

ST.FELIM'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

SN Leiter, Coill an Chollaigh, Co. Cabhain

Roll No. 18564W

Principal:

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Monday 17th August 2020

RE: Physical Distancing and Safe School Attendance

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you and your families are keeping well and are having an enjoyable Summer. We are currently working on our school procedures and routines to ensure that there is as much Physical Distancing as is possible in our building when we re-open our doors on Tuesday 1st of September.

We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -

- 1. Increasing Separation** - This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Each class will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles. Within the bubbles, children will be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children (no more than 6) who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the bubble, or classroom.
- 2. Decreasing Interaction** - This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. There will be marked routes for various bubbles to enter and exit the school. Pupils will access their classrooms using four different doors around the school.

Entrances and Exits

- Children will enter the school premises through the green gates in the main school car park.
- They will walk up the ramp maintaining physical distancing.
- Staff members will be present to show children where to go and to remind them to hand sanitise on the way in.
- Children will exit these doors at break and lunch times and again at home time.

Classes	Door
Junior & Senior Infants	Infant Back Door
1 st & 3 rd Class	Door in Link Corridor to Hall
2 nd & 5 th Class	Door at New Classroom
4 th & 6 th Class	Double Doors

Classrooms

In order to maintain physical distancing in our classrooms, the following measures have been taken:

- All unnecessary furniture has been removed from all classrooms to create as much space as possible.
- One half of our school hall has been repurposed into a 60m² classroom
- Teacher's desks are at least 1 metre and where possible 2 metres away from pupil's desks.

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 6 pupils per Pod. There will be 1 metre distance between Pods and between individual children in the Pod, whenever possible.

Breaktimes

Classes or Bubbles will have different times to access the playground and will be on different sections of the yard. As is current practice the first 10 minutes of lunchtime will be in the classroom to facilitate children eating their lunch. We will make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times. Arrangements are as follows:

Group	Classes	Breaktime	Lunchtime
Group 1	Juniors, 1 st , 3 rd & 5 th	10:40-10:50	12:15-12:45
Group 2	Seniors, 2 nd , 4 th & 6 th	11:00-11:10	12:45-1.15

Staggered Drop off and Collection Times

To further assist with physical distancing, we will be implementing staggered drop off and collections times. These details are not yet finalised and will be communicated to you early next week.

Hand Hygiene

Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom. Liquid soap is available in all the classrooms, toilets, in one SET Room, and staff room.

Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged. Posters will be displayed throughout the school on how to wash your hands. Children and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After petting animals;
- After playing outdoors;
- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.

Teachers will make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting.

Parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message by emphasising safe behaviour in this regard to your children at home as part of the preparation for returning to school. Children must wash their hands before leaving home by following the HSE guidelines on handwashing outlined below:

How to wash your hands with soap and water

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together palm to palm until the soap forms a lather.
3. Rub the back of one hand with your palm and fingers spread so you wash between fingers. Repeat with the other hand.
4. Interlock the top of your hands and rub your fingertips - this cleans your fingertips and knuckles.
5. Then finally grasp your thumb tightly and twist to make sure your thumbs are cleaned. Repeat with the other hand.
6. This should take at least 20 seconds.
7. Rinse your hands under running water.
8. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel.

A video for children on how to wash hands correctly can be viewed at the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9VjeIWLnEg>

Safe School Attendance

While all children will be welcome back to school, we would remind parents that, where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms, they should not be sent to school. Children who display such symptoms in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school.

Children who have travelled from countries not on the Green List should not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period

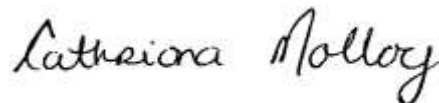
Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: - <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

Our aim remains to re-open the school in an orderly safe manner, while reassuring the children and making them feel comfortable, safe and relaxed with their friends in the new school environment. This will be achieved by all of us working towards this common goal.

Yours sincerely,



Gerry Sheanon (Chairperson B.O.M.)



Cathriona Molloy - Principal