



**Plean Freagartha COVID-19 na Gaelscoile Phortlaoise /
COVID-19 Response Plan for Gaelscoil Phortlaoise**

Contents

Document Revision History	3
Principal's Address:	4
Bunphrionsabail / Underlying Principles	5
Tuairimí / Assumptions	5
Clóis agus Bristí / Yards and Break times	5
Teacht ar scoil agus imeacht ón scoil / Arrival to and Departure from school	6
Deireadh an lae scoile / End of School Day	6
Collection of Children during the School Day	7
Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19	7
Páistí nár chóir freastal ar scoil/ Children who should not attend school	8
Tacaíocht ar leanaí nach féidir leo freastal ar scoil/ Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school	9
Éifeacht ar chás deimhnithe nó baol ar chás Covid-19 i rang/ Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class	9
Fearas Pearsanta/ Personal Equipment	9
Fearas Roinnte / Shared Equipment	9
Teagaisc Oideachais Speisialta/ Special Educational Teaching / Learning Support	9
PPE	10
Asláithreacht Mhúinteora agus Ionadaíocht / Teacher Absence and Substitution	10
Coroideachais / Physical Education	10
Rianú Teagmhála / Contact Tracing	10
Gníomaíochtaí breischuraclamacha / Extra-curricular Activities	11
Appendix 1: Plean Doirse Éalaithe na Scoile/ Door entry/exit plan for classes	12

Document Revision History

Revision	Date	Principal	Chairperson	Comments
1	20/08/2020	Dominic Ó Braonáin	Séamus Ó Ceanainn	Policy ratified at B.O.M. meeting on 20/08/20. This is a living document and will be updated in line with government and HSE guidelines.

Principal's Address:

We are in very strange and challenging times at the moment, and we are faced with challenges which none could have envisaged this time last year. We would ordinarily have been preparing as normal to welcome all our junior infants to their first days of 'Big School', and all our returning pupils to their new classes. But COVID-19 has meant we have to change the way we go about our preparations and has presented us with problems to be solved and risks to be mitigated.

The School management have developed this COVID-19 Response Plan in conjunction with Government guidelines, and in collaboration with school middle management, the Parents' Council and the Board of Management. Any amendments to the plan involving change to school policies or practice will be communicated to parents in due course.

This document is not perfect and is not how we would like to be proceeding, but it is essential during this emergency, and will be revised when and where necessary as time progresses and guidelines change.

We are all facing new procedures, new ways of doing what used to be 'simple' tasks, and we are all going to make mistakes. We are all going to need patience as we get to grips with the new normal; patience with children, patience with teachers, patience with other parents and guardians, patience with School Management. We are in this together as the community of Gaelscoil Phortlaoise, with the aim of educating our children in the safest possible environment.

We are confident that with your support and cooperation we can maintain a happy, inclusive and safe educational environment for our pupils and staff.

Is é aidhm an phlean seo ná an riosca ionfhabhtú sa Ghaelscoil a chur ar chosc agus ní féidir é seo a dhéanamh gan bhur gcabhair./Our main aim is to prevent the risk of infection coming in to our school and we cannot do this without your help!

Ní neart go cur le chéile!/ Strength in unity!

YOU SHOULD NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF THEY HAVE A TEMPERATURE, A COUGH OF ANY KIND, LOSS OF SMELL/TASTE OR HAVE ANY KIND OF SHORTNESS OF BREATH.

IF YOU OR YOUR CHILD HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH A PERSON DISPLAYING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS, PLEASE DO NOT COME TO THE SCHOOL.

Bunphrionsabail / Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make every effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – children, 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 co-operation 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.

Tuairimí / Assumptions

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system.
- The school is split into two groups, with each group having different break times and lunch times i.e. staggered supervised breaks throughout the day; **Junior and Senior Infants will finish at 1.30 p.m**
- Break/Lunch groups will be constituted of:

Grúpa A / Group A	Grúpa B / Group B
Naíonáin Shóisearacha / Junior Infants	Naíonáin Shinsearacha / Senior Infants
Rang 4	Rang 1
Rang 5	Rang 2
Rang 6	Rang 3

- The day will include 2 x 20-minute break for both groups. The groups will remain in their own class bubbles for these breaks – i.e. the yard will be split between the class bubbles.
- Yard supervision has been amended to ensure adequate supervision is in place for all breaks/lunches.

Clóis agus Bristí / Yards and Break times

Groups A and B will have different break and lunch times:

Grúpa / Group	Am Sosa / Break-time	Am Lóin / Lunch-time
Grúpa A / Group A	10:30 – 10:50	12:05 – 12:25
Grúpa B / Group B	10:50 – 11:10	12:25 – 12:45

- Within each class setting from 2nd to 6th(inclusive), the children will be further divided into class pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods.

At the junior end of the school, Junior Infants to 1st Class (inclusive), the department has recognised that children will not be able to socially distance, and while children will sit in the same groups throughout the week, they will not form pods.

- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all classes and S.E.T. classrooms.

Teacht ar scoil agus imeacht ón scoil / Arrival to and Departure from school

- Formal tuition will commence at 8.50 am with the school gates opening at 8.30am to distribute the arrival of children at the school.
- Children will be asked to go straight to their designated yard areas where they will remain in their class groups under the supervision of staff.
- Each class teacher will walk their class to their classroom at 8.50 am.
- Children in Junior and Senior Infants will assemble on the Junior Yard at the front of the school.
- Children from 1st to 6th class will assemble on Intermediate and Senior yards (basketball courts).
- On very wet mornings, the pupils will be directed to their classrooms where they will remain supervised.
- Each individual class is assigned an Entry/Exit Door. All pupils must use their class assigned door when entering or exiting the building for breaks/lunches/at the end of the school day.
 - Class Door Assignment is set out in **Appendix 1** at the end of this document.
- We ask for co-operation from all parents/guardians with these times and entry points, as it will mean that the numbers congregating on school grounds at any one time will be minimised.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building without been invited to do so.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email, Aladdin Connects or by phoning the school office.
 - Staff email addresses will be issued to parents when the school re-opens.
 - Please contact the school secretary on 057 863 2019 if you wish to speak with a teacher/staff member and we can arrange a call-back.
- Urgent meetings between staff and parents may take place outside the school building or in areas within the school building conducive to social distancing. Such meeting requests must be received at least 24 hours in advance.

Deireadh an lae scoile / End of School Day

- Junior and Senior Infants will finish at **1.30pm**, with classes 1st to 6th finishing at **2.30pm**.
 - Class teachers will lead their classes to their designated exit doors (see **Appendix 1**).
 - **We ask that parents arrive no sooner than 15 minutes before classes end.**

- Please do not congregate in groups, and practice Social Distancing at all times while waiting on your child.
- After collecting your child, we ask that you leave the school grounds as quickly as possible.
- Although the school campus facilitates a drop and go system for cars and buses, we encourage all parents to park away from the school campus and walk their children to school. Please exit the school grounds and campus immediately once you have collected or dropped off your child.

Collection of Children during the School Day

If a parent/guardian has to collect their child during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

- Please inform the class teacher via email that you will be collecting your child during the school day.
- When a parent/guardian arrives at the school, they should phone the office number (057-868 8293) to alert the secretary / class teacher that they have arrived.
- **PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD NOT ENTER THE SCHOOL BUILDING UNLESS PRIOR PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED.**
- The child will be escorted outside from their class by a staff member.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

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. **PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS ARE UP-TO-DATE ON THE ALADDIN SYSTEM.** Contact the school office/class teacher if your contact details have changed. The school email address is runai@gaelscoilphortlaoise.net
- The child will be accompanied to the school's designated isolation area by a member of staff.
- The staff member 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.
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. He/she will be asked to wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.

- An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/ be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
- The school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The symptomatic child will be asked to avoid touching people surfaces and objects.
- The child presenting with symptoms will 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.
- If the child is well enough to go home, the school will arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible, and advise them 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.

Páistí nár chóir freastal ar scoil/ Children who should not attend school

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school:

- Children who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Children who have a suspected case of COVID-19 and the outcome of the test is pending.
- Children 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 with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school.
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
- Children who are generally unwell.

Tacaíocht ar leanaí nach féidir leo freastal ar scoil/ Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school

If a child is unable to attend school for an extended period of time, the class teacher (and/or the learning support teacher, where relevant) will advise the parent/guardian of the suggested activities to support the child's learning at home. Communication between teacher/parent/pupil will occur via the Aladdin Connect System and e-mail.

Éifeacht ar chás deimhnithe nó baol ar chás Covid-19 i rang/ Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class

If the school is notified that a person in your child's class has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:

- The parents of all children in the class will be notified.
- Public health advice will be sought and followed.

Fearas Pearsanta/ Personal Equipment

- It is requested that all children bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment.
- Pupils will be required to leave their pencil case and other stationary resources on their class table/within their pod for the duration of the school year.
- Pencil cases should remain in school, and pupils should have a supply of stationary at home for homework use.
- It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.

Fearas Roinnte / Shared Equipment

- By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, laptops and the equipment used for structured activities and play in Infant classrooms.
- 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.

Teagaisc Oideachais Speisialta/ Special Educational Teaching / Learning Support

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 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.
- Where children from 3rd to 6th Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending.

PPE

- While it is not envisaged that 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 and face masks.
- All staff will however be given the option of wearing PPE if they so wish.

Asláithreacht Mhúinteora agus Ionadaíocht / Teacher Absence and Substitution

- 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. In such circumstances, other members of staff who are available to supervise will take on supervision duties in the classroom in question. When a substitute teacher becomes available, they will immediately take on duties as the class teacher for the duration of the sick leave.

Coroideachais / Physical Education

- Where possible, P.E. will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings.
- If the sports hall is being used by class groupings, common touch points will be cleaned at intervals throughout the school day.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at entrance to sports hall.

Rianú Teagmhála / Contact Tracing

- Daily contact tracing will be in place in the school reception area.
- Staff and pupil attendance will be tracked via the Aladdin school system.

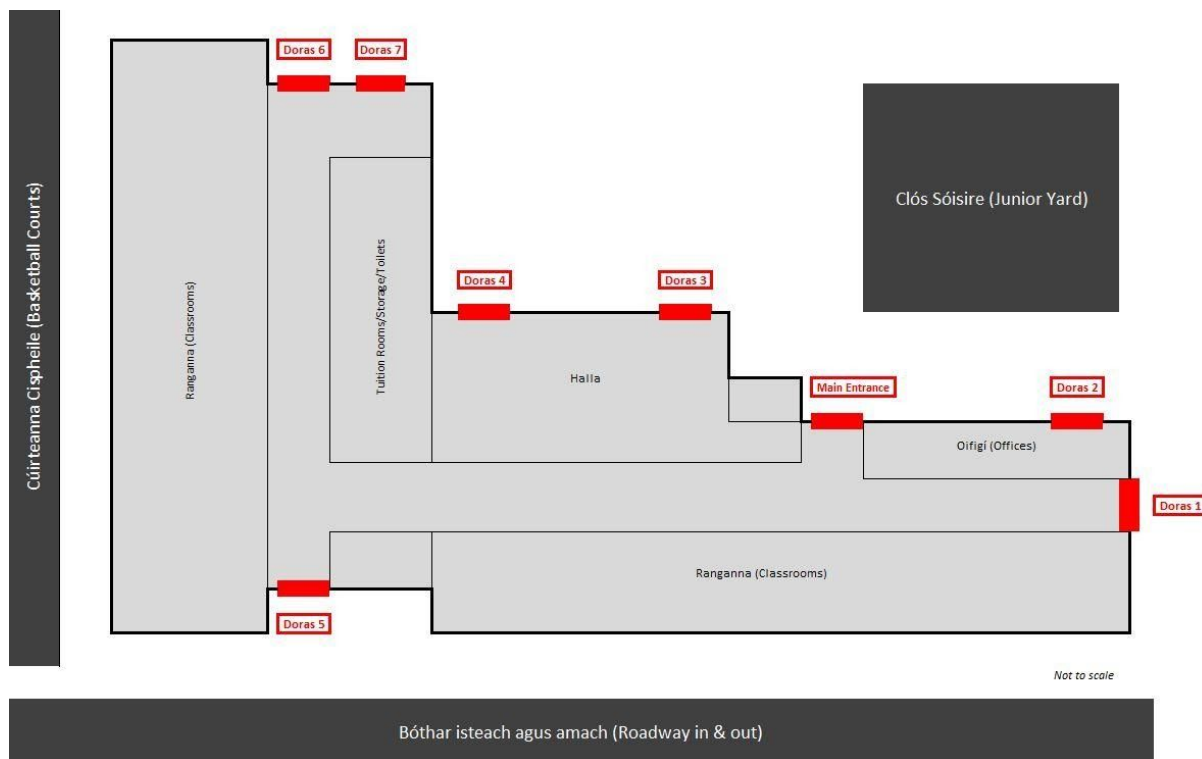
- Details of all **essential visitors** will be recorded in the school's contact tracing log which will be made available to the HSE on request should a case of Covid-19 occur within the school community.

Gníomaíochtaí breischuraclamacha / Extra-curricular Activities

- Following a Board of Management meeting on Thursday 20th August 2020, it was agreed that the focus at this point is on getting our pupils and staff back to work in the classroom in a safe and healthy environment.
- No extra-curricular activities will take place until further notice.
- The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities will continue to be explored, including the running of Cuman na mBunscoil training and matches, and will be reviewed at every meeting which follows, while adhering and referring to current and up-to-date government and HSE guidelines.
- When we have more information on this we will communicate with parents.
- There will be no Homework Club in the school for the foreseeable future.
- The school will be following government guidelines and HSE advice in relation to 'essential' workers and visitors entering the school building only.

Appendix 1: Plean Doirse Éalaithe na Scoile/ Door entry/exit plan for classes

Parents are asked to collect their children from the designated doors.



Rang:	Múinteoir	Doras:
Naíonáin Bheaga	M. Donna	Doras 1
Naíonáin Bheaga	M. Rita	Doras 2
Naíonáin Mhóra A	M. Cuileann	Doras 3
Naíonáin Mhóra B	M. Crios	Doras 4
Rang 1A	M. Rebecca	Doras 5
Rang 1B	M. Aisling	Doras 5
Rang 2/3	M. Ciara	Doras 1
Rang 2/3	M. Niamh	Doras 2
Rang 2/3	M. Tomás	Doras 6
Rang 4A	M. Caoimhe	Doras 3
Rang 4B	M. Clíodhna	Doras 4
Rang 5	M. Áindle	Doras 6
Rang 6A	M. Éanna	Doras 7

Rang 6B	M. Siobhán	Doras 7
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