

This plan was created to meet the Government's *Work Safely Protocol*. It is designed to support the students, staff, parents, BOM and all other school users in putting measures in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

The plan will be updated as necessary with new items highlighted in yellow each time.

The measures put in place are based on the following:

1. [Covid-19 Response plan](#) issued to schools on the 18th August 2021
2. [Public health advice](#) for schools
3. [Circulars from the Department of Education](#)

A collaborative approach between all school users is needed to ensure the safety of all.

We thank all school users in advance for adhering to public health advice when using the building, when on school grounds and for dropping / collecting in the vicinity.

COVID-19 POLICY STATEMENT

Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed and updated the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed:  Date: 23 August 2021

MEASURES IN PLACE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN THE SHOOOL

ITEM	RESPONSE MEASURE
After School Activities	<p>After school activities can resume under the Response Plan for 2021/22. The activities will be bound by whatever limitations and guidelines are set for that activity. These may include numbers allowed attend, distance to be maintained between participants, whether outdoors / indoors etc.</p>
Antigen Testing	<p>If a ‘detected’ result from a PCR test of a pupil is received, the parents are asked to notify the school. The school will forward on information for other parents in that child’s pod to access free antigen tests.</p> <p>If there is a second case in that same class in a week, the entire class is notified about the availability of free antigen tests.</p> <p>Parents should follow the advice issued in the letter at the time.</p> <p>Further information on antigen testing is available here.</p> <p>Antigen tests should only be used when a child displays no symptoms.</p>
Classroom Organisation	<p>Classrooms should continue to be free of any excess equipment / furniture so that space can be maximised. The purpose of bubbles and pods is to limit contact rather than avoid all contact as this is not always possible in a classroom context.</p> <p>Bubbles: Each class in the school is a bubble. Bubbles should not mix other than for integration of children from Coiscéim.</p> <p>Pods: Within each class, the children should be organised into discrete pods. The numbers in a pod should be as low as practically possible. The purpose of the pod is to limit sharing across the class while allowing for a positive educational experience for the children.</p> <p>Children within pods should maintain social distancing between each other and between other pods as much as is possible and reasonable.</p> <p>Tables may be grouped accordingly to reflect the pods in the class.</p> <p>Staff should give careful consideration when allocating children to pods but flexibility is allowed when necessary using common sense and considering the specific context of the class.</p>
Cleaning	<p>All school users are responsible for maintaining hygiene standards throughout the school. Cleaning equipment is readily available to staff.</p> <p>No cleaning equipment should be removed from the school.</p>

	<p>Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned by school staff throughout the day. A school cleaner will help in this regard throughout the day but this does not take from each individual's cleaning responsibilities.</p> <p>Surfaces should be clutter free and chairs should be stacked at the end of the day and ready for cleaning and sanitising by cleaning staff after school. Staff should clean and disinfect their work areas before and after use.</p> <p>Waste will be removed daily from each room.</p>
<p>Close Contact of a Positive Case</p>	<p>The HSE decides the next course of action in relation to school users coming in contact with a positive case of Covid-19 in the school.</p> <p>This may involve removing a number of contacts (children or staff members) isolating and working from home, removing a pod or closing an entire class. The HSE makes these decisions based on their own guidelines taking age, activity during contact or vaccination status among other things into account.</p> <p>Parents of students should be aware that it may be necessary for students to self-isolate as a result of being deemed a close contact. The dates and durations will be set by the HSE. The HSE will also arrange for testing of close contacts and will follow up before their return to school.</p>
<p>CO2 Monitors</p>	<p>CO2 monitors are dispersed around the school. They serve as a reminder to ventilate rooms. If they turn orange / red, it can be interpreted as the room is not adequately ventilated at that time. Doors and windows should be opened further. Persistent orange / red may require further mitigation measures as per DE guidelines.</p>
<p>Dealing with a Suspected Covid-19 Case</p>	<p>The following steps will be followed in Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh when dealing with a suspect case of Covid-19:</p> <p>A case is suspected if the individual displays one or more of the common Covid-19 symptoms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High temperature 2. Cough 3. Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing 4. Loss of smell / taste or distortion of smell / taste <p>If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact the principal (150) immediately. The person will be isolated in the designated isolation area by the principal via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times; ▪ The principal will provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;

- The principal will assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;
- 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 and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

Children displaying ‘uncommon symptoms’ (sore throat, headaches etc) are unfit for school and a call is made for them to be collected. They are not subjected to the isolation process.

Families are encouraged to walk / cycle / scoot to school where possible.

Three entry / exit points to the school are in use:

ALL CLASSES BEING AT 8.50AM

ENTRY (Gates open 8.40am)

Class	Gate	Door/ stairs
Junior Infants	Main gate	Direct to classroom
Senior Infants x 1	Main gate	Direct to classroom (Ms McCarthy)
Senior Infants x 2	Top gate	Direct to classroom
Rang 1	Top gate	Direct to classroom
Rang 2	Top gate	Direct to classroom
Rang 3	Bottom gate (Carpark)	Up vehicle ramp, back stairs
Rang 4	Main gate (Office)	Main door - Main stairs
Rang 5	Main gate (Office)	Main door – Side stairs
Rang 6	Bottom gate (Carpark)	Up pedestrian ramp, car park door

Drop Off / Collection

Coiscéim		As per class level
----------	--	--------------------

Note some entry gates differ from that level's exit gate

EXIT (Infants: 1.30pm, All other classes: 2.30pm)

Class	Gate
Junior Infants	Front yard, exit main gate (collected) – 1.30pm
Senior Infants	Main yard, exit bottom gate (collected) – 1.30pm
Rang 1	Front yard, exit main gate (collected)
Rang 2	Main yard, exit bottom gate (collected if necessary)
Rang 3	Bottom gate – meet parent outside school grounds
Rang 4	Main gate – meet parent outside school grounds
Rang 5	Main gate – meet parent outside school grounds
Rang 6	Bottom gate – meet parent outside school grounds
Coiscéim	As per class level

Infants – Rang 2: Parents collecting children should wait only on the yellow boxes on the yard. This ensures social distancing is maintained. Please do not congregate on the yard at collection time.

Ranganna 3 – 6: Walk home / arrange to meet parents away from school grounds if necessary.

Wherever possible, parents are discouraged from collecting / dropping students to the gate. This ensures easier distancing for the children and reduces congestion.

Golden Time

Golden time in school (play time) must be structured and supervised in such a way that ensures pod / bubble integrity at all times.

Staff must be extra vigilant in times of any less structured activities in ensuring the adherence to the safety measures in place. Outdoor play whenever possible at this time is recommended.

Home Items Being Brought to School

Bringing non-essential items between home and school should be avoided. These items include toys, cards, excessive stationery etc. All personal items should be labelled clearly.

Homework

A mix of physical and digital homework (Seesaw) is appropriate to use given the hand hygiene measures in place in schools. This should include relevant written work, class readers, novels, learning etc as per school policy.

<p>Hygiene</p>	<p>All school users are asked to practice good hygiene at all times.</p> <p>Respiratory Hygiene All families are asked to practise good coughing / sneezing etiquette at home by using tissues (<i>catch it, bin it, kill it</i> etc) or coughing / sneezing into an elbow. School staff will reinforce this also in school.</p> <p>Hand Hygiene All families are asked to practise good handwashing technique at home and this will be reinforced at school.</p> <p>Sanitisers are available throughout each classroom and around the school. School users should wash / sanitise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When leaving for school and upon arrival 2. Before eating / drinking 3. After using the toilet 4. Before and after outdoor play 5. When their hands are physically dirty 6. After coughing or sneezing <p>Children may, if they wish, bring their own sanitisers to school provided it meets the required standard (60% alcohol or above etc).</p>
<p>Induction Training</p>	<p>All staff must have completed the Department of Education’s Induction Training prior to returning to school, if they have not done so previously. The training is available here.</p>
<p>Lead Worker Rep</p>	<p>The role of the LWR is explained here</p> <p>The LWR is Patrick Murphy. The assistant LWR is TBC</p>
<p>Masks & PPE</p>	<p>Masks must be worn at all times by staff, students from 3rd – 6th class and any guest school users in accordance with public health guidance. This includes, according to public health, parents / guardians outside school grounds as it is classified as a ‘busy area’.</p> <p>Masks may be removed when seated at a desk and when eating / drinking provided a distance of at least 2m between individuals exists.</p> <p>Gloves are generally not required unless performing intimate care / medical attention. Other PPE is available as per usual practice.</p> <p>It is not currently recommended that children of primary school age need to wear face-coverings. Families are free to make this decision for their children.</p> <p>Information on proper mask use is available here.</p> <p>Government issued requirements for students of 3rd – 6th classes around mask wearing is available here.</p>

Masks (Medical Grade)	Medical grade masks must be used by all SNAs and staff in special classes. The school will provide these for use by staff.
Opening Times	Students should not present to the gate before 8.40am in an effort to limit mixing wherever possible. Parents are discouraged from waiting at the gate. Parents should disperse immediately once a child has entered the premises.
Resource Rooms	Resource Rooms may be used for SEN teaching. Staff using the resource rooms must ensure surfaces and common touch areas are cleaned and disinfected between individual use. See also <i>Staff Working in SET</i> .
Return to School (RTS)	All parents must make a health declaration through Aladdin Connect on behalf of their child after any absence or period of school closure such as holidays or midterms.
Return to Work (RTW)	All staff must complete the RTW issued by email ahead of their return and after any significant absence / school closure such as holidays or midterms. Sample RTW forms are available here .
Risk Assessment	A health & safety risk assessment has been carried out and is available here .
School Transport	For families who travel to school under the school transport scheme, advice and guidelines are available here .
Shared Equipment	School users should avoid sharing where possible with personal supplies preferential. Staff can allocate school equipment accordingly to help in this regard. All other shared equipment such as toys, electronics, books etc should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use by different people.
Signage	Signs are displayed throughout the school and at entry points reminding school users about respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene, social distancing and other public health measures.
Singing / Music	Singing should only occur in well ventilated spaces with distance maintained between performers.
Special Educational Needs	Maintaining distancing with children with SEN may not be practical or appropriate. Parents of children with SEN must therefore have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes to baseline behaviour suggesting an infection. In such instances, children must not attend school.
Sports	The school will follow the Return to Sport protocols.

<p>Staff</p>	<p>Maintain a distance of 2m from other adults at all times. Maintain a distance of 2m from children when not engaged in teaching.</p> <p>When teaching, staff should maintain a minimum 1m distance and 2m where possible, avoiding close contact at a face to face level with students.</p> <p>Common sense must prevail here in relation to the age of the child, medical vulnerability or special educational need. All staff must avoid physical contact with each other and informal group discussions.</p>
<p>Staff Absence Management</p>	<p>All efforts will be made to ensure a teacher is with each class. The following order will be used in the event of a teacher absence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Substitute teacher from supply panel 2. Substitute teacher from school supply 3. Allocated SET teacher from the level 4. Allocated SET teacher from within the school 5. Unqualified supervision <p>If a teacher cannot be organised, parents will be notified that a teacher is unavailable and the children cannot attend school that day. In such a situation, Seesaw will be utilised by the class teacher, in the first instance if their health allows, to continue learning at home.</p>
<p>Staff Bubbles</p>	<p>Staff in generally will work across their level to keep mixing at a minimum. SET staff and SNAs may rotate when necessary across class bands for the purpose of station teaching as long as there is adherence to the measures outlined.</p> <p>The class bands are Jnrs & Snrs, R1 & R2, R3& R4 and R5 & R6.</p>
<p>Staff Carpark</p>	<p>The carpark will close to staff vehicles from 8.35am to be used then as a pedestrian entrance. Staff may park on the public road after that time. Staff must not drive through the entrance under any circumstances after 8.35am.</p>
<p>Staff Duties</p>	<p>Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play. In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adhere to the School COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined. ▪ Complete the RTW form before they return to work. ▪ Must inform the principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace. ▪ New staff must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices. ▪ Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained. ▪ Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing. ▪ Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19. ▪ Not return to or attend school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances. ▪ Follow the HSE guidance if they are identified as a close contact. ▪ If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel. ▪ If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above. ▪ Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same. ▪ Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school ▪ Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health
<p>Staff Meetings</p>	<p>Staff meetings may take place between staff in a vacant, well ventilated space. Meetings will be in small groups (usually between those at a level or the management team). Croke Park meetings will take place in school on the dates contained in the staff diary (Tuesdays). Continued adherence to all the measures outlined is necessary including social distancing of 2m, mask wearing, hygiene measures, ventilation etc.</p>
<p>Staff Utensils / Personal Items</p>	<p>All staff must use and clean their own equipment, supplies and utensils</p>
<p>Staff Wellbeing and Employee Assistance</p>	<p>The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is available to all education staff under the Occupational Health Strategy. It is provided by Spectrum.Life under the logo <i>Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile</i> and can be contacted at 1800 411 057 by phone, text, WhatsApp, Callback or live chat. There is also a wellbeing portal, an app, online cognitive behavioural therapy and E-learning programmes available.</p>
<p>Staff working in SET</p>	<p>In the first instance, SEN Teachers and SNAs will work with students in the students’ own environment at the students’ workstations as per best practice. Should some withdrawal in limited circumstances be necessary, then use of the SEN rooms is appropriate – maintaining social distancing and small groups.</p> <p>Areas like the OT Room and Sensory Room are accessible to all students providing it is timetabled. The necessary measures must be put in place to limit sharing, ensure social distancing and allow time for cleaning before and after use.</p>

Staffroom	The main staffroom is available for use at break times (maximum 8 people at breaks). The resource rooms are also available to staff (maximum 3 people at breaks). Staff must continue to wear their mask other than when eating / drinking.
Symptoms of Covid-19	<p>The common Covid-19 symptoms are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High temperature 2. Cough 3. Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing 4. Loss of smell / taste or distortion of smell / taste <p>A full list of symptoms according to the HSE is provided here.</p>
Unwell Children / Unwell Staff / Illness	<p>Under no circumstances should a child, staff member or visitor come to school if they are unwell in any way. Contact your GP and seek medical advice if necessary.</p> <p>Parents / guardians of an unwell child in school will be contacted to arrange for collection of the child.</p>
Ventilation	<p>All windows / doorways should be open fully when weather permits and also when the room is not in use.</p> <p>All windows and doors should be open partially during periods of colder / inclement weather to ensure ventilation.</p> <p>CO2 monitors will be used to check ventilation throughout the building as necessary – see <i>CO2 Monitors above</i>.</p> <p>Full details on ventilation can be found here.</p>
Videos for Parents and Children	<p>Video advice for parents and children are available at the following links.</p> <p>For Parents</p> <p>For new Junior Infants</p> <p>For Senior Infants to Rang 2</p> <p>For Rang 3 to Rang 6</p> <p>Poster advice for parents can be downloaded here.</p> <p>All information is available in multiple languages here.</p>
Visitors to the School	<p>Visitors are permitted when deemed essential by the principal and arranged in advance (such as some parent-teacher meetings, DE inspectors, other professionals).</p> <p>Visitors details are kept in a log for contact tracing purposes.</p> <p>Visitors are subject to the guidelines in place around mask wearing, social distancing, hygiene etc.</p>

	<p>The dropping of items such as lunch boxes or forgotten home work is not appropriate for everyone's safety.</p> <p>If, for an emergency / exceptional reason, a child must be collected during the school day, it must be organised with the school office in advance through email or phone (office@bsrac.ie)</p>
Yard and Supervision	<p>Breaks and yard times are staggered with clearly marked zones for each class bubble.</p>