

## Reopening our school: Health & Safety measures

### Underlying principles

The Board of Management of Belgrove Junior Boys NS acknowledge and accept its responsibility to make every effort to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of all members of the school community – pupils, parents/guardians and staff. The following safety measures have been adopted by the Board to better ensure that it can exercise that duty of care.

Assuming it is in keeping with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week. While it may not be possible to eliminate the risk of infection, with the co-operation of all members of our school community it is possible to minimise the risk of COVID-19 being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread.

As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the COVID-19 health and safety measures can be implemented.

### Assumptions

This Roadmap for return assumes that all children will return to school on Tuesday 1st September 2020 when the school will fully reopen.

When boys return to school, there will be a particular emphasis on Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), mental health and wellbeing and Physical Education.

A Lead Worker Representative (LWR) and an Assistant Lead Worker Representative (ALWR) have been appointed to advise management and staff and to monitor compliance with Covid 19 control measures in the school.

We will review our existing emergency procedures involving evacuation procedures and first aid to consider any new risks arising from the implementation of our Covid 19 health & safety measures.

No adult, other than a staff member, should enter the school without an appointment.

### Hygiene and respiratory etiquette

It is crucial that all school staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

COVID-19 posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school including offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilet areas. These are intended to inform and remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of COVID-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

Regular and thorough cleaning of hands with soap and water or with hand sanitiser will be implemented in line with health guidance. Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitisers will be available at multiple locations within the school and in each classroom.

### Contact tracing

A COVID-19 Contact Tracing Log will be used to support Health Service Executive (HSE) tracing. There will be a system in place for all visitors who need to come to the school to make an appointment and to record their visit using the Contact Tracing Log.

## Cleaning

A revised and expanded cleaning and sanitising regime will be implemented. Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces will be conducted, in particular, toilets, lifts, door handles and kitchens. Cleaning will be performed regularly throughout the day.

There will be regular and frequent collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

## Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. This will be updated in line with advice from the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre).

It is recommended by the Department of Education and Skills that primary school teachers and staff wear face coverings where a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. Face coverings and face visors will be made available to staff.

Children will not be required or requested to wear face coverings.

The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by staff or pupils is not appropriate. It does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves. Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

## 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 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. We will be focusing initially on wellbeing and getting the children used to the new routines.

## Wellbeing of the School Community

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our children 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

## 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 a Special Ed. teacher) will liaise with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and suggested activities to support the child's learning at home will be shared with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

### Special Education

Learning support will be provided using a blended approach of in-class and withdrawal support. Where possible, the provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within two bubbles only although this may not be possible in all cases.

Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers will be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.

Where children receive support in one of the Special Ed. rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group where possible.

When working with a boy with SEN and social distancing is not possible, the teacher will wear a face covering.

The tables and chairs in the Special Ed. rooms will be wiped clean after each use.

### School Facilities / Extra-curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are temporarily suspended while the new routine is established. We recognize that these activities are an important component of the children's development and will endeavour to re-establish these activities as soon as it is safe to do so on the advice of HSE.