**Underlying Principles**

* The 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.
* 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.

**Assumptions**

* All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system
* The school is split into 8 class groups(bubbles) where each class group(bubble) is prevented from mixing with another class group during the school day.
* In Scoil Mhuire the 8 class groups will be made up of Junior infants, Senior Infants, 1st class, 2nd clas,3rd class, 4th class, 5th class and 6th 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, children will be arranged in PODs where possible in these classes.
* Children from Third Class to Sixth Class will be arranged in Pods within their Class Bubbles, with a maximum of 6 pupils per Pod. As far as possible, each Pod will be at least 1 metre distance from the next Pod.All unnecessary furniture will be removed from these classrooms to create as much space as possible.
* Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms. Parents are advised not to send hand sanitiser bottles in with their children in their school bags.
* There will be two breaks as normal each day-10 minute break at 11:00a.m. and 30 minute break at 12:30p.m.

**Key to Entrances & Exits**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Entrance and Exit Points** | **Number** |
| **Main Front Door of school beside intercom** | **1** |
| **Front Door at right of school opposite garden bench** | **2** |
| **6th class exit door in 6th class room at rear of school** | **3** |
| **P.E. hall door at rear of school** | **4** |
| **Junior infant class room door in back yard** | **5** |
| **Buzzer door near staff room at rear of school** | **6** |

**Entrance & Exit Points for Specific Classes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CLASS** | **ENTRANCE & EXIT POINT** |
| **Junior Infants** | **5** |
| **Senior Infants** | **Morning (6) Evening (1)** |
| **1st class** | **Morning (6) Evening (2)** |
| **2nd class** | **Morning (4) Evening (2)** |
| **3rd class** | **Morning (2) Evening (1)** |
| **4th class** | **2** |
| **5th class** | **1** |
| **6th class** | **3** |

Arrangements for dropping off and picking up pupils from the school facility will be organised to maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe social distance between drivers/parents/guardians and all school staff.

**Arrival at School**

* Parents/guardians will be encouraged to use the “drop and go” system in the mornings when dropping off pupils. Pupils should be dropped off at upper roundabout near school black gate or at the entrances to the pedestrian walkway.
* The principal and in-school management team will then direct the pupil to her designated line. Junior infants-2nd class will line in the back yard near the junior infant building and 3rd-6th class will line in the basketball yard.
* These areas will be supervised from 9:10a.m. each morning by the principal, in-school management team and SNA. Each class should line up at their designated point with social distancing observed.
* The class teacher will invite the children to enter the building via their designated entrance point at 9:20a.m.
* No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
* No pupils should enter inside black gate at roundabout before 9:10a.m.
* Messages for teachers can be sent by email or by phoning the school office.

**Collection from School at end of school day**

* Collections in the evening time will be staggered for 1st-6th class. Junior and Senior infants will be collected as normal at 2p.m. from the blue and black line inside the front black gate. 1st and 2nd class will be collected at 2:50p.m. from the black and yellow line respectively. 3rd and 4th class will be collected at 2:55p.m from the green and white line respectively.5th and 6th class will be collected at 3:00p.m. from the blue and red line respectively.
* In the evening time collections will be made from the black gate at the front of the building.
* A collect and go system will operate here. You can either pick up on the roundabout or park in car park and walk up the pedestrian walk way. Pedestrian walk way is to be used as a one way system for upward travel only in the morning and downward travel in the evening. A bollard will be placed at the top of this walkway and children only will be allowed beyond the bollard at the top of the walkway. We encourage pupils to use the pedestrian walkway as much as possible.
* Each class will have a designated coloured line which will be clearly marked at the front of the building.
* As is the case in the morning this will be supervised by the in-school management team the principal and SNA.
* Parents will be asked to socially distance at all times and wear face coverings/masks/ while waiting to collect children in the evening outside front black gate at upper roundabout area.
* Senior pupils from 3rd-6th are encouraged to use the pedestrian walkway in the morning when being dropped off and in the evening to meet their parents/minder.
* In the interest of the health and safety of all we ask parents to be patient at collection time and abide by health and safety regulations at all times
* When the school day for each class is over the following arrangements will apply –
  + Junior Infants and Senior Infants - the class teacher will bring the children to their designated exit point at the front of the school and will release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them.
  + 1st – 6th Class – the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately in order to minimise contact and assemble as a whole class in their designated line at the front of the school at their allocated time.

**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

* Please phone ahead if collecting child early
* When the adult arrives at the school, they should either phone the office or use the intercom at the front door of the school to alert the office that they have arrived
* The child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff
* The adult who is collecting will be asked to give their details for the school’s contact tracing log
* No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

**Children who should not attend school**

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 have been advised to self-isolate for a period of 14 days
* Children who are generally unwell

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

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, the class teacher (and/or the learning support teacher, where relevant) will provide suggested activities to support the child’s learning at home which will be shared with parents.

**Personal Equipment**

* In so far as possible, it is requested that children from 2nd to 6th Class will bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment.
* It is further requested that all items have the child’s name on them for ease of identification.
* For children in Junior, Senior Infants and first class, the school will provide an individual bag which will hold each child’s pencils, crayons, etc., and which will be labelled with their name.

**Shared Equipment**

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

**Yards**

Each bubble of 8 classes will have access to the yards during their allotted break times. The yard has been divided up into 8 separate sections. Each section has been clearly marked with coloured boundary lines. Increased yard supervision at break times has been organised to prevent class groups(bubbles) mixing and going outside their boundary lines.

**Learning Support**

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within the confines of a bubble.

* 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 and if this isn’t possible a face mask must be worn by these teachers.
* Where children from 3rd to 6th Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
* The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending

**PPE**

PPE will be worn by staff in any situation where 2M social distancing is not possible. Staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will also wear appropriate PPE including gloves and face masks.

**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, the SET teacher that is attached to that class will work with that class for the day.

**PE**

Where possible, PE should take place outdoors and use of equipment should be confined to the P.E. equipment sets that have been distributed to each of the 8 class groups (bubbles). All classes are encouraged to participate in ‘The Daily Mile’ as part of their P.E. programme.

**Extra-curricular Activities**

The Board of Management has decided to allow the phased return of after school activities as well as dancing and G.A.A. skills taught by external teachers during the school day. These activities will be operated with class bubbles and all external teachers will have to adhere to strict Covid-19 protocols.

**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 and also social distancing rules.

**Additional Measures to Limit Interactions**

Children will go straight to their classrooms from the yard and will not congregate in the corridors or hallways.

While we will all be delighted to see each other again, hand shaking and hugging will not be allowed.

**Doors and Windows**

Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces. External doors must be closed after use at all times in the interest of safety.

**Ventilation**

The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice ‘Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools’

In accordance with this guidance, to ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible, and will be opened fully while children are taking breaks in the playground and also at the end of the school day. CO2 monitors will be distributed to schools for classes in early September to help monitor ventilation needs.

**Cloakrooms and Toilets**

Junior Infants, Senior Infants, 5th and 6th class will use the toilets in their class rooms.

2nd and 4th will use the toilet block area at the bottom of the main corridor opposite their class rooms. Each toilet cubicle and sink will be labelled to ensure only one class uses each specific toilet cubicle, soap dispenser and sink in this area.

1st and 3rd class will use the toilet block area at the top of the main corridor opposite their class rooms. Each toilet cubicle and sink will be labelled to ensure only one class uses each specific toilet cubicle, soap dispenser and sink in this area.

All pupils from junior infants, senior infants, 5th and 6th class will hang their coats in their classrooms. Children from 2nd class will use their designated cloakroom off the main corridor and 4th class will use the cloak room area near their toilet block. Children from 1st class will use the coat hooks on the corridor near the principal’s office. 3rd class will use cloak room area near their toilet block.

**Lunches**

Parents must make sure that children bring their lunches to school to avoid adults having to come to the school during the day. Please remind your children not to share their food or drinks with other children and to label their lunch boxes.

Children will eat their lunches at their desks, as per our usual practice.

**Uniforms/Tracksuits**

Our uniform policy for the new school year remains unchanged. The girls will be expected to wear the formal uniform and school tracksuit on P.E. days. (Infants will continue to wear the school track-suit each day as normal.) We do appreciate that parents may wish to wash uniforms more regularly and the school will be taking a common sense approach to this change.

As a school we strongly advise 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.

**Office**

A contactless payment system has been set up to minimise the amount of cash that needs to be handled. Parents/Guardians are asked to co-operate in helping to keep school staff safe by arranging for contactless payments through the school office.

Children should not be sent to the Secretary’s Office to deliver messages.

As far as possible, staff members should not enter the Office area and should speak with the Secretary at the glass window area of her office.

**Photocopying**.

Any staff member who uses the photocopier should clean it down after use with the wipes provided and sanitise/wash hands before use.

**ICTs**

A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICTs. Devices should be cleaned after use and before they are returned to the charging trolley. There will be a 72 hour gap between use of mini-laptop devices by different classes. Coding equipment such as Beebots and Lego wedo 2.0 set will be quarantined for 72 hours before being used by the next class. A timetable will be available for use of Beebots, Lego Wedo 2.0 set and mini laptops.

**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. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, face coverings should be worn. A temporary second staff room area for breaks will be set up at the back of the hall to ensure staff are socially distanced at break and lunch times. Staff will stick to their assigned staff area at all times including use before or after school. Staff areas are rotated monthly.

Staff meetings will be held remotely on Zoom.

**Teaching and Learning**

As a staff, we are very aware that the children spent a lot of time learning remotely last school year. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.

Each child will be a different place in relation to 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.

The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum guidelines for us, and we ask you to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during the return to 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

Our usual practice is 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 extra targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

In keeping with our Amber flag we will continue to support the well being of our pupils and staff through various activities such as our whole school mindfulness time.

Parents and staff will be guided to the wellbeing resources available on the NEPS and gov.ie/backto school websites.

**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.

**Scoil Mhuire Mount Sackville Cleaning Checklist**

All cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.

* Staff are responsible for cleaning personal items that have been brought to work and items handled at work or during breaks. Staff advised to clean personal items that they bring to work (e.g. mobile phones) and to avoid leaving them down on communal surfaces or they will need to clean the surface after the personal item is removed. Staff are provided with wipes and disinfectant spray to clean their own desk at regular intervals.
* Staff are advised not to share, cups, cutlery or pens. Staff are encouraged to bring their own cups and crockery to school.
* Cleaning staff will be trained in the new cleaning arrangements for the school
* Sufficient cleaning materials and PPE will be available to allow for increased cleaning
* School setting is thoroughly cleaned once per day
* Cleaning staff will be instructed to wear gloves when cleaning and are aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before and after wearing gloves
* Cleaning staff are aware that cleaning is best achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water. clean cloths, mops and the mechanical action of wiping and cleaning, following by rinsing and drying.
* System in place for the disposing of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a rubbish bag. Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person suspected of having Covid-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection
* System in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use
* System in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use.
* Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as light switches, kettles, eco boiler, toasters, microwaves taps, door handles to be done regularly.
* Tables, chairs and floors of classrooms to be cleaned daily.
* Staff areas and toilets to be cleaned daily.

After a suspected Covid-19 case all cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.

* It is recommended cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after a suspected coronavirus (Covid-19) case. This wil reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people
* The area should be kept closed and secure for 72 hours (if possible) for cleaning as the amount of virus living on surfaces will have reduced significantly by 72 hours
* For cleaning purposes, wear a face mask, disposable or washing up gloves. These should be double-bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours and then put with the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished
* Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you normally use. Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as toilets, light switches and door handles
* If an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with coronavirus (Covid-19) consider using protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and apron
* Wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 second
* and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning
* Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned as normal

All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids All cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, using an approved and recognised detergent and disinfectant in line with the manufacturer’s instructions for dilution, application and contact times

Disinfectants used should be  effective against viruses.

**Additionally:**

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.

Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.

Any items that have been heavily contaminated with bodyfluids and that cannot be cleaned by washing should be disposed of .

**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

* The most up to date Public health advice will be sought and followed

**Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 in the school:**

**The Board of Management will*:***

* Appoint an appropriate person (school principal) for dealing with suspected cases.
* Have a designated isolation area available within the school building. The designated area and the route to the designated area should be easily accessible. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 needs to be considered so having additional isolation areas available or another contingency plan for dealing with additional cases must be planned. It would be important that the designated area has the ability to isolate the person away from other workers/children.
* Our isolation area will be the small room at the end of the corridor near the 5th class room which will be supervised by the principal until a parent collects the child at the front door.

**If a person displays symptoms of Covid-19 the following procedure is to be implemented**:

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following procedure will be implemented:

* Isolate the staff member/pupil and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times.
* Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the principal/deputy principal and go to the isolation area.
* Provide a mask for the person/pupil presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.
* Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
* If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians of this child will be contacted immediately by telephone. To help us in this regard, parents are asked to make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times.
* Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor.
* The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.
* Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided.
* If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
* If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
* Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery.
* Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved

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.