

Plan for re-opening Carron NS

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.
- One of the key challenges for schools during this pandemic is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for pupils and where teachers feel able to engage with pupils in a way that supports their learning. The evidence now available indicates that the risk for otherwise healthy children of serious illness associated with COVID-19 is very low.
- The most critical part of managing the risks of COVID-19 related to schools is doing everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If the infection is not introduced it cannot spread. The risk of introduction is related to how common the infection is in the community served by the school at a given time. If the infection is uncommon in the community then the likelihood of introduction into the school is much lower.
- It is important to emphasize that the risk of spread of infection in both directions exists in all interpersonal interaction's pupil-pupil, teacher-teacher and teacher-pupil therefore the risk is not limited to the classroom and must be managed in all settings.
- It is acknowledged that staff will not always be able to maintain physical distance from their pupils and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the child e.g. if a child sustains an injury and requires first aid. However, where possible teachers will maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m.
- We will manage the risk of spread by the following:
 - ✓ Regular hand hygiene
 - ✓ Maintaining physical distancing
 - ✓ Application of respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
 - ✓ Environmental hygiene

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- We advise parents not to bring their child/ren to school if the child has symptoms of a viral respiratory infection or if there is someone in the household suspected or known to have COVID-19.
- We advise parents not to bring their children to school if they have been identified as COVID-19 contacts.
- We will ensure students (as appropriate) are aware of the reason why they should not attend if they have respiratory symptoms.
- We will ensure students are aware that if they develop signs or symptoms when at school they should let their teacher know.
- Parents/guardians are advised that the school reserves the right to decline entry to pupils who appear to have fever or respiratory tract infection.
- On-site temperature taking is not recommended because fever is not a consistent symptom of COVID-19 in children and would result in delayed school entry. Parents/ guardians and/or educational settings do not need to take children's temperatures every morning. However, if a child presents with illness during the day and is placed in an isolation space, their temperature will be taken.
- Please ensure that we have 2 updated contact numbers for people who can be contacted to collect your child from school in the event of illness.
- Everyone entering the building will be required to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser. This may need to be supervised.
- As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented.

Assumptions

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system. The bubbles will not interact with other bubbles.
- Decreasing interaction: The extent to which this is practical depends on the classroom setting. A common-sense approach is required in recognising the limits to which decreasing interaction between pupils can be achieved. The following measures will be encouraged:
 - ✓ Limited interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared spaces.
 - ✓ Social physical contact (hand to hand greeting/hugs) will be discouraged.
 - ✓ Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (for example to access a shared resource) this will be organised to the greatest extent possible to minimise congregation around the point of access to the shared resource.
 - ✓ Pupils and teachers should avoid sharing of personal items such as pens and other writing materials and tablets to the greatest extent possible.
 - ✓ Pupils will be encouraged to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth)

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- ✓ Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets the contact surfaces of the devices will be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged before and after use.
- The junior and senior classes will enter and exit the building at different points.
- Classes will be assigned zones within the yard to ensure that bubbles do not interact.
- Children in the senior class will initially be seated in pairs/pods, approximately one metre apart.
- Generally speaking the objective is to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different class bubbles as much as possible, rather than to avoid all contact between pairs, as the latter will not always be possible.
- The aim of the system within the school, is that each class grouping mix only with their own class/bubble from arrival at school in the morning until departure at the end of the school day. *The pods within those class bubbles is an additional measure, to limit the extent of close contact within the class bubble.*
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry/exit points and in all rooms throughout the school. We have also taken the additional measure of plumbing sinks in the toilets to ensure that warm water is provided in these areas.
- Frequency of hand hygiene- Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene
 - ✓ On arrival at school;
 - ✓ Before eating or drinking;
 - ✓ After using the toilet;
 - ✓ After playing outdoors;
 - ✓ When their hands physically dirty;
 - ✓ When they cough or sneeze.

Key to Entrances & Exits

Entrance and Exit Points	Number
Front Door	Sinéad's Class
Emergency door at back of school (opp lunch room)	Mary's Class

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Arrival at school

- Children should be dropped at the school gate **no earlier than 9.15.**
- Each class should line up at their designated point with social distancing observed.
- The class teachers will invite the children to enter the building via their designated entrance point at 9.20.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email, note in the journal or by phoning the school office.

End of School Day

- Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait outside the school wall. Parents should adhere to 2m social distancing, modelling best practice for the children.

Yard

- The risk of virus transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.
- Adjusting outdoor play spaces will minimise crowding and contact.
- It is not possible to maintain physical distancing when primary school children play together outdoors, but it is helpful to keep to consistent bubbles.
- Children will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities.
- Each classroom bubble will have access to yard/ play area during their allotted break times. The areas will be rotated during the week so each bubble has the opportunity to play in different areas.
- Play areas will be monitored by the supervising teacher. The SNA will remain with the children in the junior class bubble.

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 the class teacher's mobile phone.
- The child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.
- Where possible please give prior notice to the class teacher that your child will be collected early via note in journal or phone call /text

Leaving School at the End of the Day

Children will be escorted to the gate in an orderly manner by staff at their leaving time. Children will be directed to go straight to the bus/cars. Parents should collect their children on time.

Special Education Team

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 teacher will work within the confines of a bubble.

- Where a SEN teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.

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- Where children from receive support in the SEN room, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs in SEN rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending.

PPE

PPE will be worn by staff where 2m distance cannot be maintained, staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid, SNA's and SEN teachers moving between bubbles will wear a visor when working with the 2nd bubble.

The PPE used will be a clear visor rather than masks. This allows for the children to see the facial expressions of the teacher.

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, the SEN teacher will take the class for the period of time until a substitute teacher can be sought. This day can then be reclaimed and the time lost by the SEN teacher can be made up for. If, however, the SEN teacher is covering a teacher absence in her base school, it is possible that children may have to stay at home until substitution becomes available.

Special Educational Needs: Additional considerations for those with Special Educational Needs

- For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or reasonable to implement.
- The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which might suggest illness/COVID-19 infection and where symptoms are present, children should not attend the school.
- Similarly, staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend for work if they develop signs or symptoms of respiratory illness.
- Hand Hygiene: Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using either soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.
- Equipment: Some children may have care needs (physical or behavioural) which require the use of aids and appliance and/ or medical equipment for example toileting aids, moving and handling equipment, respiratory equipment. Cleaning of aids and appliances is carried out in the school.
- Staff who provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment should apply Standard Precautions, as per usual practice
- The use of a face covering will conceal facial expression and can make communication difficult and as such may not be practical in this setting however the wearing of a visor as an alternative to a facial covering may be considered where there is a concern that physical distancing cannot be maintained, there will be prolonged close contact and/or that exposure to fluid/respiratory droplets is likely.

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Checklist for parents/guardians

1. Monitor your child's health and keep them home from school if they are ill.
2. Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of Covid 19. They are
 - ✓ High temperature
 - ✓ Cough
 - ✓ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - ✓ Loss of smell/taste or distortion of taste.
3. Teach and model good hygiene practices for your child/ren.
 - a. Wash your hands with soap and warm water frequently. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty;
 - b. Ensure waste is safely collected, stored and disposed of;
 - c. Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose.
 - d. Please ensure your children have an adequate supply of tissues for each day.
4. Encourage your child/ren to ask questions and express their feelings with you and their teachers. Remember that your child/ren may have different reactions to stress; be patient and understanding.
5. Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding children to be considerate of one another.
6. Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts.

Checklist for pupils

1. In a situation like this it is normal to feel sad, worried, confused, scared or angry. Know that you are not alone and talk to someone you trust, like your parent or teacher so that you can help keep yourself and your school safe and healthy.
 - a. Ask questions, educate yourself and get information from reliable sources.
2. Protect yourself and others
 - a. Wash your hands frequently, always with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
 - b. Remember to not touch your face;
 - c. Do not share cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others.
 - d. Practice physical and social distancing as much as possible
3. Be a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy.
 - a. Share what you learn about preventing disease with your family and friends, especially with younger children;
 - b. Model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members.
4. Don't stigmatize your peers or tease anyone about being sick.
5. Tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver if you feel sick, and ask to stay home.

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

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be implemented:

- ✓ Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by the classroom teacher.
- ✓ The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by the a staff member. They 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, if one is available. He/she 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 school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist them by calling their GP.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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.

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

If the school is notified that a pupil/ member of staff in/ linked to 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

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

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Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school/ High Risk Children

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time due to illness or being high risk, the class teacher and/or the Special Education Teacher will provide activities/ work to support the child's learning at home. This will be shared with parents. An appropriate platform such as SeeSaw or Google Classroom will be used.

Children who are high risk must have a letter from their consultant and provide this to the school.

Personal Equipment

- In so far as possible, it is requested that all children in Carron NS will bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., to school in their own pencil case to avoid the sharing of equipment.
- Their pencil case and colours will remain in school.
- It is further requested that all items have your child's name on them for ease of identification.
- Lunchboxes and water bottles – we ask that these are thoroughly cleaned everyday.

Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, laptops and the equipment used for structured activities (e.g. maths/ science) 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.

Sports equipment will be assigned to each class e.g. football/ basketballs/ skipping ropes.

Additional materials used by a class during PE sessions will be cleaned after use. Hand hygiene will be observed prior to and after use.

Toys: All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis for example weekly. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.

- ✓ Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or body fluids will be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.
- ✓ Cloth or soft toys used will be machine washable.
- ✓ Jigsaws, puzzles and toys that young pupils or those with Special Educational Needs may be inclined to put in their mouths will be capable of being washed and disinfected.
- ✓ All play equipment will be checked for signs of damage for example breaks or cracks. If they cannot be repaired or cleaned, they will be discarded.
- ✓ Clean toys and equipment will be stored in a clean container or clean cupboard. The manufacturer's cleaning instructions should always be followed.
- ✓ At this time, soft modelling materials, like plasticine, clay and play dough where used should be for individual use only.

Cleaning Procedure for Toys

- ✓ Wash the toy in warm soapy water, using a brush to get into crevices.
- ✓ Rinse the toy in clean water.
- ✓ Thoroughly dry the toy.
- ✓ Some hard-plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher.

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- ✓ Toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up should be wiped with a damp cloth/ antibacterial wipe and dried.

Books/ book rental /library policy

- Textbooks that are shared will be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Children will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.
- Library books which are used in the classroom can be returned to the shelf and made available again without any delay.
- Library books which are taken home will be returned to a quarantine box, where they will be held for 72 hours before being wiped and returned to the shelves.

Cleaning

- Cleaning is best achieved using a general-purpose detergent and warm water, clean cloths, mops and the mechanical action of wiping/scrubbing. The area should then be rinsed and dried.
- The routine use of disinfectants is generally not appropriate but is recommended in circumstances where there is a higher risk of cross-infection for example someone has become ill whilst at school or if there has been a spillage of blood, faeces or vomit.
- Disinfectants are potentially hazardous and must be used with caution and according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Surfaces and items must be cleaned before a disinfectant is applied as most disinfectants are inactivated by dirt.

	Routine	Post COVID case
Surfaces	Neutral detergent	Neutral detergent AND 0.05% sodium hypochlorite OR Virucidal disinfectant
Toilets	Neutral detergent AND (optional) 0.1% Sodium Hypochlorite OR virucidal disinfectant	0.1% sodium hypochlorite OR Virucidal disinfectant
Cleaning equipment	Non –disposable cleaned at the end of cleaning session	Non-disposable disinfected with 0.1% sodium hypochlorite OR virucidal disinfectant
Personal protective equipment for cleaning staff	Uniform AND household gloves	Uniform AND plastic apron (if available) AND household gloves
Waste management	Domestic waste stream	Place in plastic bag and tie, then place in a second plastic bag and store securely for 72 hours before putting it out for collection in the normal domestic waste stream

PE

Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings. If the PE hall is being used by class groupings, common

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touch points will be cleaned after use and all windows will be left open during and after the use of the hall.

Where equipment is shared between classes, the items will be cleaned before being returned to the storage unit.

Clothing Current DES guidelines do not require daily laundering of children's clothing . However, it is recommended ,where possible, that children do not wear the same clothing to school 2 days in a row. As we do not have a school uniform this is very do-able. For example, children can rotate 2 school outfits every second day. An outfit can therefore be aired on the day it is not in use.

Visitors

Visits to the school during the school day should be by prior arrangement and visitors should report to the school principal and will be subject to the same controls that apply to staff entering the school. Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained with visitors where possible. We ask that visitors use face coverings/masks as per NPHET guidance. Visitors who enter the school building will be asked to fill out a contact tracing form, which will be kept on file in the school office.

In relation to drop off of forgotten items (books lunch boxes) a designated drop off point that does not require interactions with staff may be appropriate e.g box in the front porch

Parents visiting for meeting with teachers should be by appointment only and will be facilitated in a way that observes social distancing requirement. Meetings will be arranged to ensure that the congregation of parents in waiting areas is minimised, for example when parents travel for a meeting by private car they may be invited to remain in the car until the teacher is ready to meet them.

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