

## **Logistics Covid 19 Plan for Re-opening of Edmondstown National School**



**Version 3.0 August 2021**

### Underlying Principles

Edmondstown National 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.

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 that this plan can be implemented.

### Return to Education:

Parents must complete a “Return to Education” form 24 hours prior to their child’s return to school after any absence. This form will be available on the school website under “downloads”.

### Opening & Closing Times:

All children will return to school on 31<sup>st</sup> August. All classes will operate within a bubble system.

Within each class, the children will be further divided into pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods where possible.

### Safe Entry and Exit from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

**We respectfully ask that from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 and for the duration of the COVID 19 restrictions, parents/pupils do not enter the school campus before 8.40am**

In order to mitigate risk of infection and to minimise the number of people congregating at any given time, we will be continuing with our staggered arrival and departure times for the children. This will work best and most effectively if everyone is clear on what is to happen. In order to alleviate possible anxiety and also to make this a positive, safe and joyful experience for children and parents, we will initiate the following entry and exit times.

From 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Arrival	Departure
Children with surnames beginning A- G	8:45	2.20
Children with surnames beginning with H - N	8:50	2.25
Children with surnames beginning with O - Z	8:55	2.30
Junior infants as above		1:30 * See separate letter

Most children from first class upwards are able to find their classroom on their own. However, parents may accompany them to the classroom door, for the first day or two, if necessary

At home time, children from 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> will leave the yard when we see their parent. Older children will leave independently. However, it is imperative that all children understand that if they can't find their parent that they **MUST** come back into the yard and wait.

Staff will be on the yard at drop off and collection times to assist and direct. All classes will have a separate entrance door and will follow the coloured markings for their particular class. Their class teacher will be waiting for them in the classroom.

Parents of Junior & Senior Infants will drop and collect their child via the red route in the left hand yard nearest the road, whilst maintaining social distance. Ideally no other parents need to enter the school yard.

Parents should remain in their cars until the allocated time of arrival or collection. Parents who walk should remain socially distanced on the pathway outside the school. Parents must not delay when dropping or collecting children.

### 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

- Prior notice of collection should be by phone or email to the school secretary.
- The secretary will phone the class teacher and the child will be brought from their class to the entrance hall
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so
- Children may not return to the school after any appointment

### Visitors to the School

- Visits to the school during the school day will be by prior arrangement only.
- All visitors must report to the school reception/office.
- All visitors must complete the visitors' Contact Tracing Log.
- Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained where possible and all visitors must wear a face mask.
- In relation to forgotten school items etc. there will be a designated box outside the front door. Please deposit the item in it and ring the school.

### Communication

- When homework is assigned, it will be sent home via Seesaw. Homework Journals will not be used until further notice.
- Parental communication with the Class Teacher, which would formerly have been written into the journal or on a note will be via the Class Teacher's school email.
- General communication to the school will be via email [edmondstownns@hotmail.com](mailto:edmondstownns@hotmail.com) or 01 4933255
- Communications from the school will henceforth be via the school's administration portal – Aladdin. Therefore it is crucial that we have everyone's email on file . If you have changed your email, please let Linda know in the office at [edmondstownns@hotmail.com](mailto:edmondstownns@hotmail.com) NOTE: Communications of text or email from the Aladdin Portal cannot be responded to. If you wish to clarify something you will have to email using the school email.

### **Parent/ Teacher Meetings**

- Meetings with parents will be held over the phone or via Zoom.

### **Children who should not attend school**

We are looking forward to welcoming all of our children back to school after the summer break and of welcoming our new Junior Infants. We positively encourage all parents/guardians to bring their children back. We are conscious of anxiety, but we will provide support for your children in a kind, safe and positive learning environment.

However, 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 live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- 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 are following current gov.ie advice.
- Children who are generally unwell

### **Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school**

If a child is unable to attend school, under medical advice, for an extended period of time, the Class Teacher or Special Education Teacher will provide work to support the child's learning at home and this will be shared with the parents/guardians.

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

We love to see all of our children at school every day. However, under the current circumstances, parents/guardians must keep children at home if they display any Covid-19 Symptoms. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>  
Staff must not attend school if they display any symptoms.

There is a designated isolation areas in the school.

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 and asked to collect their child immediately. It's important that parents have arrangements in place for this eventuality. Public transport of any kind should not be used. Please note: Siblings of the said child must also be taken home until testing has been carried out.
- 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
- 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
- Children should be brought home by parents and their doctor should be called and they should

continue self-isolation at home

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

Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal or LWR and go to the isolation area.

- A HSE approved face covering will be provided to the staff member who is symptomatic.
- The staff member who is symptomatic should maintain a 2m distance from others if possible and avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.
- They should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin
- If the staff member is not well enough to go home, they should wait in the isolation room away from others and mindful of the need to observe good respiratory and hand hygiene. Arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.
- If they need to use the bathroom they should wipe contact surfaces for example taps and clean their hands after attending the toilet.
- Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.
- If the staff member is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.

The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.

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.

It is important to remember that any of us can get sick or unwell, and if we do, we need understanding and support from those around us. It is essential that anyone who feels unwell makes that known to the Principal/Deputy Principal as soon as possible.

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

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

- Public health advice will be sought and followed

### **COVID-19 Related Absence Management**

COVID-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

### **Teacher or SNA Absence and Substitution**

If a teacher/SNA is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher/SNA for the class/pupil. 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 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.

### **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention.

The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile'.

A free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and staff members are encouraged to make use of the service when the need arises.

### **Temperature Checks:**

On-site temperature taking is not recommended because fever is not a consistent symptom of Covid-19 in children and would result in delayed school entry. HSE guidelines at present are that parents and/or educational settings do not need to take children's temperature every morning

### **PPE**

#### **Masks:**

- As per current guidelines all staff must wear face masks. HSE approved face masks are recommended for SNAs and SETs but will be provided for all staff for their optional use.
- All adult visitors will also be required to wear face mask. Visors are no longer considered appropriate.
- Current HSE advice states that primary age children are not required to wear masks or visors.

#### **Wearing of Gloves:**

The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by pupils or staff is not appropriate. There will be an emphasis on hand hygiene rather than on the wearing of disposable gloves.

For a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. This might include roles such as:

- Assisting with intimate care needs
- Administering First Aid
- Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised as people in very high-risk groups or may be living with those who are in the very high-risk category.
- When staff members have to move between classrooms to support children with learning needs.

Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment, they will apply standard precautions as per usual.

### Hygiene and Cleaning

Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom. Everyone entering the school building will be required to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser. Hand sanitisers will not be stored near heat or naked flame.

Desks are washed down with a Milton solution before eating break and lunch each day.

Hot water and emulsifying soap are available in all bathrooms.

Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.

Children should bring a packet of tissues to school.

In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be thoroughly cleaned at least once per day. Particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, stair rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities. A checklist will be in operation.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building. Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area throughout each day.

Waste will be collected regularly from offices and other areas within the school.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.). They must practice good hand hygiene including washing or/and hand sanitising when entering and exiting vehicles and when entering and exiting school buildings.

### Changes to Classroom and School Layout and to School Routines

The DES guidelines recognise that a common-sense approach is needed in our Primary schools. To that end, every effort will be made to limit interaction within classrooms, to limit contact between class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities.

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class Bubble is simply a class; it is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until the children go home at the end of the school day.

Classroom space has been reconfigured to maximise physical distancing in the following way:

#### Junior Infants to Second Class

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. However, as a staff we will endeavour to minimise sharing and maximise physical distance between children.

### Third Class to Sixth Class

Children from Third Class to Sixth Class will be arranged in Pods within their Class Bubbles, with a maximum of 6 pupils per Pod. A Pod is simply a group. Children are used to working within class groups and will be familiar with this arrangement. As far as possible, each Pod will be at least 1 metre distance from the next Pod. All unnecessary furniture has been removed from these classrooms to create as much space as possible.

It would be impossible to agree to all requests therefore requests for placement of pupils in particular pods cannot be considered. We appreciate the concerns of parents but ask that parents trust our teachers to use their professional judgement in arranging pods. While indoors, pupils will work and share within their pod. However, while outdoors children may interact freely with all pupils in their class (bubble). At particular intervals, pods will be changed.

There will be limited interaction on arrival and dismissal and in corridors and other shared areas throughout the school

### Breaktimes

The DES guidelines state that the risk of virus transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low. It is not possible to maintain physical distancing when primary school children play together outdoors, but in so far as is practical and possible children will remain within their class bubble during break time. Children are not restricted to their pods (groups) while outside; they may play with anyone in their bubble (class).

Each class will have access to a separate space in the yard during their break times and at other outdoor times during the day.

Children will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities. There are two outdoor sinks in the yard.

Rain coats are essential as we intend to get the children out into the fresh air regardless of the weather, where possible.

### Personal Equipment

- Children from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class should have a compact **school pencil case** which will be left in school at all times and a home pencil case to complete homework assignments.
- All school books will be kept in a box which has been provided by the school so no school bags are required for the moment.
- It is further requested that all personal items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.

### Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including computers, 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.



## Teaching and Learning

Each child will be at a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure you that staff will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2021/2022 school year.

### Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers

Staff members (Special Education Teachers and SNAs) can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimised where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

Government guidelines ask us to provide support to pupils based on what is known as the Continuum of Support. This is a tiered system that provides Whole School and Classroom Support for all pupils, additional School Support for some pupils, and School Support plus which is extra targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

### Learning Support

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal.

- 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.
- Where children from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group unless they are in the same pod.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending
- SET teachers will be assigned to specific “bubbles” where possible.

### Special Educational Needs

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or reasonable to implement. The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which might suggest illness/Covid-19 infection and where symptoms are present, children should not attend the school.

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using either soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean).

It is recommended that SNAs and SET teachers wear HSE approved face masks which are provided by the school.

### Wellbeing of the School Community

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff. These are promoting:

- A sense of safety
- A sense of calm
- A sense of belonging and connectedness to school
- A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy
- A sense of hope

### **Substitute Teachers and SNAs**

A copy of the Covid-19 Response Plan will be provided to each substitute teacher/SNA. Substitutes will be required to complete a Return to the Workplace form before they enter a classroom and will be asked to confirm that they have engaged in the online Induction Training.

### **PE**

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings. Class teachers and pupils may engage in some curricular activities outdoors during the day.

### **Corridors**

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 left when in the corridors.

### **Additional Measures to Limit Interactions**

- Children will go straight to their classrooms from the yard and will not congregate in the corridor.
- While we will all be delighted to see each other again, hand shaking and hugging will be discouraged.

### **Doors and Windows/Ventilation**

- Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces.
- The school will comply with the Department's guidance : "Practical steps for good ventilation". To this end, to ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be opened fully before and after school and at times when the children are not in the classroom e.g. at break, lunch and p.e. time. At other times, windows will be partially kept open to permit air flow and minimise discomfort, particularly during cold weather.
- The Department will provide two CO2 monitors for sharing between classrooms.

### **Lunches**

- Parents/Guardians must ensure that children bring their lunches to school to avoid adults having to come to the school during the day. In the event that a child forgets her lunch, her parents will be contacted. It must be stressed that should this happen, children will not be permitted to share food or drink.
- Children should bring a napkin/piece of kitchen roll to school to spread on their desk at lunchtime. When lunch is over all crumbs, litter etc should be wrapped in napkin and replaced in the lunchbox. Children will eat their lunches at their desks, as per our usual practice.

### **Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.**

Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, etc. and as far as possible should not share with other pupils. Copies/textbooks should have plastic covers.

### Uniforms/Tracksuits

- To facilitate daily outdoor breaks, children will wear the school tracksuit every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the duration of the pandemic. This will allow for frequent washing, if necessary.
- It is advisable that children should wear their school uniforms or tracksuits **only for school related activities.** Uniforms or tracksuits should be taken off straight after the child arrives home from school for the day. They should not be worn in non-school based after-school activities or facilities, shops etc.

### Rain coats

As there will be additional outdoor breaks (rain or shine) and as PE will be outdoors whenever possible, we ask that children bring a small foldable rain coat/mac to school daily.

### Office

- Children will not be sent to the Secretary's Office to deliver messages. The inter-class communication system will be used.
- As far as possible, staff members should not enter the Office area and should speak with the Secretary from the half-door.

### Assemblies:

We will be unable to host assemblies in the hall but we will use our intercom system for short whole-school communications.

### Photocopying.

The school secretary will be the only one to use the photocopier.

### ICTs

A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICTs. Devices should be cleaned after use and cleaned before returning to charging trolley.

### Staffroom

- All staff members should maintain a physical distance of 2 metres when they are not engaged in teaching e.g. when they are using the staff room and arriving to work.
- Staff meetings will be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing.
- Staff members should bring their own cups, bottles, cutlery, etc. to school and avoid sharing utensils in the staffroom as far as possible.

### Extra-curricular Activities

- The resumption of After-School activities is on hold for the present, pending government updates.

This is a living document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie), [www.dbei.ie](http://www.dbei.ie), [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie), [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie), [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) or agreements with education partners as appropriate for primary schools.