



Address: St Mary's Primary School, Nenagh, Co Tipperary

Roll No: 16112A

COVID-19 Policy Statement December 2021 Updated

1. St. Mary's Convent Primary School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff, a safe learning environment for all our pupils and a safe environment for visitors to the school. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. All members of the school community and visitors to the school must follow the protocols outlined in our policy.

We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice



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2. Face coverings in Primary Schools

2.1 NPHE has recommended the wearing of face masks/coverings by children aged nine years and above on public transport, in retail and other indoor public settings as already required for children aged 13 years and over. They have also recommended that this is introduced for children in 3rd class and above in primary schools. They have advised that this measure is being introduced on a temporary basis and is subject to review in mid-February 2022.

2.2 Guidance on face masks/coverings in Primary Schools

Wearing a face covering or mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic. Wearing of face masks/coverings Pupils from third class and up in primary schools are required to wear a face mask/covering. The exemptions to this are set out below.

2.3 Rationale

Face masks/coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face mask/covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Face masks/coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact. Face masks/coverings must not contain any slogans/logos/images that may cause upset or be deemed offensive to any member of the school community. Visors Face masks/coverings are more effective than visors. In the limited circumstances where a face mask/covering cannot be worn clear visors must be considered.

2.4 Exemptions

A medical certificate to certify that a person falls into a category listed below must be provided to the school on behalf of, any person (pupil) who claims that they are covered by the exemptions below:

- any pupil with difficulty breathing or other relevant medical conditions
- any pupil who is unable to remove the cloth face-covering or visor without assistance
- any pupil who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the cloth face covering or visor, for example pupils with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity. Schools will be best placed to identify those children whose complex needs are such that the wearing of face covering may not be possible for them, and to discuss this with parents as required. In such circumstances a school may not require medical certification to provide an exemption to the wearing of face coverings. In other circumstances where a medical certificate is not provided that person (staff or pupil or parent or other visitor) will be refused entry to the school.



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2.5 Directions for effective use of face masks/coverings

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- Information should be provided by schools on the proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings. Advice on how to use face coverings properly can be found here.
- All pupils should be reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash or sanitise their hands (using hand sanitiser) before putting on and after taking off the face covering.
- Face masks/coverings should be stored in a designated space, for example, in an individually labelled container or bag.
- Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.
- Face masks/coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.

2.6 Mixed classes in single rooms

Where there are mixed classes, e.g. 2nd and 3rd class in a single classroom, schools should note that only children in 3rd class and above, are required to wear face masks. As per previous advice, however, parents of other children who would prefer that their children wear a face mask are not precluded from doing this.

2.7 Provision of face masks

Parents should be advised that they obtain face masks for their children which fit properly and are comfortable for the child to wear. In the event that a child forgets, loses or damages their masks during the course of the school day, then the school should have a sufficient supply to replace the mask for the child in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day or where required on an ongoing basis.



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3. Covid 19 Symptoms and procedure

3.1 If any child displays the following symptoms in school, parents must collect their child at their earliest convenience. The child cannot return to school for a minimum of 48 hours.

Signs of COVID-19 disease:

- fever of 38.0°C or higher without another medical reason (such as chickenpox or a urine infection) OR
- new cough or difficulty breathing or worsening of an existing breathing problem, OR
- loss of sense of smell, change in sense of taste, or loss of sense of taste (if your child is able to say this) OR
- other minor breathing or chest problems in a child who has been in contact with an ill person, is part of an outbreak or is a contact of someone who has COVID-19
- Other symptoms associated with COVID-19 include fatigue, nasal congestion, conjunctivitis, sore throat, headache, muscle/joint pain, skin rash, nausea or vomiting, diarrhoea, chills or dizziness. Symptoms may present differently in different age groups and with different variants of the virus. Some symptoms may also be confused with common cold, hay-fever or flu. If you have any new acute symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, self-isolate and contact your GP. However, if you or your child's symptoms are very mild then stay at home, reassess after 48 hours and contact your GP for advice.

3.2 Parents/Guardians are requested to inform the school if their child tests positive for Covid 19. The school will contact the parents of the pupils in his/her pod with information regarding HSE guidelines and the contact details for requesting Antigen Tests for their child. If more than one pod in a class has a positive case of Covid 19 detected, the entire class will be contacted with the above information. This procedure is outlined by the Department of Education and Skills and must be implemented by all Primary Schools.

Signed: _____

Date: _____



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COVID-19 ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM MEASURES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2021/2022.

- Children will be given access to the yard at 8.45am.
 - 1st to 6th Class will all line up at their set entrance each day.
 - Children must line up in their designated line. No playing or mixing of bubbles is permitted.
 - Teachers are to be in the school from 8.45am each day.
 - Children are to be collected from their line at 8.55am. Formal instruction will begin at 9.am.
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- Staff will be provided PPE in the form of visors, masks, gloves and wipes on the first day of school. After this staff will be required to collect their own PPE when needed from the school meeting room.
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- Children should not attend school if they display any symptoms of COVID-19. If a child becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 they must be placed in the school isolation room (Meeting Room Corridor). The principal is to be phoned and informed. He will make arrangements for the immediate contact of parents and for the supervision of the child who has become unwell. Pupil confidentiality is paramount here.



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- Children bring all their books to school on September 1st. These books are to be kept at the child's place.
- Homework will resume as normal in September. Please meet with your class counterpart and decide what level of homework will be set for your class in line with the school Homework Policy.
- Children can bring home their homework in their schoolbag nightly and return it to school the next day. Class money is to be collected by electronic payment. If a child presents with cash it is to be logged and sent to the office.
- Teachers are responsible for the correction of the pupils work and to ensure that this is done in a safe manner.
- Children must sanitise on entry to school, after playing on the yard, before and after play and art activities.
- Children must wash their hands before sanitising when they are visibly dirty.
- Children **must hand wash** before eating at both breaks.



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- Children are not to share classroom resources: pencils, colours etc.

- P.E. equipment is to be kept to a minimum requirement.
- If you wish to use equipment this is permitted, but you must accept **full responsibility** for the sanitising/cleaning of the equipment (using sanitising wipes/ sanitising spray).
- Children **must sanitise** before and after P.E.
- Staff will operate on the assumption that all equipment has been previously sanitised.
- In Junior classes, we recommend the purchasing of a class set of bean bags.

- Children are not to be sent on messages to other classrooms. If you are absent, your substitute is to bring the roll call to Ms. Girard at the end of the school day.
- Any other communication is to be done via Aladdin.
- In case of emergency please phone the office or school principal.

- We will have two 20 minute breaks daily. Children will play for 20 minutes and eat on return from the yard, after washing their hands and sanitising.

- Children will remain in set quadrants as last year.



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- Staff are to supervise their own class while they are eating.
- Junior Infant to 2nd Breaks: 10.20 -10.40 and 12.20-12.40.
- 3rd Class to 6th Class Break: 10.45-11.05 and 12.50-1.10.
- Children hand wash on their return from yard.
- Eating is to take place **after play time. No food can be taken outside.**
- Teachers are to bring their own cups, cutlery, tea, coffee, milk etc. If teachers wish to use the school kettle, they must firstly sanitise and wipe the kettle down with a wiper when finished.
- No supplies of cups are to be kept in the staff room.
- Classroom doors are to be left open during the school day, with the windows also allowing in fresh air.
- Children will keep their coats on their chair and will store their lunch bag at their place.
- Staff must wipe down the school photocopier and printer after use.



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- Classes are not to be split for EPV days. Children are to remain in pods or bubbles as per D.E.S.
- Children will exit the school on a staggered basis
- Junior Infants: 1.35pm (From September 20th)
- Senior Infants 1.35pm
- 1st Class: 1.40 pm.
- 2nd, 3rd, 4th Class: 2.35 pm.
- 5th and 6th Class: 2.40pm
- Each class has a designated exit door and gate. Please familiarise yourself with the appropriate exit route and gate for your class.



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