



Coinnigh an solas ar lasadh

St Patrick's National School

Slane, Co. Meath

(041) 982 4229

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www.slanens.ie

Roll No: 18040L

Acting Principal:

Lorna Gerrard

Return to School Plan September 2020

Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility 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.
- It is very important that we are all up to date with the current public health advice including correct hand washing and sanitising techniques, coughing and sneezing etiquette, guidelines in relation to travelling abroad, etc. Please see the following link for further information. <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>. All of our actions will help reduce the risk of the spread of the virus and facilitate our return to school.

Assumptions

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system.
- The school is split into 2 groups with each group having different break and lunch times.
- The school is split into 3 groups for starting and finishing times and this will be done alphabetically to facilitate all families.
- The day will include two breaks of 20 and 25 minutes respectively.
- Within each class from 3rd to 6th, the children will be further divided into pods as per HPSC guidance for schools, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods. Every effort will be made to ensure that at least one friend will be with your child in the pod. No further guarantees can be made as all requests could not be reasonable accommodated.
- Where toilets are outside the classrooms – each class will have designated toilets and a boys/girls toilet will be clearly identified within the classes allocated toilets.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms.

Timetables

(Separate, special arrangements will be put in place for our Junior Infants and their parents at the beginning of the school year. Junior Infant pupils will finish at 12.00 noon for the first two weeks)

Staggered Arrival and Dismissal times September 2020

Arrival

| | | |
|-------------|---------|--|
| 9.15 – 9.25 | Group 1 | Families Surname A-F and children on buses |
| 9.25 – 9.30 | Group 2 | Families Surname G-M |
| 9.30 – 9.35 | Group 3 | Families Surname N-Y |

Dismissal

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1.50 – 1.55 | Junior Infants Ms. Kerr | Main Gate | Pupils with siblings in other infant classes will be accommodated where all pupils in the family can be collected at the same time – parents will be notified of this by phone |
| 1.55 – 2.00 | Junior / Senior Infants Ms Collins | Pedestrian/small gate, front lawn | |
| 2.00 – 2.05 | Senior Infants Mrs. Kelly | Main Gate | |
| 2.45 – 2.55 | Group 1 | Families Surname A-F and children on buses | Main Gate Pedestrian gate if pupils are crossing at the lollipop lady |
| 2.55 – 3.00 | Group 2 | Families Surname G-M | |
| 3.00 – 3.05 | Group 3 | Families Surname N-Y | |

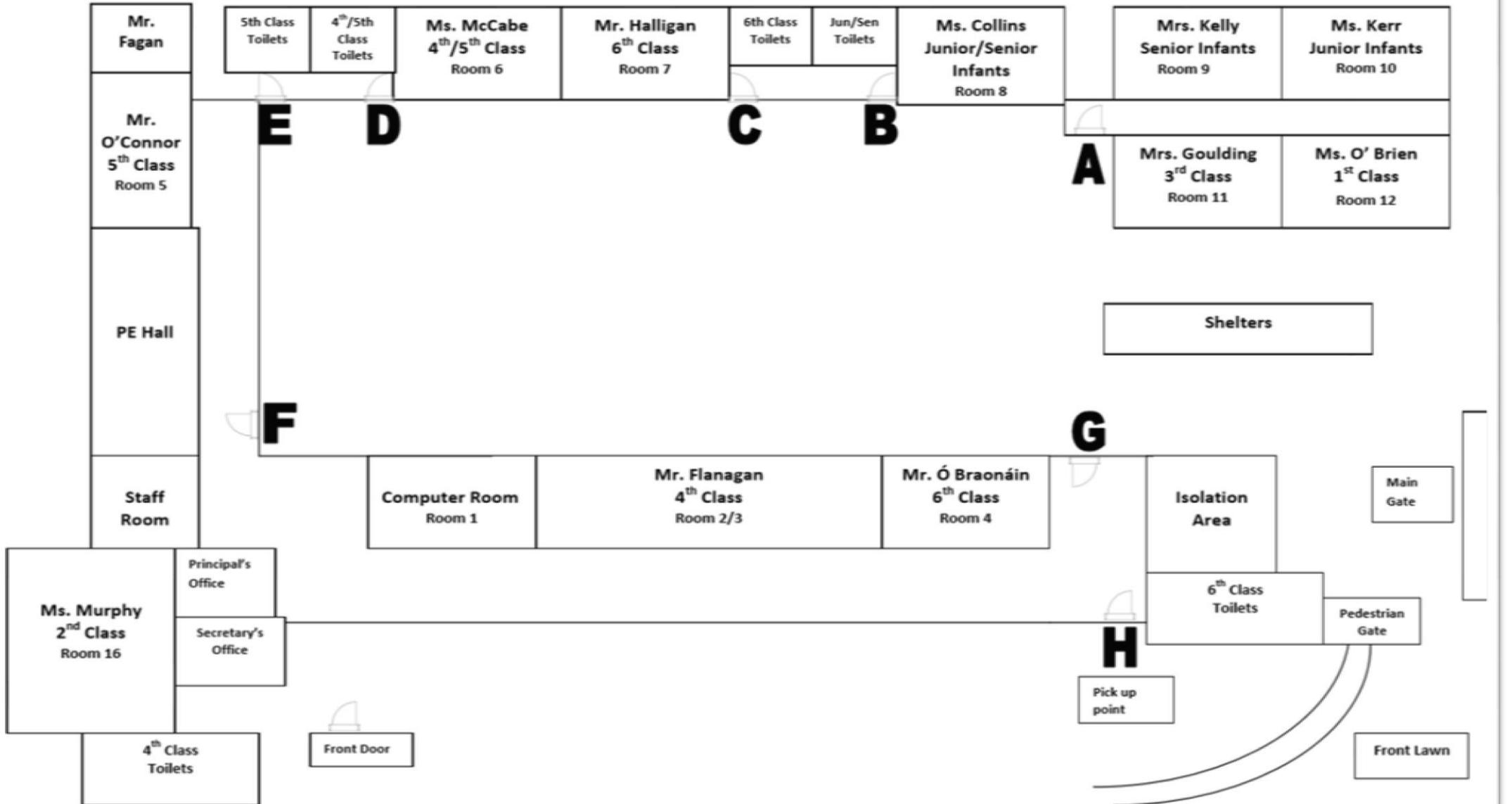
Entry and Exit Points for Specific Classes (See School Map). These apply to break times also.

| | |
|---|--|
| Ms. Kerr Junior Infants | Point A: Double doors in infants building |
| Ms. Collins Junior/Senior Infants | Point B: Individual door to classroom |
| Mrs. Kelly Senior Infants | Point A: Double doors in infants building |
| Ms. O'Brien 1 st Class | Point A: Double doors in infants building |
| Ms. Murphy 2 nd Class | Point F: Door into school at top of the yard, near staff room |
| Mrs. Goulding 3 rd Class | Point A: Double doors in infants building |
| Mr. Flanagan 4 th Class | Point G: Door near school gate beside the library |
| Ms. McCabe 4 th /5 th Class | Point D: Individual door to classroom |
| Mr. O'Connor 5 th Class | Point E: Individual door to classroom |
| Mr. Halligan 6 th Class | Point C: Individual door to classroom |
| Mr. Ó Braonáin 6 th Class | Point G: Door near school gate beside the library |

Slane NS Map

Ms.
Delaney

Mrs.
Connor



Important Notes:

- Children only enter through the school gates, in the mornings.
- Parents should drop the child and leave the school grounds.
- No children allowed assemble on the yard in the morning – children will go straight to their classrooms at the allotted time.
- In the afternoon, for collection, parents/guardians may collect outside the gates, and should stay in or near their cars where possible.
- They are asked to stand a social distance apart outside gate.
- As normal, pupils who cross at the lollipop lady can enter the gate at the front of the school and enter the yard through the small pedestrian gate.

To minimise the amount of interaction in the car park and at the school gate we strongly encourage children to:

- Walk or cycle to school
- Park and stride – park a short distance from the school and walk the rest of the way

Arrival at school

Group 1: 9.15-9.25

Group 2: 9.25-9.30

Group 3: 9.30-9.35

- We ask for co-operation with these times as it will mean that the numbers congregating on school grounds at any one time will be minimised.
- **The school gates will not open before 9.15am. There will be no supervision before this time.**
- **At the above listed times**, the pupils will enter the school maintaining social distancing. They will proceed to their assigned entry points (see school map) and enter their classrooms where school staff will monitor hand hygiene.
- Other staff members (including Special Education Teachers, SNAs and the Principal) will be available outside and inside the building to receive the children and to help them to their classrooms.
- If a child appears unwell on entering the classroom, the child's temperature will be taken and in the interests of the safety of the staff and the other children, the school will contact the parent and ask the parent to take the child home immediately.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the school grounds in the mornings.
- Messages for teachers can be sent to teachers' school email, See Saw or by phoning the school office. You will receive the teachers' school email in due course.

End of School Day

- Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait in the school car park or outside the school grounds at the designated time.
- We recommend that parents arrange a pick up point with their child(ren) so as that pupils can vacate the school grounds and walk to meet their parent/person that is collecting them.
- Social distancing to be maintained at all times.

Group 1: 2.45-2.55

Group 2: 2.55-3.00

Group 3: 3.00-3.05

- **This system will apply rain, hail or shine so please make sure that your child comes to school with appropriate clothing for the weather!**
- When the school day for that class is over the following arrangements will apply:
 - Junior and Senior Infants: the class teacher will bring the children to their designated entrance/exit point and will release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them. (All Junior

Infants will be brought to the collection points at 12.00 each day for the first two weeks.) Adults to congregate maintaining social distancing.

- 1st – 6th Class: the class teacher will bring the children to their designated entrance/exit point and they will proceed on their own from there. Adults who are not waiting in cars to congregate in the car park maintaining social distancing.
- We encourage people to have an arranged meeting point outside the school ground whereby pupils can cross at the lollipop lady or walk and meet their parents.

Collection of Children during the School Day

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

- When the adult arrives at the school, they should either phone the office or use the buzzer at the front door of the school to alert the office that they have arrived.
- Please use hand sanitiser provided before pressing the buzzer.
- The child will be brought from their class to the adult, in the school foyer, by a member of staff.
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.
- **If an adult is collecting a suspect Covid-19 case, the above procedures will apply and they will then be directed via an outdoor route at the front of the school to collect the child at the pickup point H (see map).**

Should a matter of urgency arise for parents, they must phone the office and make an appointment for access. Access will only be permitted once they have used the hand sanitiser. Once inside the school building, they must maintain the required social distance and follow the directions of the principal/staff member.

Other Responsibilities for Parents:

- Parents must ensure that their child has his/her own hand sanitiser and packet of tissues which are **labelled** coming to school. These items will stay in the child's school bag. These must be replaced when empty.
- Each child's equipment/books/copies will be labelled with the child's name as equipment/books cannot be shared.
- All lunch boxes, bottles and items and clothing should be clearly labelled.
- **Parents are to ensure that their child knows and uses the protocols around coughing/sneezing/use of tissues/hand sanitisers and hand washing prior to returning to school.**
- Parents must ensure that all **books/writing equipment/lunch boxes/water bottles** are sanitised using alcohol wipes on completion of homework before being placed in the child's school bag.
- Water bottles are to be filled at home every evening.
- Where practicable, pencils to be pared at home and copies ruled.
- Children are to go to the bathroom **before** they leave home for school daily.
- Children are to wash their hands **before** leaving for school.

Access to the school building/contact log

- Access to the school facility will be in line with agreed school procedures.
- Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents/guardians will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal.
- The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities will be maintained.
- Teachers will take the daily roll call each morning at 10.20am and this will act as contact tracing for pupils.
- Teachers will sign in the staff contact tracing sign in book each morning.

Lunches

- Parents/guardians are asked to make sure that children bring their lunches to school 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 should have lunches and lunchboxes that they can open themselves. For example, pupils often need assistance opening Frubes, a yoghurt pot is more suitable where they can manage it themselves.
- Children will eat their lunches at their desks, as per our usual practice.
- All rubbish from lunches will be brought home in the child's lunch box.
- Lunch boxes should be thoroughly washed at home each evening.

Uniforms:

- Children should wear their tracksuits on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and uniforms on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Children's uniforms (including tracksuits) must be clean and washed regularly as a child may have coughed or sneezed into their sleeve as per coughing protocols. In the event that either a uniform or tracksuit is not dry after being washed, they can wear the alternative – whichever piece of school clothing is ready.
- It is more important than ever that all clothing be **clearly labelled**, as a "Lost and Found" box cannot be facilitated.
- 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.

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 and/or are in the very high risk category who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate/restrict their movements for a period of 14 days
- Children who are generally unwell

Please note the symptoms of Covid-19:

- a fever (high temperature – 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a cough
- shortness of breath
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If any child or adult is experiencing these symptoms they should seek medical advice.

Children in Very High Risk Groups:

Parents should seek advice from their GP/Specialist if they think their child is in a very high risk group as defined by the HSE <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>. They must make an informed decision if it is safe for their child to return to school on September 1st. Children who are defined as very high risk by a consultant or medical practitioner can forward evidence from either of these professionals for the purpose of support from the school for the provision of distance learning. Please inform the principal of the advice given. If there are any parents out there who have concerns about their child's health, please contact the school at 041-9824229 or via email at office@slanens.ie.

Supporting the Learning of Children who are defined as very high risk and cannot attend school

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, the class teacher (and/or the Special Education Teacher [SET], where relevant) will provide suggested activities to support the child's learning at home to the parents/guardians.

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

Use of Face masks: It is currently not recommended in Ireland for children under 13 to wear face masks as a mitigation strategy against the transmission of Covid-19. It is currently the opinion of public health that their use, especially among young children, has the potential to cause more harm than good. If a parent wishes their child to wear a mask, this will be permitted, as will visors.

Personal Equipment

- It is requested that all children use their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., at school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment. (All books and stationery are packed and ready to be given to each child on the first day). These items will remain at school. School stationery will be labelled at school.
- Pupils will receive a ziplock bag with additional stationery which can stay at home.
- Pupils from 1st – 6th Class will have their own individual boxes to store their learning materials which will be provided by the school.
- For children in Junior and Senior Infants, the school will provide a pouch or container which will hold each child's pencils, crayons, etc., and which will be labelled with their name. They will not be shared.

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.

Children's learning spaces

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. Physical contact between pupils will be discouraged.

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. However, where possible, children in these classes will be arranged in Pods of no more than 6 pupils and as far as possible each Pod will be at least a 1 metre distance from the next Pod.

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 a 1 metre distance from the next Pod.

Use of resources in the classroom

- Only resources which can be easily cleaned will be used. Toys and materials which are difficult to clean (e.g. dress up clothes or soft toys) will not be used during this temporary Covid-19 emergency.
- Pupils will hand sanitise before and after using any materials.
- Pupils will not be allowed to share their own materials/resources such pencils, pens, rulers, books etc.
- Sharing of educational materials between pods will be avoided where possible. All items will be sanitised before another pod uses them.
- Break times will be staggered, and each class bubble will play in their designated section on the yard.

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.
- Windows will be opened when children are singing as a group, or when they are playing musical instruments. Recorders will not be shared between pupils.

Office

We have an online payment system that minimises 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 online payments through the school office.

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

As far as possible, staff members will not enter the Office area and will speak with the Secretary at the Foyer/ Reception area.

Photocopying

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

Yard

Two groups will have access to the yards during their allotted break times and there will be a maximum of three class bubbles outside in each yard at any one time:

1. Junior Infants, Junior/Senior Infants and Senior Infants (Group 1 Junior Yard)
2. Fourth/Fifth, Fifth and Sixth (Mr. Halligan) Classes (Group 1 Senior Yard)
3. First, Second and Third Classes (Group 2 Junior Yard)
4. Fourth & Sixth (Mr. Ó Braonáin) Classes (Group 2 Senior Yard)

- Each class bubble will play in their allocated section on the yard/field with their own class bubble.
- Yards will be supervised by class teachers, SETs and SNAs working within those bubbles.
- There will be a strict policy whereby there is only one bubble in a corridor at any given time, unless there is an extreme circumstance (in the case of an evacuation).
- Pupils will be outside as much as possible and within reason. For example, during very heavy rain and cold weather, their time outside will be reduced but every effort will be made to have the children outside in the fresh air as much as possible. The rain jacket and change of footwear will facilitate this. These items can be left at school.

Special Education Support

In keeping with our Special Education policy, 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.

- In-class Support: Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining a social distance from one another.
- Withdrawal Support: Where children 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 may wear PPE during the school day. Staff members who are attending to particular care needs, dealing with suspected Covid-19 cases or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves, face masks, face shields and aprons.

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, it may not be possible for the class to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

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.

PE

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and the use of equipment will not be permitted. If the PE hall is being used by class groupings, common touch points will be cleaned at intervals throughout the school day.

Extra-curricular Activities

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities will be explored. However, it would not be recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time. The staggered finishing times will also make the scheduling of after-school activities problematic. The Board of Management have decided that only essential activities will take place in the school initially and that this will be reviewed during the first term. Further updates will be provided in due course.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

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

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. Face coverings should be worn.
- Staff meetings will be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces 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.

Hygiene and Cleaning

- 30 hand sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom.
- Warm water and soap is available in all classroom sinks, class toilets, staff bathrooms and staff room.
- Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.
- As per public health guidelines – pupils and staff will perform hand hygiene:
 - on arrival at school
 - before eating or drinking
 - after using the toilet
 - after playing outdoors
 - when their hands are physically dirty
 - when they cough or sneeze
- Pupils will dispose of any used tissues in the pedal bins in their classrooms.
- In accordance with the DES guidelines, as well as the usual cleaning, particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, pupils desks, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.
- An additional cleaner will be employed to aid with these cleaning protocols.
- In addition to these cleaning protocols, a fogging machine will be used to sanitise the rooms each day.
- All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

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 Distance Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Distance Learning presented for all families.
- Upon our return to school our priority is to support the wellbeing of pupils and staff and to help everyone to settle back into school life.
- Each child will be at 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.

Distance Learning

- We are aware that we may need to revert to Distance Learning in the event of further school closures. Click here to view our [Acceptable Usage Policy for Internet Use](#) which is available on the school website.
- To enable this policy to be as effective as possible, we will be organising training for all pupils and parents/guardians in September. The training will focus on the use of the platform in our policy which is Seesaw.
- In the event of Distance Learning in the future – we will be sending home consent forms seeking permission for your child to use Seesaw, include images of themselves (closed and secure forum which only the teacher will see) participate in possible Zoom classes.
- We will also be moving to Aladdin Connect which will mean most of our correspondence will be via email. We will issue guidelines to parents on this is due course.
- Please ensure that we have an updated email address for Distance Learning, by emailing office@slanens.ie

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.

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.
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route 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.
- The room at the bottom of the corridor in the old school building will be the designated isolation area. Seating will be two metres apart. Supervision will be provided by a member of school staff.
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms, if one is available. S/he should 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 brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
- 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.
- 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 presenting with symptoms of Covid-19.
- 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 will be followed.