



Kiltealy National School Response Plan

Introduction

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for our school to meet the Government's '*Return to Work Safely Protocol*', the Department of Education and Skills plan for school reopening and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHE continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and re-opening of our schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of management, staff, pupils and parents.

Kiltealy National School COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others. (See Appendix 1)

School Profile

- 94 pupils
- 4 Multi-grade class teachers, includes Teaching Principal (24 release days for administrative duties per year)
- 2 Special Education Teachers (1 shared with multiple schools for 20 days, spread over the school year)
- 3 Full Time SNA posts (2 on senior day hours, 1 on infant day hours)
- Part Time Secretary (13.5 hrs/week)
- 1 Cleaner (1.5 hrs/day)
- Part Time Caretaker (1 day/month)

Planning and Preparing for a return to school

Human Resources allocated through additional funding from DES

- **Aide** – 2 days-Paid at a daily rate-James Fenlon has been contacted and appointed as our aide.
- **Principal release days** have been increased to 1 day per week. Mr. Dónall O’ Connor has been contacted and will act as substitute teacher on these days, the sub teacher and the release day will remain consistent as far as is possible.
- Appointment of an **LWR** (Lead Worker Representative) and **DLWR** (Deputy LWR)

Calendar-start date

School will re-open for **Junior Infants only** as per school calendar on **Tuesday 1st September 2020.**

All other classes, **Senior Infants-6th Class** will return to school on **Wednesday 2nd September.**

Staff in on Monday 31st Aug for Staff Meeting and Croke Park Hours.

School Day Times

Kiltealy N.S. will operate during normal school hours:

9.20am – 2pm/3pm

Junior Infants will finish school at 12pm for the first two weeks.

Children Starting Junior Infants

A parent information night will be held for parents of our new Junior Infant class on Tuesday 25th August at 7pm.

The Junior Infant Class are brought back a day early which allows for parental support to the child as they enter school on their first day.

Unfortunately, parents will not be permitted to enter the school with their child once our full cohorts of pupils are returned to school on Wednesday 2nd September.

Rest assured, the Junior Infant teacher and other school staff will do their best to make sure that every child feels happy and safe at school.

Changes to drop-off and collection

- Schools must “limit interaction on arrival and departure from school”
- Pupils who can walk/cycle/scoot to school are encouraged to do so to reduce the volume of cars parking outside the school walls.
- We will have assigned entry and exit points for each class.

- Unfortunately, no parents will be allowed to enter the school yard.
- Teachers will be in their classrooms from 9.10am.
- Other staff members (including Special Education Teachers and SNA's) will be available outside and inside the building to receive the children and to help them to their classrooms.

Morning Drop-off

At **9.10am** both gates will be opened by a member of staff. Prior to this, the children will remain outside the school premises with their parents/guardians, preferably in their cars, while maintaining social distancing.

Junior and Senior infants will enter the school yard through the lower gate (pitch side) and will enter the school building through the side door.

1st and 2nd classes will enter the school yard through the lower gate (pitch side) and will enter the school building through the middle door (double door).

3rd to 6th classes will enter the school yard through the upper gate (main gate) and will enter the school building through the main door.

The children will follow a one way travel system (with child friendly footprints and arrows) in our school corridor to get to their classroom. They will hang up their coats and sanitize their hands before sitting in their assigned seats.

Afternoon Collection

Classes will leave the school via the same gate they entered.

Infants at 12pm/2pm will be brought to the school yard and once parent/guardian is visible will be led to the lower gate. (SET member to assist)

1st & 2nd Classes-will exit at the middle door and proceed to the lower gate.

3rd - 6th Classes will exit the main door and progress to the upper gate exit. (3rd & 4th will exit firstly and 5th & 6th will follow)

Parents/Guardians are asked to maintain a social distance outside the school gate, to wait in the car for older kids.

This system will apply rain, hail or shine so please make sure that your child comes to school prepared for the weather!

Hand Hygiene/Sanitising

Children will perform hand hygiene regularly during the school day:

- On arrival at school
- Before eating or drinking

- After using the toilet
- After a cough or sneeze
- After playing outdoors
- When hands are physically dirty

Hand sanitiser dispensers will be installed throughout the school, one in every classroom, inside SET rooms, one inside each of the 3 entry/exit points to the school and in staff room.

Children are not required to supply hand sanitizer or any other hand hygiene products.

Toileting

Infant-2nd Class Classrooms

There are 2 toilet cubicles, and 2 sinks outside, with one sink located within the classroom.

Senior Classrooms 3rd-6th Classes-2 rooms

There are no toilets within the classroom

There are two toilet blocks located off the hallway in the senior end.

Traditionally a girls toilet area consisting of 2 toilet cubicles and a sink outside and a boys toilet area consisting of 2 toilet cubicles and a sink outside.

Staff toilet consists of 2 toilet cubicles and sink outside.

Changes-to avoid class bubbles mixing

The girls toilets will become the 3rd/4th class toilets. (boy and girl cubicle)

The boys toilets will become the 5th & 6th class toilets (boy and girl cubicle)

Only 1 child permitted to go to the bathroom at a time.

❖ *Installation of under sink water heaters being investigated*

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 classroom groups (bubbles) and to limit the sharing of common facilities.

The children and their teachers will work in Classroom Bubbles. A Classroom Bubble 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.

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.

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 5 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.

Breaktimes

Each classroom will be a 'Bubble'. Contact between bubbles will be extremely limited.

At break time, children will play in their Bubble, within their designated area. Line markings will be put in place to ensure classes do not move between designated areas.

There will be 4 classroom bubbles with 4 staff members on yard during break times ensuring each classroom bubble are adequately distanced from each other.

Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants

Staff members (particularly Learning Support Teachers and SNAs) can rotate between classrooms but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

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 as far as possible, 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.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending.

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.

Stickers will be placed on the corridor floors to facilitate the practice of keeping to the left.

COVID-19 Related Absence Management

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

Teacher Absences

Supply panel clusters are being set up to increase substitute availability.

If the school is unable to secure a substitute teacher, the school may use a non-mainstream teacher to cover the absence. (This includes Special Education Teachers). Every effort will be made to avoid a class being split between other classes.

Children with Additional Needs

Our Special Education Team will make sure that your child's needs are catered for to the best of our ability.

Special Education Teachers may be required to cover for mainstream teachers in the case of their absence and a substitute teacher is not available. This may mean that your child may have reduced support at times, but we will do our best to avoid this happening.

If you have any concerns or questions, email us at kiltealyns@gmail.com.

Schoolbags and Lunches

The government have not given any guidelines regarding these items but a common-sense approach should be followed.

Ensure that your child does not have any unnecessary items such as toys in their schoolbag. Choose lunchboxes, bottles and pencil cases that are easy to clean, as they will need to be cleaned frequently.

Children will eat their lunches at their desks, as per our usual practice. Please remind your children not to share their food or drinks with other children.

As per current school procedure, pupils will be asked to bring all items, finished and unfinished, home.

The school may provide individual stationary and resources for each child for example scissors and paint brushes etc. It is important that your child has all the stationary that they need as they will not be able to share with their classmates. (pencils, rubbers, colours, ruler, prittstick etc.)

Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.

Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, etc. and as far as possible should not share with other pupils. It is essential that all pencils/crayons etc. are labelled with the child's name.

Pencil Cases will be left in school, to avoid items being left behind at home. Therefore no child will be without their required materials each day.

School Uniforms/Tracksuits

There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms or tracksuits should be washed every day and this is probably not practical for most families. In order to facilitate washing when necessary all pupils from 1st-6th will:

- wear their 'main' school uniform (school jumper, trousers/skirt etc.) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- wear their PE uniform on Tuesday and Thursday.

Junior & Senior Infants will wear their **PE uniform every day**. (As we are transitioning to tracksuit only in the infant room Senior Infants have the option of wearing school uniform on Monday, Wednesday & Friday if they wish)

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. They should not be worn in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

Homework

Kiltealy N.S. Board of Management and staff would like to thank parents for their home schooling efforts over the past number of months.

Teachers will not assign homework until the week commencing 28th of September to allow pupils, parents and teachers to adjust to various new school routines.

Communication with school

Kiltealy N.S. continues to pride itself on a good communication system between home and school. Unfortunately that system has to somewhat change for the foreseeable. We would urge parents to avoid visiting the school building unless an appointment has been made with the teacher or staff member.

Contact Tracing Log

All visitors including substitute teachers, substitute SNAs, coaches/external music teachers and parents will be required to complete a Contact Tracing Log and Health Declaration Form.

We would urge parents to contact us through your child's homework diary. Alternatively contact can be made by emailing the school at kiltealyns@gmail.com or phoning the **school office** (053 9255446).

School Payments

School payments are to be sent into school with your child. The exact amount of money is to be placed in an envelope clearly labelled with:

- Child's name
- Teacher's name

- Initiative name (eg. book money)
- Amount enclosed stated

Children will not be sent to the Secretary's Office or to the Reception area to deliver messages/money.

As far as possible, staff members should not enter the Office area and should speak with the Secretary at the Reception area.

Masks

The children are not required to wear masks or face coverings.

Most recent guidelines recommend that staff wear masks or face coverings when a physical distance of 2m cannot be maintained. Visors will be our mask of choice as masks would hide facial expressions and make communication with the children more difficult. Masks may be worn also when not in a communicative capacity with children. Visors and masks will be provided to staff members.

The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Staff members are not required to wear PPE. However, 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
- 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.

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment, they will apply standard precautions as per usual.

Gloves

There is no need for the children to wear disposable gloves. They are considered inappropriate under the guidelines.

Staff members do not need to wear disposable gloves unless they are looking after a pupil's intimate care needs or administering First Aid.

There will be an emphasis on hand hygiene rather than on the wearing of disposable gloves.

Hygiene and Cleaning

10 sanitiser dispensers will be installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom.

Paper Towel dispensers will be placed in the toilet and sink areas where they currently do not appear.

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

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, chairs/arm rests, desks, sink and toilet facilities.

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 before and after use each day.

Waste will be collected daily from all bins within the school.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

Cleaning

Cleaning in schools will be increased considerably. Schools have been given a budget for the extra cleaning and cleaning materials required.

Resources will be provided for children individually where possible, or shared with their 'pod'.

Staff will maintain a regular cleaning routine of all resources and materials that will be used by different pods or class bubbles.

Where necessary items of school equipment will be isolated for 72 hours prior to being used by a different pod/class bubble e.g. PE equipment

Daily, weekly and monthly cleaning routines will be adhered to as per Government and Department of Education guidelines.

Signage

Signage will be displayed as per the Department Guidelines, with child friendly hand hygiene signage placed by hand washing and hand sanitising areas.

Doors and Windows

Where practical, all external doors will be left open on arrival, during break times and on departure, to minimise hand contact with common surfaces.

To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible, and will be opened while children are taking breaks in the playground.

Windows should be opened when children are singing as a group, or when they are playing musical instruments.

Photocopying.

Any staff member who uses the photocopier should clean it down after use with the wipes provided.

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.

Visiting Teachers/Coaches

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities such as Dancing, Coaching for games, Safe Cycling course, etc. will be explored. However, it is not recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time, for example, during music lessons.

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.

Physical Education and P.E. Equipment

Physical Education lessons will take place outside when the weather allows. Staff members and pupils may take additional breaks outside during the school day.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Parent/Teacher Meetings will be assessed closer to the time.

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.

Staff meetings will be held in larger 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. There will be no access to school cutlery/utensils.

Teaching and Learning

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th. 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 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 2020/2021 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.

Supporting the Learning of Children who Cannot Attend School

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time for medical health reasons that may be impacted by contracting Covid-19, the class teacher (and/or the Special Education Teacher, where relevant) will provide work to support the child's learning at home and this will be shared with parents/guardians.

The majority of parents have already provided an email address at which the school can contact them to support Home Learning. This will be especially important if the school, or parts of the school have to close due to HSE advice. If you have not already done so, please email kiltealyns@gmail.com and you will be added to the Contact List.

Illness and 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.

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Loss of smell or taste, or distortion of taste

Staff must not attend school if they display any symptoms.

A designated isolation area has been created in the front of school.

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

The pupil will be accompanied to the isolation area. A distance of 2 meters will be maintained. If this is not possible, the person accompanying the child must wear a face covering.

If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by telephone. To help us in this regard, parents/guardians are asked to make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times.

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

A face covering will be provided to the staff member/child who is symptomatic.

The staff member or child who is symptomatic should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.

If the staff member/child is well enough to go home, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.

Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms.

If the staff member/child 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.

14 Day Isolation Period

Anybody (including staff/pupils/parents/visitors) who has visited another country in the weeks leading up to our return to school is expected to isolate for a 14 day period on return and will not be permitted entry to the school unless they have done so.

Your child should not attend school if there is a family member (parent/sibling, or any other household member) displaying symptoms of Covid 19. Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms.

Return to Work

All staff will be required to complete online induction training for the return to work as provided by the Dept. of Education.

All staff will complete a Return to work form in the 3 days prior to returning to school.

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.