



## Trinity Primary School's COVID 19 Response Plan 21/22

It is the government's plan that all pupils will return to school and follow last year's infection prevention and control measures at the end of August, 2021.

Trinity Primary School has a responsibility to make an effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community - children, parents and staff. This Response Plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.

It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the cooperation 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 and we all must focus on our school motto - 'Ní neart go cur le cheile' - there is no strength without unity.

### Content of our school plan:

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2. What will my child's room look like?
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## Our school building and environment

- At the main doors of the three campuses there are signs stating: **Children only beyond this point.**
- Each class will enter and exit the three Campuses via various routes. Each class teacher will contact parents on **Monday, August 30th** to state which gate and door their pupils will use to enter and exit the Campus.
- Lines are drawn on all yards to mark boundaries within which class groups/'bubbles' will play in during break/yard times.
- Our corridors/open areas are cleaned and unnecessary furniture removed.
- Each classroom (now known as a 'bubble') has a sink with warm water, soap and hand towels.
- Hand sanitising units are at all entrances/exits of the main school buildings, classrooms and along corridors.
- Each *bubble* (classroom) will be reorganised to ensure as much space as possible between *pods* (groups within classes).
- All surfaces, floors, windows, handles, railings etc. have been cleaned and sanitized. There will be a thorough clean every day when school finishes as well as regular cleaning in areas that are in use throughout the day such as handles, railings, tables, desks etc.
- A 'fogger' is in place in each campus and will be used routinely.
- All rooms will have windows opened as much as is practicable to ensure that there is good ventilation in the rooms and to prevent stagnant air in occupied spaces.



- Carbon Dioxide monitors are being supplied by the Department of Education to all schools to enhance the ventilation in classrooms.
- Equipment for PE and shared resources, such as iPads and laptops, have all been cleaned and will continue to be cleaned regularly.
- Posters and floor markings have been placed in all main areas and in classrooms.
- The 'Isolation Room' on each campus will be used in the event of any member of staff or pupils feeling ill. It will be sanitised appropriately after it is used.

### How will my child's classroom look?

- Hand sanitisers are inside every door. You can also bring in your own sanitiser.
- All unnecessary furniture has been removed from the classroom to maximise space.
- Equipment that is sometimes shared will be left at the back of the classroom, will be used minimally and cleaned after every use i.e. iPads.
- Coats will be hung on the back of chairs.
- Lunches/drinks will be kept in school bags.
- School bags will be placed under your child's desk.
- Hand washing, hand drying and sanitising area will be at the sink in the classroom, not in the bathroom.

### What does my child need to bring to school?

- Their own school bag.
- Their own water bottle and lunch bag/box.
- Coat and hat, when necessary.
- Wear School Uniform as normal. Wear PE tracksuit for PE days. Wash as normal.



- Pencil case with appropriate pencils/colours etc. Children will not be able to share personal belongings.
- Personal hand sanitizers/tissues optional.

## Preparing your child for school

- Continue to practice hand washing using soap, hot water and hand sanitiser.
- Continue to practice good respiratory behaviour - cough/sneeze into elbow, wipe droplets from nose, place tissues in the bin and wash hands.
- Ensure your child has clean hands everyday arriving at school and remind them to wash between fingers and nails.
- Reassure your child that the school will do its best to keep everyone safe and that it is normal to feel a little worried.
- Encourage pupils to let staff know if they are worried in school about anything to do with the safety measures that are in place.
- In the junior side of the school, encourage your child to be independent with regard to opening their school bag, lunch bag, water bottle and zipping coat

## Absenteeism

- This is the direction from TESS (Tusla Education Support Service) in relation to queries from parents re not wanting to send children back to school (who are not deemed high risk):

***TESS will be working on a return to school for all children and young people taking a supportive approach with a focus on the Welfare aspect of the work of all staff including EWS, SCP and HSCL. TESS will work collaboratively with all schools, families, children and young people to overcome barriers and support the national effort to ensure a calm and successful return focusing on child wellbeing in the first instance.***

***All schools must report absences of 20 days or more to Tusla on the school returns system. Where there is a specific concern in relation to unexplained absences a school***



***Principal, Parent or other agency can refer a child to the Educational Welfare Service for intervention under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000”.***

## **Training and Induction**

- Staff have reviewed all training documents provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES).
- All staff will complete COVID 19 Induction Training prior to returning.
- Staff will be kept up to date with all public health advice, guidelines and changes.
- Staff are aware of what to do if a member of the school community develops symptoms of COVID 19 while at school.
- A national information campaign to support parents and pupils will be made available by the Department of Education in advance of schools reopening.
- Training and Induction videos will be made available to parents and pupils from the Department of Education in late August.

## **Cleaning**

- A daily plan for enhanced cleaning has been devised in line with government directions. Additional hours will be granted, aided by the DES allowing us to have additional cleaning throughout the day.
- A cleaner will be on site on each campus from 11.00 daily.
- All frequently touched surfaces are cleaned regularly and daily using detergents, warm water, clean cloths and mops as well as other recommended products.
- There will be regular checks to ensure that there are correct levels of soap, hand towels and sanitisers each day.



- All bins and waste will be disposed of after break time/lunchtimes and at the end of every day.
- All staff have cleaning materials on their desks to clean workspaces throughout the day and at the end of every day.
- A 'fogger' will be used routinely to sanitise classrooms.
- Pupils are encouraged to keep their own hands, uniform, desk and spaces clean and tidy.

## School groups

- Consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group.
- Two new terms ('bubbles' and 'pods') have been introduced into school life to ensure consistent groups can operate effectively.

## Bubble

- Each class is now known as a 'bubble'. Each bubble will remain consistent and will be based in their own classroom.
- We will ensure, as much as is practically possible, that there is no interaction in school/on the yard between each bubble.
- Line markings on all yards will ensure each bubble (classroom) will have their own section. Pupils in our school are already used to playing within these boundaries.

## Pods

- Within each class bubble there will be groups of pupils in a 'pod'.
- These class pods will remain consistent.



- Desks will be allocated consistently to the same pupils in these pods.
- We will ensure, as much as is practically possible, that there is 1m in distance between each pod.
- The number of pods in each room will depend on class bubble numbers.
- Pods will be chosen by their teacher and while it will not be possible to please all pupils the teachers will take into account the best interests of the pupils.

## The school day

- Each class bubble will exit and enter their campuses at different points.
- Class bubbles will not interact with other class bubbles throughout the school day.
- Hand washing, hand-drying and sanitising will become a huge part of everyday school life.
- Pupils will have to adhere to the amended Code of Behaviour (*see on separate page*) to ensure that there is safety for all school members.
- You will no longer be able to attend school if you feel any COVID 19 symptoms i.e. coughing, sneezing, flu like symptoms.

## Entering building for Parents

- Access to school by parents will be limited.
- Signs at the main doors of all three campuses will read: **Children only beyond this point.**
- Prior approval must be sought by parents who wish to enter the school building; this can be done by phone or email.
- If a pupil is dropped late, they must go to the main door of each campus, press the buzzer and wait to be admitted.



- We ask parents to minimise early collections but if **completely necessary** please let the school office know. When you arrive to pick up your child, you must press the buzzer, inform the secretary who you are and your child will then be brought to his/her class assigned exit door
- When dropping/collecting pupils we strongly ask **that there are no gatherings of parents in groups.**

## **Classes 2nd to 6th**

In the morning, parents can drop to appropriate gates of each campus and move along quickly (there will be staff on site to ensure safety from 8.50).

In the evening, parents are asked to wait in their car until you see your child's class approaching the appropriate gates.

## **Classes Junior to First**

In the morning, parents can drop to the appropriate gates of each campus and move along quickly (there will be staff on site to ensure safety from 8.50)

In the evening, Parents will enter the appropriate yard (practice social distancing) and pick up from the designated yard space.

- Any concerns parents have can be discussed over the phone. Each class teacher will also use email addresses to communicate with parents.



## Entering school – Visitors

- Access to school by visitors will be limited from now on.
- A sign at the front entrance of all three campuses will read: '**Children only beyond this point.**'
- Contractors/other visitors must seek prior approval before visiting the school by phone/email to the school office/Principal.
- As per guidelines, it is envisaged that Department of Education inspectors may visit schools.
- Visitors will be asked to use hand sanitiser on entry.
- A sign in/sign out log of those entering the school will be maintained and monitored by the Lead Worker Representative on each Campus.

## Pupils and staff at risk

- The most critical part of managing the risks of COVID 19 is doing everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID 19 into the school.
- There are pupils in our school who will be more 'at risk' and vulnerable to the virus than others.
- There may be pupils who may not return to school on August 31<sup>st</sup> due to these risks and the school will be responsible for ensuring that these pupils receive appropriate supports.
- Parents of these pupils will be contacted in August to discuss their return to school. If there are pupils with illnesses/diagnoses and conditions we ask parents to get in contact with the school office.
- Public Health guidelines state that pupils will not be asked to wear masks in school however, those who wish may wear them to reduce risks. It is not a teacher's responsibility to enforce the wearing of masks.



- Each year, 'Administration of Medication' forms are filled out by parents of pupils who have illnesses. These forms outline how the parents wish their child to be supported in the school i.e. inhaler used for asthma etc.
- As per guidelines the most important thing to remember is that **"No person (child, teacher or parent) should attend an educational setting if unwell or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with COVID 19"**

**Pupils and teachers will have to remain at home if and when they or others in their household are unwell. This will cause worry and anxiety, no doubt, but it will be an important way of ensuring our school stays free of COVID 19.**

### **Social Distancing**

- It is recognised that younger children in Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> class are unlikely to maintain social distance but it will be encouraged.
- As per Department guidelines, a distance of 1m will be maintained between class pods in classrooms, where practical and possible. This will be for 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> classes.
- Workstations and desks will be allocated consistently to the same children/pods.
- Class bubbles, as much as possible, will stay apart from other class bubbles.
- To the greatest extent possible, pupils and staff should consistently be in the same class bubble.
- All available space will be utilized and reconfigured accordingly.

### **Staffing**

- All schools were given direction by the DES to decide together who to appoint as Lead Worker Representative to deal with COVID 19.
- In our school we have decided to create a COVID 19 Committee which will consist of **three representatives** from each campus.



*On Campus 1*, The LWR will be **Mrs Mary O'Mahony** and an elected teaching staff member and an elected non-teaching staff member.

*On Campus 2*, The LWR will be **Ms Loraine Burke** and an elected teaching staff member and an elected non-teaching staff member.

*On Campus 3*, The LWR will be **Mr Padriag Birmingham** and an elected teaching staff member and an elected non-teaching staff member.

- Our COVID committee will liaise daily to ensure all protocols and systems put in place to ensure the safety of our school community are effective.
  - Staff will maintain social distance as much as is possible but common sense and a balanced approach will be applied.
  - The school will follow DES guidance around ventilation.
  - As per DES guidelines, all staff will wear the recommended face masks.
  - Staff will not be able to come to work, as per guidelines, if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID 19. A substitute teacher will be put in place to teach the class.
  - All teachers will circulate their email addresses so that parents can directly communicate with the teacher if there are any questions or concerns.
  - As per Curriculum Guidance Documents teachers will start with getting to know pupils, where they are at, re-teaching, revising and consolidating certain areas of the curriculum.

## Code of Behaviour

- When parents enrol Junior Infants, they agree that their child will adhere to the school Code of Behaviour.



- This Code has now been amended to include behaviours that we expect pupils to show and the ways in which positive behaviours will be promoted and encouraged.
- This amendment also includes ways in which the school staff will apply sanctions because if pupils do not adhere to guidelines, washing and sanitising of hands and respiratory etiquette it does put pupils and staff at risk. We want to minimise the risk of introduction of COVID 19 into our school environment and sanctions may be imposed on any pupil who endangers the safety of others.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to apply the sanctions of the Code of Behaviour if there is a breach of the school rules. The Board of Management also gives permission to the Principal to deal with any immediate decision that must be made e.g. Suspension of a pupil if they break school rules.
- Please see our amended Code of Behaviour here.

## Wellbeing and restoring our School Community

- Government Guidelines have issued to help schools support pupils: Supporting the Wellbeing of School Communities as Schools Reopen: Guidance for Schools
- Our aim in Trinity Primary School is to allow pupils time to settle into this new academic year. They will become familiar once again with the policies, plans and procedures of schools.
- It is important that pupils are allowed time to discuss their feelings around COVID 19 and its impact and to reassure pupils who may have worries or anxieties going forward.
- Building resilience in pupils is so important and the ways in which pupils have already dealt with the pandemic will be acknowledged.
- Well-being webinars will be available from the school psychology service NEPS.
- Well-being classes will be established at all class levels.
- P.E will be take place once per week but pupils will be outside for other curricular areas and it will be important to take fresh air breaks each day.



- SPHE lessons in Walk Tall, RSE and Stay Safe will be priorities areas on our return to school.

## Curriculum Guidance

As per Department of Education guidelines, the following areas will be prioritised when school re-opens:

- The staff will initially support all pupils in settling back to school. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and pupils at risk of educational disadvantage will be well supported.
- Pupils' experience of using digital technology will be built upon.
- Teachers will identify the starting points of learning through discussions with Special Education Teachers and parents initially. Pupils' conversations, questions, tasks, activities, progress records will be used to ascertain where pupils are at.
- Innovative teaching methodologies long established across the three Campuses such as 'Literacy Lift Off', 'Station Teaching', 'Aistear' and 'Maths Minds' will be combined with 'co-teaching' (teachers working in pairs) to ensure the educational needs of all children are being catered for.
- Assessments of and for learning will be carried out by class teachers and SET teachers. Standardised Tests in 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> will be carried out in May 2022.
- Certain areas of the curriculum will be re-taught, revised and consolidated. Topics from the previous year's curriculum will be re-visited also.



***Finally, like last year***

## **THINK POSITIVE!**

For pupils, you have proven you can face challenges with great courage. Last year was very different but you all were the heroes. You all adjusted exceptionally well to new protocols and control measures and as a result you all developed educationally, socially and emotionally. You will do the same this year as no changes have been made to our new school environment.

For parents, the changes you became accustomed to last year remain in place. Your cooperation and support was key in ensuring risk was kept to a minimum within our school community. We look forward with positivity that this cooperation will continue to ensure happiness and safety for the children of TPS.

For staff, we know that your teaching methods and styles have had to be altered to ensure educational progression but these changes and all your efforts were worthwhile when you observe the successes of last year.

**Let's all continue to work together.**

**Let's stand true to our school motto.**

**'Ni neart go cur le cheile'**