

Scoil Niocláis Covid 19 Response Plan August 2020

Scoil Niocláis Covid 19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and the Board of Management in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of Covid -19 in the school environment. This Covid response plan details the policies and practices necessary for Scoil Niocláis to meet the Government's *"Return to Work Safely Protocol"*, the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. This plan supports the safe reopening of the school where the overriding objective is to promote the health and safety of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and developmental needs of the pupils of Scoil Niocláis. This Covid Response Plan is a living document and will be updated in line with public health advice as appropriate.

School Profile

840 pupils

32 mainstream class teachers

13 full time special education teachers

1 shared special education teacher who works in the school 2 days per week.

1 EAL teacher

10 Special Education Needs Assistants

Administrative Principal

Administrative Deputy Principal.

Full time secretary.

Full time caretaker.

Part time Canteen Supervisor

Contract Cleaners.

All our classrooms measure 60 metres squared. 2 rooms are 70msq

Each Class room has its own toilets and sinks.

There are sinks available in the staff bathrooms, staff rooms, kitchenette.

There are no sinks in the 15 Special Education Rooms.

Accessing the school grounds.

There are 4 gates to the school grounds.

Set Down area outside the 3 school gates on the Bellevue side and a car park on the Church side.

Human Resources allocated through additional funding from the DES

Aide – 10 days

Assumptions

School will reopen on Thursday August 27th

Staff will return to school officially on Tuesday August 25th for 2 days training and setting up the school for the safe return of all our pupils.

Key Dates

Week beginning August 10th

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

Contact the SNPA Committee and ask for questions/concerns from the perspective of parents. These can be addresses in the BOM's final plan.

Contact the school community and inform them that the BOM's Covid -19 response plan will be published on August 18th

Appoint Aide

Elect Lead Worker and Assistant Lead Worker Representative.

Draw up list of required PPE, etc so that it is ready when the procurement process opens

Week beginning August 17th

Publish Covid – 19 response plan to the school community.

Organise BOM, ISM and Staff Meetings as required to monitor progress against tasks.

Week beginning August 24th

Organise BOM meeting to monitor progress.

Staff return to school officially on Tuesday August 25th to partake in training and to set up the school for the safe and orderly return of pupils on Thursday August 27th.

Staggered Drop Off and Collection times.

To help with the amount of traffic around the school gates, children are asked to walk,/cycle to school if at all possible. If your child is cycling to school please provide a bicycle lock as the school is not responsible for any loss or damage to the bicycle

Children should not arrive at school until 8.35 when the school gates open. Arriving earlier leads to the danger of children and adults congregating and spreading the virus.

All children will then enter and leave the building through their appointed gates and doors as follows;

Junior and Senior Infants will access the grounds through the Church gate and walk directly to the outside doors of their classrooms.

First Class will enter through the gate at the top of the steps and enter the school through the 04 door.

Second Class will enter through the gate at the top of the steps and enter the school through the fire door on the Bellevue side of the main building.

Third and Fifth Class will enter the grounds through the playground emergency gates on the Bellevue and assemble in the school playground

Fourth and Sixth will enter through the gate at the top of the drive and assemble in the basketball court and on the plaza outside the 14 door.

For Social distancing purposes each class will be divided into 2 groups by alphabetical order and arrive at the school at the following times

Group A ; All surnames beginning with any letter from A – L

Group B ; All Surnames beginning with letters M –Z

Please note

If your name is O' Leary then we regard your surname as beginning with L. You come with group A,

IF your surname is O' Sullivan then we regard your surname as beginning with S. You come with group B

If your surname begins with Mc/Mac e.g. McCarthy we regard your surname as beginning with C

Group A will arrive at school between 8.35am – 8.45am.

Group B will arrive at school between 8.55 am and 9.05am

Unfortunately, it will not be possible for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before/after school with the exception of parents/guardians of junior and senior infant children. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, the children may not come onto the school grounds before the gates open at 8.35am.

Separate, special arrangements will be put in place for our Junior infants and their parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

Morning

Gates will open as usual at 8.35am.

Supervision will be provided from 8.35 am on the grounds and school corridors.

All class teachers will be in their classrooms by 8.40am.

Parents are asked to “drop and go” at your appointed time on the set down areas on the Bellevue side from 8.35am to 9.05am. **Please do not stop and park your car in this area. We encourage as many pupils as possible to walk to school**

Other staff members (including Special Education Teachers, SNAs, Principal and Deputy Principal) will be available outside and inside the building to receive the children and to help them to their classrooms.

Afternoon Dispersal

Junior Infants

All infant pupils and parents are to enter the school grounds through the Church Gate.

From September 14th onwards

Parents collect pupils from outside classroom door. Class to be divided in alphabetical order by class teacher ; Group 1 will be collected at 1.10 and group 2 will be collected at 1.20.

Parents are asked not to arrive before their appointed time to comply with social distance requirements and for child protection reasons

Separate arrangements will be communicated to you regarding the first 2 weeks.

Senior infants from August 27th

Parents collect pupils from outside classroom door. Class to be divided in alphabetical order by class teacher ; Group 1; Surnames A-I will be collected at 1.10 and group 2 Surname M-Z will be collected at 1.20

Parents are asked not to arrive before their appointed time to comply with social distance requirements and for child protection reasons

First class and Second Class will exit the school through the Church gate.

Group 1 from both first and second classes i.e surnames A – I will be brought to this gate at 2.10pm

Group 2 from both first and second classes i.e. surnames M – Z will be brought to the gate at 2.20pm

We ask parents not to congregate around the gate. The teacher will bring the pupils to an appointed place in the Church Car park from which your child can be collected safely.

Third and fifth will exit through the emergency gate to the playground on the Bellevue side

Fourth and sixth class pupils will exit the building through the gate at the top of the drive.

Supervision will be provided until 2.30pm.

As we expect that many of the older pupils walk home themselves there should not be as many cars arriving for pick up at this time. Parents/Guardian who wish to collect their children should arrange a meeting point well away from the school gate where children are trying to exit safely.

We recommend that pupils exiting through the Bellevue Exit and who need to cross the Grange Road walk as far as the lollipop lady to cross the road.

Parents/Guardians who collect their children from the school are asked to stand away from the school gate to allow pupils to exit the grounds. Please maintain a social distance at all times.

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

Summarised timetable for drop offs and pick ups

8.35 gates open

Staff supervision provided in the grounds and on corridors from 8.35am to support pupils on arrival.

Class teachers will be in their classrooms from 8.40am

Children to access their room by 9.05am

No adults to enter the school grounds except parents of junior and senior infants.

No adults to enter the school building.

Church Car Park. When parking Infant Parents park at the front of the Church only. Parking behind the Church is strictly reserved for staff.

Break times.

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

The yard space the children will use is based on how far they will have to travel from their classroom through the building to get to the yard.

Junior and Senior Infants will use the outside doors to their classroom to access the main playground.

Third and Fifth classes downstairs in Dóirín Aláinn will access the Main playground through outside class doors.

Third class based upstairs will use DA back stairs and fire door to access the main playground

Fifth class based upstairs in DA will access the playground through the front stairs and main playground door.

First class will exit the building through the 04 door and second classes will exit the building through Bellevue fire door and will play the plaza and the basket ball court as well as the astro turf pitch

Fourth and sixth will also use the astro turf pitch, basket ball court, plaza

Times to be staggered.

Yard Supervision.

A rota will be organised based on class bubble and SETS allocated to those classes.

Class teachers – Junior & Senior Infants first and second classes and SETs allocated to these classes to work together.

Class teachers – third, fourth, fifth and sixth classes and SETs allocated to these 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.

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work as far as possible, 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 social distance from one another.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending.

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. 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 the halla will be used for storage of P.E. equipment and as a staff room.

Assemblies

School Assemblies will be held via Zoom

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 our usual practice of keeping to the right when on the stairs and in the corridors. One way systems will be put in place where ever possible

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'll 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.

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.

Cloakrooms and Toilets

Pupils will use the bathrooms in their own classrooms. They will use their own soap and towel which they will bring to school in their toilet bag.

Hand sanitiser will be available in each classroom.

Lunches

Parents and guardians must make sure that children bring their lunches to school in the morning 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. We urge parents to practice with their children how to open and close their lunch boxes/ drinks container etc so they can carry out these tasks independently at school

Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.

Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, should not share with other pupils.

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 in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

Office

A contactless payment system has been set up through the school app. This will 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 app.

Children should not be sent to the Secretary's Office or to the Reception area to deliver messages.

Staff members should not enter the Office area and should speak with the Secretary at the Reception area or at the hatch in the main corridor.

Parents who have forms or documents to be signed will post them to the school office. We will sign and return by post.

Photocopying.

Any staff member who uses the photocopier should clean it down after use with the wipes provided.

Each Class and SET teacher will be provided with 2 reams of paper monthly.

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.

Initially we will not use our computer room. This will be reviewed at the end of October.

Visiting Teachers/Coaches

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities such as dancing, coaching for games, etc. will be explored. However up to the Hallowe'en Break, in the interests of Health and Safety, we will cancel visiting teachers and coaches.

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.

Swimming (for the relevant classes) will not take place in Term1.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Parent/Teacher Meetings may take place via phone or be postponed. We will assess the situation closer to the time.

Where a parent needs to discuss an issue with the teacher please contact the school office. The teacher will return your call. Reminder

recording of teachers voices/calls is never allowed in Scoil Niocláis.

Please refer to our Communications Policy.

Alternatively, the school journal can be used to communicate with the teacher.

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.

The staff will be divided into 2 groups for staff meetings and will hold meetings in the 2 sides of the school halla to facilitate physical distancing.

Staff members should bring their own cups, bottles, cutlery, etc. to school and avoid sharing utensils in the staffroom as far as possible.

Staff Breaks; in order to facilitate social distancing 3 staff rooms will be used Naomh Bríd staff room, main building staff room and kitchenette in Halla. Staff Members will be assigned a staffroom and a time in that room.

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 in 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 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.

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 special education teacher/teacher on covid leave will provide work to support the child's learning at home and this will be shared with the parent/guardian.

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. Parents, if you have not already done so or if your email address has changed, please communicate same to your class teacher in your child's journal and you will be added to the Contact List for Home Learning.

Parents of new junior infants will be contacted by their class teacher requesting their email address and adding them to our contact list.

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)

The guidelines recommend the Staff members wear PPE in the form of face coverings when a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

Staff will always wear a face covering in the following situations

- Assisting with intimate care needs
- Administration of first aid
- Administration of medicine
- 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.
- When staff members have to move between classrooms to support children with learning needs.

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.

Visors and masks will be provided to staff members.

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

Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom.

Warm water and soap is available in all the cloakrooms, 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.

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 must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

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>

Staff must not attend school if they display any symptoms.

A designated isolation area has been created in the Link building.

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. A distance of 2 meters will be maintained. 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, parents/guardians 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 and encouraged to use hand sanitiser

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.

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

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. The child should not return to school until the symptoms have gone.

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 a Special Education Teacher will teach the class until the teacher returns or when a substitute teacher becomes available.

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.

Contractors or essential visitors to the school must complete the contact tracing log. These persons must wear a face covering and hand sanitise on entering and leaving the school building

Tasks Identified to Date

		Completed
Draw up and communicate the school's Covid-19 Response Plan	BOM in consultation with Staff and Parents	
Appoint LWR and ALWR	Staff meeting and aladdin	
Provide Return to Work Forms to all staff	Principal- secretary	
Provide links to training	Principal	
Complete and return RTW forms	All staff; retrunto secretary	
Complete Induction training	All staff	
Draw up list of PPE in advance of procurement process	Principal and staff	
Purchase required PPE	Aide	
Arrange for installation of sanitising units, provision of PPE to staff and provision of cleaning materials to staff.	Aide and caretaker	
Display signage	Aide	
Create Isolation Area	Caretaker	
Review of S,H and W Policy and Covid-19 Risk Assessment	BOM	
Timetable for yards	Staff	
Plan for coat racks	Staff	

Agree timetable for SETs and SNAs e.g. Allocate SETs for Jun. Infs. to Second, and SETs for 3 rd to 6 th . Keep withdrawal to a minimum. In-class support as far as possible.	SETs/SNAs/All staff SEN Coordinator	
Agree sanitising routines for LSTs/SNAs moving between Pods or Class Bubbles	LSTs/SNAs	
Provide Notes to all school staff	LWR	
Agree classroom layouts	All staff	
Timetable for ICTs and plan for sanitisation	ISM Team member	
Plan for provision of ICT needs to pupils in case we need to return to Home Learning	ISM Team Member and staff	
Staffroom – arrange for social distancing.	Staff member	
Plan for a visit to the school by incoming Junior Infants	Infant teachers and Principal	
Collection of pupil's belongings from last year's classroom and school collection of last year's book rental books	Staff meeting/all staff	
Arrange for collection of 6 th Class belongings	Principal	
Organise and distribute Book Rental books to classrooms	Rosemary and team to be decided at staff meeting	
Agree daily timetable to include staggered breaks	Staff	

Agree supervision rotas	Staff	
Agree and plan for morning drop off and afternoon pick up routines	Staff	
Plan for the possibility of remote learning if the school/part of the school is advised to close by HSE	All staff	
Plan for how P/T meetings, General Information on how meetings might take place.	All staff	
Arrange cleaning and sanitisation of the building before school re-opens	BOM/Principal	
Plan for the management of substitutes	Principal/DP/Secretary	
Plan for enhanced daily cleaning routines	ISM Team member and Principal and cleaning contractor	
Plan for Teaching and Learning – September, October	All staff	
Plan for Staff and Pupil Wellbeing	BOM, ISM Team	
Order and set up of directional signage around the school	Principal and secretary	

