



Catherine McAuley Junior School,
Bunscoil Nic Amhlaidh,
Castlemoyle,
New Ross,
Co. Wexford.
26th August 2021

Dear Parents / Guardians

We look forward to returning to school. We realise that many parents still have concerns and worries but we hope to make school as normal as possible for the children and are really looking forward to welcoming them, especially our new arrivals.

We have been working very hard to ensure that we can all return to school safely. The protocols in place worked really well last year. We have looked at the risks and put in place procedures and plans to reduce the risks as much as possible. The following letter outlines what we have planned for this year. Your co-operation is vital in making it all work.



Class Organisation

Each class will be a bubble with two adults (two teachers or a teacher and an SNA).

The class will only interact with these adults. The children will not mix with the children in other classes. They will have their own yard time, supervised by one of the adults working in their class.

Each class will use one entrance/exit and the same stairs at all times. When the child comes to school s/he will go to their door, where they will sanitise their hands before going to class. In class they will wash their hands for two minutes. There will be regular hand washing throughout the day.

Tables will be arranged to maximise social distance. The adults in the class will wear a face covering.

We are conscious the children have missed a considerable amount of time over the last two years so we will be doing a lot of revision to bring the children up to where they should be. If a child needs extra support it will be provided by the two adults working in the class.

First day back- 31st August 😊

All children will start back on **31st August**



Arrival and dismissal times will be staggered the same as last year. Adults must remain 2 metres apart while dropping off and collecting the children.

The gates will remain closed until your child's appointed class time.

Please do not arrive early and if arriving by car, please stay in your car on the Bawnmore Road until the appointed time.

ADULTS MUST WEAR A MASK WHEN ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Junior Infants.

- ✚ On **Tuesday 31st August and Wednesday 1st September** Junior Infants will be coming in in small groups to meet their teacher and friends to get to know their classroom and begin to settle in.

If you did not get notification of your time, please contact the office.

Parents are welcome to come to the Hall door on Tuesday and Wednesday but will be asked to drop the children at the gate from Thursday 2nd. There will be staff members and familiar faces at the gate and along the way, to help them to their classes.

- ✚ From **Thursday 2nd September**, Junior Infants will come to school at **9:00am** and go home at **12:00pm** until Friday 10th September. From **Monday 13th September** Junior Infants will come to school at **8:55am** and go home at **1:25pm**
- ✚ The Junior Infant children will be collected from their class area in front of the school building. **Parents may come onto school grounds at this collection time.**

Senior Infants

- ✚ From **Tuesday 31st August** Senior Infants will come to school at **8:55am** and go home at **1:35pm**.
- ✚ The Senior Infant children will be collected from their class area in front of the school building. **Parents may come onto school grounds at this collection time.**

- ✚ Your co-operation with these times is vital as we try to keep the number of adults on school grounds and outside the school at any one time, to the minimum.
- ✚ Parents are asked to stand at the designated class area, behind the yellow lines, keeping 2 metres apart when collecting the children.

First & Second Classes Tuesday 31st August

- ✚ The **2nd Classes** will come to school at **8:45am** and finish at **2:30pm**.
- ✚ The **1st Classes** will come to school at **8:45am** and finish at **2:20pm**.
- ✚ 1st & 2nd Classes will be collected and dismissed **from the gate**. This is to reduce the number of adults on the school grounds.
- ✚ The children will follow the coloured line to their door. **Blue line** for Second Classes and **Green line** for First Classes where they will be met by a teacher who will supervise hand sanitising using a contactless sanitiser.
- ✚ There will be staff members along the way to greet the children and help them.
- ✚ **Collection Time:** First and Second Classes will be brought to the gate for collection by parents or adult appointed by the parent. The children will not be released unless there is an adult at the gate. Please be on time. If you want your child to walk down to the car please contact the school in writing to let us know.

Glaisín

The children in Glaisín will come to school at 8.45am and go home at 1.30pm or 2.30pm as usual. They will use the Glaisín entrance as usual.

These arrangements are in place for the moment. We will be reviewing them regularly and welcome suggestions/feedback from parents.

Siblings

We are conscious that we have a number of families with more than one child in the school. Brothers and sisters can come to school together at the earlier time and go to their relevant classrooms. School staff will be at the doors to help and supervise the children. This should make life easier for parents.

Things your child should know

Some of the children may be anxious about coming back to school. Teacher will be listening to the children about their fears and will teach them that we can help to keep ourselves safe by doing the following:

- ❖ Children wear masks coming into and going home from school
- ❖ Children must wear masks on the bus
- ❖ Smile but don't hug or shake hands
- ❖ Wash your hands properly and regularly
- ❖ Only use your own things-pencils, rubbers, Twistables.
- ❖ Cough/sneeze into your elbow or into a tissue. Put the tissue in a bin straight away.
- ❖ Tell teacher if you feel unwell
- ❖ Keep 2 metres apart when coming into and leaving school grounds

These are the tools that will help to reassure the children and help them to settle back into school.

Please teach them the same rules at home so that they will really get the message and feel much safer.

Checklist for children and parents before coming to school every morning

- Am I well? Have I got a snuffle / cough / sore throat / high temperature?
- Have I got my lunch?
- Have I got my coat?
- Have I washed my hands?

Parents on school grounds

Junior & Senior Infant parents may come onto the school grounds at dismissal times only.

We ask First & Second-Class parents NOT to come onto the school grounds unless they have made an appointment.

All adults must wear face coverings on school grounds.

Bus Children

On arrival in the morning the bus children will sanitise at their designated entrance and go straight to their classrooms. There will be staff members to greet the children and help them along the way.

At home-time they will be collected for the bus as usual.



Communication - Contacting your child's teacher

We used Class Dojo for communication with home very successfully for the past year. Please continue to use Class Dojo to get in touch with the class teacher. This would help take some of the pressure off the phone in the office and will ensure that you can ask your question of the most appropriate person, that is the class teacher.

Of course you can ring the office if you have an urgent message.



Collecting early / appointments

If a child is to be collected outside of normal times, the following arrangements will apply:

- ✚ The adult must ring ahead to let the school know s/he is coming
- ✚ The adult will hand sanitize and sign the Contact Tracing Log giving a current phone number.
- ✚ The adult who is collecting the child will sign the child out and meet the child at the door.
- ✚ All adults visiting the school must wear a face covering.

School Belongings

- ✚ School lunches will be provided as normal.
- ✚ If bringing a lunch from home, please use an actual lunch box/bag not the schoolbag. The lunch box will need to be sanitised at home every day. Please remember the Healthy Eating Policy.
- ✚ **We are a nut free school.**



We have a uniform to make life easier for parents!

- ✚ Two sets of uniforms should be enough for each child, as in other years. This will give you a chance to wash/dry one uniform while wearing the other.
- ✚ It would be a good idea for the children to change out of their uniforms immediately after school, to reduce the risk of bringing in anything from home or bringing anything home from school.
- ✚ If the uniform is not dry, it won't be the end of the world, if the child comes to school in their ordinary clothes.

Cleaning and Sanitisation - to make school as safe as possible.

All adults working in the school including Teachers, Special Need Assistants, Secretary, caretaker, cleaners will have received training on best practice and safety protocols before returning to work.

They will also complete a return to work questionnaire.

They will have a supply of sanitising wipes and sprays in the classrooms for use during the day.

All adults will wear a face covering when in school.

The school building will be thoroughly cleaned each evening, giving particular attention to toilets and regularly touched surfaces such as door handles, bannisters, light switches etc.

A cleaner will be on site all day, sanitising touch points in the classrooms.

Shared Equipment

All children will have their own personal equipment such as pencils, rubbers etc. and will not be sharing these with other children. However, some classroom equipment needs to be shared, such as toys in infant classrooms and I-pads.

Shared equipment will be cleaned with wipes or other cleaning products at regular intervals, to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

Handwashing and Hand Sanitisers

Handwashing will be a frequent feature of the children's day in school as last year. They will sanitise their hands on arrival at school before going to class.

We are using Biosan chemical free hand sanitiser

Handwashing will take place:

- ✚ Before & after eating and drinking
- ✚ After using the toilet
- ✚ Before leaving the classroom
- ✚ On return to the classroom after playing outdoors
- ✚ When their hands are physically dirty
- ✚ When they cough or sneeze

We have put touch free hand sanitisers at all school entrances for the children when they come into school. Children *may* bring their own hand sanitiser.



Contact tracing log

Each member of staff will sign in/out each day.

All visitors to the school will sign in/out and give a current contact number. This will allow the HSE to contact trace if need be.

If there is a suspected case or confirmed case of Covid19 in my child's class what will happen?

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

- The parents of all the children in the class will be notified.
- Public health advice will be sought immediately and followed.

Children who should not attend school

The following children 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 may have Covid 19 and are waiting for the test result.
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid 19 and is waiting for the test result
- Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school. *Please contact Elma Sutton*
- Children who are generally unwell. If your child has a cough/ a sniffle/ a high temperature s/he should not come to school. You should contact your GP by phone and follow the advice of your GP with regard to testing.
- Your child must stay at home for 48 hours after the symptoms have cleared up.

Returning from Abroad

- Adults who have been vaccinated, have proof of recovery from Covid-19 or a negative PCR test do not need to quarantine and neither does their child
- However if the adult needs to self-quarantine, the child must quarantine as well. (www.gov.ie, August 26th 2021)
- These guidelines are subject to change

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Pupils/adults should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid19.

If a pupil/adult displays symptoms of Covid19 while in school, the following procedures will be implemented:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area by a member of staff who will wear Personal Protective Clothing. The staff member will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child at all times
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. He/she will wear the mask while in school. The mask must be worn while on school premises.
- If the child is well enough to go home, parents will be called to bring the child home as soon as possible. The family will be advised to inform their GP of the symptoms by phone.
- The school will facilitate a child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home. Their GP will be called if contact cannot be made with parents.
- If the child is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick child is showing symptoms of Covid-19.
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning/sanitizing of the isolation area and work areas involved.

The school will inform the HSE

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 will be followed by school and parents.

Conclusion

We are very conscious that we really depend on one another at this time of national crisis and that we are all in this together. We are depending on everyone's goodwill, patience and flexibility to ensure that our school is a safe, welcoming, happy environment for everybody on 31st August.

Thank you for your co-operation. The above information will be reviewed regularly and we will be in contact with you regarding any changes.

Yours sincerely,

Elma Sutton
Principal

