bubble has their own designated exit and entrance door and toilets
- Additional resources and time have been allocated for cleaning of the school.

ASD Classes

ASD classes will form a Class Bubble

Support Teachers

- Larger rooms have been allocated to Support Teachers to allow for social distancing of pupils
- Support Teachers will decide on a combination of in-class and withdrawal to be utilised for the month of September
- Support Teachers will be allocated to specific Class Bubbles
- All work surfaces will be cleaned between groups

Classroom Allocation and Entrances: see attached map

Section 6: Break Times

General Principles

- The school aims to minimise contact between Class Bubbles during Break Time as per Department Guidelines. A staggered approach to Breaks will achieve this
- Monthly yard rota will be modified to reflect this arrangement
- Breaks will be 15 mins in morning and 25min for lunch
- Teams will alternate for supervision during Break Time

Team1: (A) Ms. Connaughton and (B) Ms. Carey

Team 2: (A)Mrs. Gahan and (B) Ms. Rochford

Team 3. (A) Ms. Travers and (B) Mrs. Snell

Team 4. (A) Eva and (B) Ms. Porter – (ASD Classes 1 Bubble)

Team 5. (A) Ms. Dolan and (B) Ms. Clare

Yard Teams:

First Yard Session: Team A

Second Yard Session: Team B

Each Class Bubble will be assigned a separate yard area

Class Teacher from the **Teams** will supervise to facilitate teachers breaks:

First Break

Team A will go on break at 10.30 to 10.45

Team B 10.45 to 11

Lunch break

Team A 12 to 12.25

Team B -12.30- 1pm

Adjoining Team teacher supervises children eating lunch and teacher's

Section 7: Additional Safeguards

- Parents must ensure that their child has a box of tissues which are **labelled** coming to school. **These must be replaced when empty.** (Please buy boxes of handkerchiefs as opposed to the small packets)
- Parents must ensure that all of the child's equipment/books/copies are labelled with the child's name as equipment/books cannot be shared.
- Parents are to ensure that their child knows and uses the protocols around coughing/sneezing/use of tissues/hand sanitisers **prior to returning to school.**
- Parents must ensure that all **books/writing equipment/lunch boxes/water bottles** are sanitised using alcohol wipes on completion of homework before being placed in the child's schoolbag.
- Water bottles are to be filled **at home every evening. Water bottles cannot be refilled in school**
- Pencils to be pared at home.
- Children are to go to the bathroom **before** they leave home for school daily.
- Children are to wash their hands **before** leaving for school

Parents and Uniforms:

- Children's uniforms must be clean and washed regularly as a child may have coughed or sneezed into their sleeve as per coughing protocols. P. E days will be allocated by teachers.

Children who may have symptoms:

- **Any child who is unwell with a fever, has a cold, influenza or infectious respiratory symptoms or is displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus is to stay at home.**
The child's parent should contact their GP and seek their guidance on referral for coronavirus testing.
- **Parents should contact school immediately**

Protocols if a child becomes unwell or presents as a suspected case of COVID-19 while at school -*The principal or Deputy Principal will be the Primary Responder*

- **Step 1:** Confirm the identity of the suspected cases with the reporting teacher/staff member
- **Step 2 :** Remind the teacher/staff member of the protocol when dealing with a suspected case (personal precautions, isolation within the room, giving child face mask, asking child to collect their belongings, telling child what will happen next, providing reassurance)
- **Step 3:** Delegate a staff member to contact HSE and seek any implications for the class, staff and other members of the school community
- **Step 4:** Request secretary/HSCL coordinator to contact parents immediately to tell them of collection point. Arrange for cleaning of Isolation Room
- **Step 5:** Put on P.P.E. as appropriate
- **Step 6:** Collect pupil at classroom door-bring to the Isolation Room- provide reassurance- maintain a 2 meters gap. -maintain visual presence as much as possible
- **Step 7:** Provide a quick briefing to parent/collecting adult. Direct them to contact their G.P. immediately on returning home
- **Step 8:** Remove P.P.E. and disinfect/discard as appropriate
- **Step 9:** Ensure Isolation Room is cleaned. Restrict access for 72hrs
- **Step 10:** Communicate HSE advice to any affected school staff and arrange for any arising communication to parents and or school community
- **Step 11:** Follow up with parent of suspected case

If there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in school.

The school will be contacted by local Public Health staff of the HSE to discuss the case. They will identify people who have been in contact with the person and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken.

- An assessment will be undertaken by HSE public health staff.
- Advice on the management of children and staff who came into contact with the person will be based on this assessment.

Symptomatic people should self-isolate and arrange to get tested for COVID-19. Confirmed COVID-19 cases should continue to self-isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days and should not return to school until they are advised that it is safe to do so. Close contacts of a confirmed case (their partner/family member should be notified and go home if at work and restrict their movements for 14 days. They should not attend work during that time.

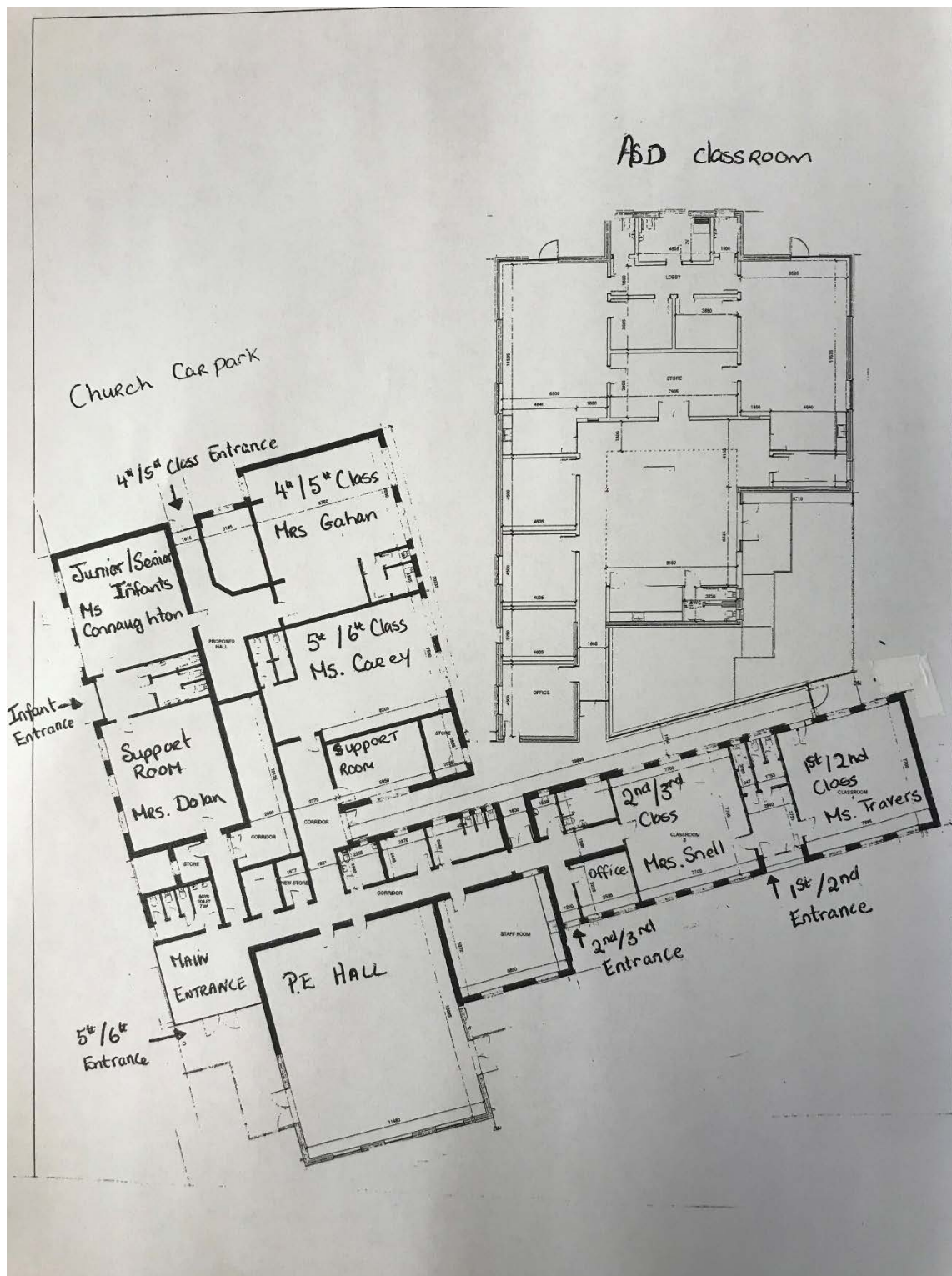
Children in High Risk Groups: Parents should seek advice from their GP/Specialist if they think their child is in a high-risk group. They must make an informed decision if it is safe for their child to return to school on August 27th. They should inform the principal of the advice given. The principal has already contacted parents of pupils known to her during August to discuss any possible concerns they might have. If there are any parents out there who have concerns about their child's health, please contact the principal on (0402) 36669

The Minister of Health recently announced that the flu vaccine will be available free to all children aged between 2 and 12 in the coming weeks. The vaccine will be given as drops on the tongue. We are awaiting further information on this and will let you know as soon as we get an update. It is more than likely that the vaccine will be given in the schools so as to avoid thousands of families descending on GPs.

Use of Face masks:

It is currently not recommended in Ireland for children under 13 to wear face masks as a mitigation strategy against the transmission of the coronavirus. It is currently the opinion of public health that their use, especially among young children, has the potential to cause more harm than good.

- If a parent wishes their child to wear a mask, this will be permitted. Staff will not be responsible for the fitting removal or maintenance of the mask.
- Where a 2metre distance cannot be maintained, staff must wear a facemask/covering. All staff will have access to a visor and mask.



COVID-19 Policy Statement

St. Brigid's N.S. 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. 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.

Signed: _____ Date: _____