



Covid Response Plan

School Profile

235 pupils

9 Mainstream classes

3 Special Education Posts (2 teachers job sharing)

Administrative Principal

2 Full Time SNA posts

1 Infant hours SNA post

Full Time Secretary

Part Time Caretaker

2 Cleaners

There are three classrooms that are 80 m²: one of these is a prefab. All of these have toilets in the classroom. The other classrooms are smaller with shared toilets between two classes.

There is one main entrance and 6 exits. There are also two gates on school grounds for entrance and exit.

Key Dates

Week beginning August 23rd

All staff return to school to prepare for re-opening

Organise BOM, ISM and Staff meetings to discuss and allocate tasks (Possible tasks listed at the end of this document)

Contact PA Committee and ask for questions/concerns from the perspective of parents.

Contact the school community and inform everyone that the BOM's COvid-19 Response Plan will be published on August 26th.

Elect Lead Worker Representative and Deputy Lead Worker Representative.

All staff to prepare their work stations and help de-clutter corridors.

BOM Meeting August 25th.

New infants welcomed to school with their parents.

Week beginning Monday 10th August

Cleaning of school will begin by caretaker.

Principal to work on plan.

Extra section of the yard to be laid for tarmac

BOM to source cleaning company.

Send update to staff and parents.

Week beginning Monday 17th of August

All staff to complete Return to Work form.

Online training to be completed by all staff.

Week beginning Monday 31st August

Monday – welcome all pupils back to school.

Juniors to begin at 10am

Usual School Hours

9.20 – 2.00p.m. Infants

9.20 – 3.00p.m. First to Sixth

Under normal circumstances parents/guardians have access to the school yard both before and after school.

Staggered Drop Off and Collection Times

To help with reducing the amount of traffic around the school gates, the Principal and the S.N.A.'s will co-ordinate bus arrivals at lower gate beside G.A.A. grounds and encourage all pupils to walk straight into their classrooms. A one- way system will be in operation for cars: all motorists will be asked to drive up to the main entrance to the school from the village side, queue and drop off pupils when able to do so.

Pupils from 2nd and 6th class will enter and leave the building through the Front Door. The two infant classes will enter and exit the school through the side door to the left of the main entrance. 1st, 3rd and 4th classes will enter and leave the school building through their own door to the side of the school. 5th class will enter and leave the building through the door nearest to them.

All doors will be manned and coloured coded for the first week so as to avoid confusion.

Unfortunately, it will not be possible for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before/after school. If you have a concern about your child, please ring or email the school to make an appointment. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, the children may not come onto the school grounds before the school doors open at 9.10a.m. ***(Separate, special arrangements will be put in place for our Junior Infants and their Mams and Dads at the beginning of the school year.)***

Morning:

All class teachers will be in their classrooms by 9.10a.m.

Parents are asked to 'drop and go' outside the school at the main entrance anytime between 9.10a.m. and 9.20a.m. **No parking will be allowed.** Please be mindful of other drivers and pedestrians arriving to the school.

Children will go directly to their classrooms on arrival. Other staff members (including Special Education Teachers, SNAs and the Principal) will be available outside and inside the building to receive the children off the various buses and to help them to their classrooms.

Afternoon:

(Special arrangements will be put in place for Junior Infants for the first two weeks of the school year)

From 16th September onwards:

1.50p.m. Class teacher will bring **Junior Infants** to the main school gate. Mams/Dads are asked to observe social distance guidelines while waiting to collect their child.

From 1st September onwards:

2.00p.m. Class teacher will bring **Senior Infants** to the main school gate. Mams/Dads are asked to observe/ social distance guidelines while waiting for their child.

2.50p.m. Class teachers will bring First and Second Class to the school gate. Pupils availing of buses will be escorted to correct buses. Mams/Dads are asked to observe social distance while waiting for their child. S.N.A.'s and teachers will supervise pupils availing of bus transport. All buses will now park at lower gate G.A.A. side with parents in cars dropping off and collecting at main school gate.

3.00p.m. Class teachers will bring Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes to the lower gate and supervise bus departures. All buses will be parked at lower gate. Motorists are asked to collect pupils at main gate, observe one- way system and maintain social distance while waiting for their child. Supervision will be provided until 3.10p.m.

Mams and Dads who walk or drive to the school to collect children are asked to maintain a social distance outside the school gate.

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

Summarised Timetable for Drop Off and Pick Up

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 9.10 | All staff to be present to support arrival of pupils
Class teachers to be in their classrooms
SETs, SNAs and Principal to support arrival of pupils |
| 9.10 – 9.30 | Arrival of pupils – Stop, Drop, Go system. All pupils will be supervised alighting from buses. No adults to enter the school yard. Children to go straight to their classrooms on arrival. |
| 1.50 | Junior Infants collection at main entrance. |
| 2.00 | Senior Infants collection at main entrance. |
| 2.50 | First and Second class to exit school building. |
| 3.00 | Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth to exit school building. |

Break times

The DES guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

Pupils will be escorted in their line to the yard by their teacher.

Zones in the yard.

10.50-11.00 Break for Junior Infants (Yard to the front of the school building), Senior Infants (Yard in front of school building), First (Half of Top yard) and Second (Half of Top Yard)

11.10-11.20 Break for Third (Yard in front of the school building), Fourth (Half of Top yard), Fifth (Half of Top Yard) and Sixth (Yard in front of school building)

12.30 – 12.55 Playtime outdoors for Junior Infants (Yard in front of school building), Senior Infants (Yard in front of school building), First (Half of Top yard) and Second (Half of Top Yard)

1.00-1.30 Playtime outdoors – Third (Yard or grass area to the front of the school), Fourth (Yard or grass area to the front of the school), Fifth (Half of Top Yard or designated grass area) and Sixth (Half of Top Yard or designated grass area)

When the grass is dry, there will be designated areas for the class bubbles to go on the grass. These will be marked with coloured cones. Zones can be rotated as needed on a weekly basis.

Summarised Timetable for Breaks

Time	Place	Class
10.50 – 11.00 - Break	Half of top yard	First
	Half of top yard	Second
	Yard in front of school	Junior Infants
	Yard in front of school	Senior Infants
11.10 – 11.20 - Break	Half of top yard	Sixth
	Half of top yard	Fifth
	Yard in front of school	Third
	Yard in front of school	Fourth
12.30 – 12.55 - Playtime	Half of top yard	First
	Half of top yard	Second
	Yard in front of school	Junior Infants
	Yard in front of school	Senior Infants
1.00 – 1.30 Playtime	Half of top yard	Sixth
	Half of top yard	Fifth
	Yard in front of school	Third
	Yard in front of school	Fourth

Yard Supervision

A rota will be organised based on Class Bubbles and the SETs allocated to those classes.

Class teachers - Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First and Second and SETs allocated to those classes to work together

Class teachers - Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes and SETs allocated to those classes to work together.

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 class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities.

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class 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.

Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants

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

SEN staff will assist Principal and Deputy with all yard supervision, handwashing, transfer to and from transport. They will be involved in wellbeing programmes and endeavour to allay any anxiety in students by new procedures in school. Pupils with ASD will be seen individually each day. One SEN teacher will move between classes to facilitate in class teaching or whatever level of support is needed by class teachers

- 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.
- The S.E.N team will focus on supporting class teachers in implementing new routines. They will also work alongside teachers and S.N.A.'s to support the well-being of all pupils particularly those who are anxious or have additional needs.

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. Pods will be changed after every long break e.g. mid-term, holidays. 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

General Purpose (GP) Room

The GP Room may not be used for Assemblies, Physical Education or for any other gatherings of pupils. For the present, it will be used for third class until the new classroom is ready and for storage of equipment until storage container is on site.

Assemblies

Monthly school Assemblies will be postponed for the time being.

Corridors and Stairwells

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 the practice of keeping to the left when on the stairs and in the corridors.

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. If classroom doors are closed, there will be extra cleaning of all handles during the day.

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.

Toilets

Junior and Senior Infants will use toilets at their classrooms. The S.E.N. team and S.N.A.'s will support the new routine regarding hand washing and hand sanitation.

First Second and Sixth Classes will use the toilets outside their classrooms. All other classes have toilets in their classrooms. Additional soap dispensers and paper towels have been installed in all toilets.

The children will be shown how to wash their hands correctly using warm water and soap.

Posters displaying how to wash hands and how to use hand sanitiser will be on display outside all toilets.

Pupils will be asked to bring their own sanitiser pack to school with hand cleansing wipes, tissues, sanitiser and a disposable mask.

Lunches

Mams and Dads 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.

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

Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.

Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, etc. and as far as possible should not share with other pupils. **Pupils will be asked to keep their pencil case in school so will need a second one for home.**

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.

We will follow our usual practice in relation to uniforms and tracksuits. Uniforms should be worn every day, except on P.E. days, or when otherwise requested by teachers.

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 while attending other activities outside of school time.

Office

A contactless payment system has been set up to deal with the collecting of money for art and photocopying and other activities 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 or to the Reception area to deliver messages.

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 Drama, coaching for games, etc. will be explored at a later date. 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. All classes are encouraged to participate in walking laps around the school.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Parent/Teacher Meetings may take place via phone/ Zoom or be postponed. We will assess the situation 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 remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing.

Staff members will avoid sharing utensils and will ensure that their cups plates and cutlery are placed in the dishwasher.

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 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 which every teacher is familiar with. There will be a huge emphasis on well-being through the teaching of S.P.H.E., Art and more use of outdoor space.

All teachers will endeavour to provide learning experiences that support children to focus on their strengths, positive attributes and qualities to enable reconnection with the school community and to assess where the children are at in terms of their learning.

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 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 school

is in the process of setting up Microsoft Teams for every staff member to support remote learning.

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. Mams and Dads, if you have not already done so, please email secretary@newcestownns.ie and you will be added to the Contact List for Home Learning.

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.

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.

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.

Masks

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

All staff will try to maintain social distance, however, when this is not possible, visors will be provided to staff.

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

12 sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, outside each classroom.

Warm water and soap is available in all toilets and at each sink in the staff bathroom and staff room.

Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message. All pupils will be encouraged to bring in their own Sanitiser pack containing Tissues, Hand sanitiser, hand cleansing wipes and a disposable mask.

No outside equipment to be brought to school e.g. footballs, hurleys etc.

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, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, 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 regularly from offices and other areas within the school.

Staff will not share any kitchen utensils and all cutlery will be washed thoroughly in the staffroom dishwasher.

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. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>
Pupils who have been sent home from school with Covid-19 symptoms must keep their child at home until they have been advised by their G.P. that it is safe for them to return to school.

Staff must not attend school if they display any symptoms.

A designated isolation area has been created in the spare classroom and a second isolation area will be prepared to the left of the assembly hall.

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 by a staff member. A distance of 2 metres 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, Mams and Dads 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. Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.

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.

COVID-19 Related Absence Management

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

Teacher or SNA Absence and Substitution

If a teacher/SNA is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher/SNA for the class/pupil. If a substitute teacher/SNA is not available, it is not appropriate for the class/pupil to be divided into groups and accommodated in

other classes. In such circumstances, it may not be possible for the class/pupil to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

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.

Implementation/Ratification and Review

Implementation and Ratification and Review. It was ratified by the Board of Management on 25th August 2020.

Signed: Michael Scanlon

Michael Scanlon,

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Dorothy O'Donovan

Dorothy O'Donovan

Principal