**Underlying Principles**

* The school has a responsibility to make an effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – students, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school 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, it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week and for a full school day. This plan has been formulated to achieve that aim.
* It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the cooperation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus 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 plan can be implemented.

**Assumptions**

* All staff and children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system.
* A Return To Work form will be completed and returned to the principal by staff before returning to work.
* There will be two different starting and finishing times in the school- we will be the first school to open on the OLV campus each day. **8.40am- 2nd and 3rd classes. 8.45am- 4th , 5th and 6th classes**
* The school day will include 2 breaks.
* Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms.

**The students will wash their hands after using the bathroom and after sneezing or coughing if their hands are used, and after activities that are likely to soil their hands. Hand sanitiser will be available for all other instances e.g. entry into school, before eating etc. Hand sanitizer will not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.**

**Physical Distancing**

* As all of our classrooms are 40m² or less we will be using the guidelines on pages 12-16 of the *Illustrative primary classroom layouts* published by the Department of Education and Skills, to organise our classroom layouts. These can be viewed here- <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a0bff-reopening-our-primary-and-special-schools/>

**Ventilation**

* The latest guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice is available here- <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ad236-guidance-on-ventilation-in-schools/> The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the start/end of each school day) and only partially open when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.
* The DES are providing CO2 monitors for the school. We will implement guidelines for the use of these monitors when they arrive in the school.

**Timetable:**

| **Timetable for Group A** | **Timetable for Group B** | **Timetable for Group C** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **10.20 – Break time**  **10.30 – Class resumes**  **12.00 – Lunchtime**  **12.30 – Class resumes** | **10.30 – Break time**  **10.40 – Class resumes**  **12.30 – Lunchtime**  **1.00 – Class resumes** | **10.40 – Break time**  **10.50 – Class resumes**  **1.00 – Lunchtime**  **1.30 – Class resumes** |
| **Staff and Classes in Group A** | **Staff and Classes in Group B** | **Staff and Classes in Group C** |
| **2nd – Ms Farrell**  **3rd – Ms Holden**  **4th – Ms Farrell-McCabe**  **SET TBC**  **SNAs TBC**  **Ms Greene** | **2nd – Ms C Smith**  **3rd – Ms Mullins**  **4th – Ms Cassidy**  **SET TBC**  **SNAs TBC**  **Ms Durnin** | **5th Ms Callinan**  **5th Ms Fleming**  **6th Ms O Dea**  **6th Ms Grehan**  **SET TBC**  **SNAs TBC** |

**One-way system, entrance & exit points.**

The school will operate with a one-way system when children are travelling ‘en masse’ around the school e.g opening time, yard times, PE time etc. In so far as possible, the one-way system should be used whenever possible, however we have to be practical about things. E.g. A child being collected from Room 1 should not have to walk the full one-way route to exit via the stairs beside Room 6. Also, it would not be practical for children from Rooms 6-9 to have to travel the full route of the downstairs corridor to gain access to their toilet facilities. These scenarios would in fact create increased touches on bannisters, thus increasing the risk factor. Children will be encouraged not to dawdle on the corridors or stairs in any instance.

Staff will pass each other in the corridor however it is always encouraged to keep 2m away from the other adults in the school. Department guidelines state *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.*

**Pupil Entrance:** Brown door closest to the Parent’s Room

**Pupil Exit:** Double doors beside Room 5.

At home time both doors will act as exit doors- this is the ONLY time pupils may exit the school using the door closest to the Parent’s Room.

**Journeying to and from school**

Our families are asked to consider travelling to and from school by walking or cycling. A bicycle rack is available in the yard for the students to lock their bikes to during the school day. We will now have three Crossing Guards (Lollipop Persons) on duty at both the Ballymun Road crossing and the Collins Ave crossing closest to the Victory Credit Union. If you must use your car, please park at the back of the church or at Ballymun Library and encourage your child to walk independently from there to school. You can then arrange to meet them in the same place when school closes. This will ensure fewer adults will be gathering at the school pedestrian exit at opening and closing times.

**Arrival at school**

**These decisions have been made with the safety of the whole school community in mind. As you are aware the Girls’ School has the smallest yard space on the campus, with the largest number of students.**

* Students should not be arriving more than 10 minutes immediately preceding the start of the school day, as supervision by staff only begins at 8.30am. We must consider the Boys’ and Infant schools and avoid a clogging of the campus.
* The school day will now start at **8.40am for all 2nd and 3rd class students.**
* The school day will now start at **8.45am for all 4th, 5th and 6th class students.**
* **Girls from the same family may of course arrive into the school yard at the earlier time, and the older girls can simply wait under the canopies until it is time for them to line up.**
* **PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CHILDMINDERS MAY NOT ACCOMPANY THEIR DAUGHTER TO THE SCHOOL YARD.**
* **All children in the senior schools must walk from the pedestrian gate on their own up to the senior schools. Children arriving from the Clonmel Road laneway should be accompanied to the top of the lane and should take care crossing the driveway independently into the Girls’ School yard. *(SNAs please see below)***

**There will be markings on the ground from the main pedestrian gate. A teacher will stand at the main pedestrian entrance to show the children where to go and also at the entrance to the Girls’ School yard to encourage swift exiting of the Infant School yard.**

* 2nd and 3rd class children will line up first at 8.40am. Once they have been invited inside by the teacher on duty, the 4th, 5th and 6th class children will line up at 8.45am.
* The teachers on duty will invite the children to enter the building via the only student entrance point to the school- the brown door closest to the Parents’ Room. The brown double doors at the end of the corridor beside Room 5, must not be opened in the mornings.
* The brown entrance door in the yard will remain open until **8.55am.** Students arriving at the school after this time will need to enter the school via the main entrance next to my office.
* **No adults, other than staff members or those on the ‘essential visitors list’, may enter the school building**. If parents attempt to enter the school via the student entrance in the yard, the staff member on duty will direct them around the front of the building to the main entrance. Signs will also indicate this. This is to reduce the amount of paperwork we need to complete- we must keep a record of everyone who has entered the building each day, in order to be able to provide contact tracing details to the HSE, if necessary. There will be no toilet facilities available for anyone other than staff and students.
* If parents arrive at the main school entrance, they must use the intercom to communicate with Ms Sandra Durnin. The ‘drop off box’ is outside the main entrance and messages can be left in and/or forgotten items can be dropped into- money and/or valuable items should never be placed in this box.
* As usual, messages for teachers can be written in homework journals, by phoning the school office or emailing the teacher at their school email address.
* Meetings with parents are as important to learning and well-being as ever before and we will make these arrangements if needed, on a case by case basis. Some of the options include phone meetings, Zoom meetings, meetings in the yard under the canopy or meetings in the school hall/Parents’ Room before school (this must be scheduled at considerable notice as these areas are shared between three schools).
* ***SNAs will meet a designated child(ren) at the main school pedestrian entrance each morning:*** SNAs are responsible for the care needs of their designated child from the handover, which includes accompaniment to and supervision in the school yard.

**During the School Day**

The guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills will have some impact on how we operate during the school day, however nothing that isn’t manageable.

* There is no requirement for children from 2nd class to exercise social distancing within their classroom so each 2nd class will be one ‘bubble’, however each ‘bubble’ (class) must not mix with other ‘bubbles’ (classes).
* Children in 3rd- 6th classes will be organised as they usually would, into groups or rows that are 1m apart (where possible). This group/row will then become ‘pods’ within the class ‘bubble’. This will mean that within the classroom the pods must remain 1m apart. As per department guidelines, all the children from the same class can mix as usual when they are outside.
* The main impact on the school is that there should be no mixing of class bubbles i.e 3rd Class A cannot mix with children from 3rd Class B etc. This will mean maths groups will no longer take place as they did prior to Sept 2020. The guidelines also state that staff should not mix between bubbles *whenever possible.*
* All doors, other than the staffroom door should remain open at all times to reduce multi-touch use of doorknobs, and to ensure good ventilation.

**Collection of Children during the School Day**

If it is essential that if a student is collected during the day (e.g. dental appointment) the following arrangements will apply:

* The parent/guardian will give the school ample notice of any appointments that must be attended during the school day, by ringing the school/writing a note to the class teacher.
* When the parent/guardian arrives at the main entrance, they should either phone the office on 01-8379833 or use the intercom at the front door to alert the office that they have arrived.
* The school secretary/supervising staff member will ask the person to identify themselves and state their relationship to the child being collected. They will make a record of the date, time and the reason for early collection provided by the parent/guardian.
* Please have patience as you wait for your daughter to arrive at the door for collection- she may be in the middle of a group activity/in a support teachers’ classroom etc.
* A parent/guardian must inform the school if they have nominated another adult in their place to collect their daughter from the school. No one under the age of 18 may collect a student early from the school.
* No adult may enter the school building.
* Please try and arrange for your child’s appointments to take place outside school hours whenever possible, as once they have been collected, they may not return to the school building that day
* As per school policy, for health and safety reasons, students may not be collected early between 2pm-2.25pm, unless a written request is received by the school.

**End of School Day**

**Parents must complete a dismissal form to inform the school of their plans for their daughter at home time- will she be collected in the church car park, will she walk home independently etc etc.**

* **ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CHILDMINDERS MUST REMAIN OUTSIDE SCHOOL GROUNDS AT HOME TIME- *Parents are advised to maintain 2m distance from each other, to wear masks and to ensure they do not congregate outside.***
* **To alleviate congregation outside the school, sisters will leave the school first and arrive for collection at the school gate accompanied by Ms Greene before all 2nd and 3rd classes at 2.20pm.**
* **2nd and 3rd Classes will finish school at 2.20pm** and will be accompanied by their teacher to the main pedestrian gate for dismissal.
* **4th, 5th and 6th Classes will finish school at 2.25pm** and will be accompanied by their teacher to the main pedestrian gate for dismissal.

***Children and adults must disperse as quickly as possible at home time.***

**Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**

**Children/Staff should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.**

**Symptoms according as per HSE August 2021 include: a fever, a new cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties, loss of taste or smell, fatigue, aches and pains, or less common symptoms such as sore throat, headaches, runny or stuffy nose, feeling sick or vomiting, diarrhoea.**

If a staff member displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, they will be immediately asked to leave the school building, return home (avoiding public transport) and seek advice from their GP. Their work station will be thoroughly sterilised before a staff member replaces them in the room. The room will be ventilated for 30 minutes with the students removed from the room.

Staff are encouraged to download the HSE Covid-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

Staff Duties in this regard: Staff must 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 Staff must undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following are the procedures will be implemented:

* Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately- as per our separation and custody policy, if a child becomes ill in school and requires collection from the school, the school will contact the parent with whom the child principally resides for collection. It is assumed that this parent will keep the other parent informed of such.
* The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area by their class/SEN teacher. The teacher will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic child at all times.
* The door of the isolation room will not be closed. The teacher will sit with the child at a safe distance until her parents arrive, in order to ensure she does not feel anxious or worried.
* An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents, who must call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
* If they cannot immediately go home, the school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation.
* The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided
* The child should go home as soon as possible and parents will be advised to inform their GP 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, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick child is a Covid-19 suspect.
* Arrangements will be made 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.

**Children/Staff who should not attend school**

* Children/Staff who are displaying signs/symptoms of Covid-19 (advice will be given to self-isolate/restrict movements and contact their family doctor)
* Children/Staff who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
* Children/Staff who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
* Children/Staff who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
* Children/Staff who live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
* Children/Staff with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
* Children/Staff who have travelled outside of Ireland- you must consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel
* Children/Staff who are generally unwell
* Children/Staff who have been identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19 dependent on their vaccination status as per the latest guidelines available here- <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/contact-tracing/close-contact/>

**Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class**

If the school is notified that staff member/student has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19

* Public health advice will be sought and followed.

**Children’s Personal Equipment**

As part of the Book Rental Scheme the school will provide each student with one of each of the following- pencil, rubber, parer, ruler, scissors, glue and pens (where applicable). We request that all parents supply a pencil case and colours (twistables or colouring pencils are preferred) to complete the school stationary set.

**Glanmore lunches will start on 31st August** this year and children should be discouraged from bringing in extra food.

**Shared Equipment**

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including iPads, laptops and the books/equipment used for structured activities. Cleaning of such shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

**Yards**

* As there will be vastly reduced numbers on the yard. The teacher on duty must remain in a designated spot that will be marked with a 2m boundary, where all of the yard is visible. The SNAs should remain in the area(s) that their designated children are allocated to.
* All members of staff will have to do full yard duty this year in order to ensure we have sufficient cover.
* All three teachers on yard duty each day will be needed for 8.30am duty in a designated area- main gate, entrance to our yard and on the yard. Staff members will be given their own whistle for the yard, as we cannot disinfect the bell 6+ times per day.
* The yard has been divided into 3 sections for two breaks and 4 for one break.

**SET**

Contrary to our Special Education policy, learning support will only be provided via withdrawal, following HSE advice in November 2020 that adults should not spend more than 15 minutes in each other's company- ***we await further clarification of this for the 2021/22 school year.*** Where possible, the provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within the confines of a bubble.

* Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining a social distance of 2m from one another.
* The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending.

SET teachers shared with other schools will not be engaging with those schools in the same way as they have done in the past i.e. teaching in both schools on a daily basis as the DES feel it is not best practice to travel between different schools on the same day. Discussions with both schools involved are ongoing, but it is important we all understand that the shared hours will have to be covered in some way.

**PPE and Work Station Cleaning**

**All school staff must wear face masks when 2m distance cannot be maintained from other staff members, pupils and parents.**

Medical Grade Masks

The schools will provide medical grade masks in the EN16483 category to all SNAs, SET teachers and those staff by necessity that need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs.

While it is not envisaged that more PPE will be worn by staff in general, staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves, aprons and face masks.

The DES have advised that all staff members should clean their own ‘work station’. Staff will clean the areas they have used that day i.e their table and chair or area of work. The children will be given responsibilities in this area also and we will be providing cleaning materials for them to clean down their table and chair, class whiteboard etc. at the end of each day.

Our cleaner, Sandra O Brien, will clean the remaining multi-touch surfaces within each classroom on a daily basis- sinks, light switches etc.

**Teacher Absences, EPV days and Substitution Cover**

The most up to date information for Covid19 related absences is available here- <https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0042-2021.pdf>

In the event that a teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class. If a substitute teacher is not available, it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes, as was practice in the past. In such circumstances, it may not be possible for the class to attend school on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

**PE**

A timetable has been drawn up by the three school principals on campus to ensure fair access to the school hall for all. Each of the 32 classes on the campus have been allocated a 35 minute slot in the school hall. This is the only indoor PE the classes are guaranteed this year. Outdoor PE and activity should take place as often as possible. A timetable for use of outdoor spaces has been drawn up for Tuesdays and Fridays. Teachers should use their own discretion to utilise the outdoor spaces as much as possible, outside these designated times. The Boys’ School again welcome our use of their extensive grounds.

Swimming will recommence in Term 1 of the 2021 school year. The rota for classes is currently being discussed, however not all classes will be offered the chance to receive swimming lessons due to time constraints. All parents are encouraged to ensure their children attend these lessons, given the importance of water safety that became so apparent over the last few months.

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