



Two Mile House National School
Two Mile House, Naas, Co. Kildare
Roll No – 17968S

Principal – Adrian O'Connor
Tel 045 871200
email: office@twomilehouseschool.ie

Two Mile House National School

Updated Covid 19 Response Plan August 2021

Underlying Principles

- 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.

Signage

Covid 19 signage is displayed throughout the building.

Health

While all children will be welcome back to school, we would remind parents that, where children are displaying symptoms of Covid 19, they should not be sent to school.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms of coronavirus (which includes the DELTA variant).

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
- Fatigue
- Aches and Pains



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Other uncommon symptoms of coronavirus include:

- sore throat
- headaches
- runny or stuffy noses
- feeling sick or vomiting
- diarrhoea

Children who display such symptoms in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school.

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of [cold](#) and [flu](#).

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), [self-isolate](#) (stay in your room) and phone your family doctor straight away to see if you need [a free COVID-19 test](#).

Getting an early diagnosis means, you can get the help you need and take steps to avoid spreading the virus, if you have it.

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE [Website](#). Symptoms may be subject to change so regular review of the HSE Website is advised. If you **do not** have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a [COVID-19 walk-in test centre](#).

- Pupils and staff should not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- If you have travelled abroad recently, please make sure you have followed all the current guidelines in place for you and your children. See gov.ie/covid-19-travel-advice for a live link.

Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at:

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

- Pupils and staff that develop symptoms at school should bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly.
- Pupils, parents and staff should cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.



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COVID-19 Tracker App

COVID Tracker app is a free and easy-to-use mobile phone app that will:

- alert you if you have been in [close contact](#) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)
- keep other app users safe by alerting them if you test positive for COVID-19
- give you advice on what to do if you have symptoms

You can download the free app from [Apple's AppStore](#) or the [GooglePlay store](#)

Employers and workers must keep themselves up to date on Public Health information as this can be updated on a regular basis. Public Health information on [close contacts, casual contacts and testing](#) is available from the HSE website.

Hygiene

Teachers will make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. We would be grateful if you could also emphasise safe behaviour in this regard to your children at home as part of the preparation for returning to school.

- Hand sanitisers will be available at all entry/exit points and in all classes and SET rooms.
- Hand washing should be performed or hand sanitiser used by pupils and staff when entering/exiting vehicles and the school building.
- Soap dispensers, hand driers and paper towels are available in classrooms and in classroom bathrooms.
- Hand washing facilities should be used after activities that are likely to soil hands.
- Soap dispensers and hand driers/paper towels are available in classroom bathrooms and classrooms.
- Soap dispensers and paper towels are available in staff and general bathrooms.
- The kitchenette off the school hall is the designated 'isolation area'.
- Foot pedal bins will be in all classroom for tissues.
- Disinfectant cleaning will take place during the day of frequently used surfaces and touch points.

Physical Distancing

We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways:

Increasing Separation. This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Each class will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles. Within the bubbles, children will be organised according to



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Department of Education guidelines. This may include children being organised into pods. A pod is a group of children (normally 4-6) who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the bubble, or classroom.

Decreasing Interaction. This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact when entering and exiting the school, accessing their classrooms and during yard time.

School Organisation

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system
- The school is split into 2 groups with each group having different starting times, break times, lunch times and finishing times.
- Group 1 will be constituted of one Junior Infant class, two Senior Infants classes, 1st class, 3rd class and 4th class.
- Group 2 will be constituted of 2nd class, one 5th class and two 6th classes.

Classroom Organisation

- Within each class the children will be divided into pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods and between pods and the teacher's desk.

Ventilation

The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice 'Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools'. The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

The Department of Education will be issuing Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) monitors to schools and these will be used according to the Department's guidance.



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School Timetables

Timetable for Group 1	Timetable for Group 2
<p>8:50 – Doors Open 9:00 – School starts 10.30 – Break time 10.45 – Class resumes 12:25 – Lunch time 12:55 – Class resumes 13.40 – Junior Infant/Senior Infant classes finish 14.40 – 1st, 3rd and 4th classes finish.</p>	<p>8:55 – Doors Open 9.05 – School starts 10.50 – Break time 11.05 – Class resumes 13.00 – Lunch time 13.30 – Class resumes 14.45 – 2nd, 5th and 6th classes finish.</p>
Classes in Group 1	Classes in Group 2
<p>JI – Ms. Vaughan Senior Infants – Ms. Smith Senior Infants – Ms. Harkin 1st – Ms. Ryan 3rd – Ms. Daly 4th – Ms. O’ Meara</p>	<p>2nd Class - Ms. O’ Donovan 5th – Ms. Williams 6th – Mr. Grehan 6th – Ms. Noone</p>



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Entrance & Exit Points for Specific Classes

Teacher	Class	Entrance & Exit Point
Ms. Vaughan	Jun Inf	Room 19
Ms. Smith	Sen Inf	Room 20
Ms. Harkin	Sen Inf	Room 21
Ms. Ryan	1 st Class	Room 12
Ms. O' Donovan	2 nd Class	Room 11
Ms. Daly	3 rd Class	Room 13 Enter/Exit at the front of school (Main entrance facing the main road)
Ms. O' Meara	4 th Class	Room 14 Enter/Exit at the back of the school. Enter at the back door beside Room 14A (Walk around the front of the school to the left of the main entrance, NOT via the path beside the school yard.)
Ms. Williams	5 th Class	Room 14A Enter/Exit at the front of the school (Main entrance facing the main road)
Mr. Grehan	6 th Class	Room 2
Ms. Noone	6 th Class	Room 1



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Arrival at school

- To help with reducing the amount of traffic around the school gate and in the carpark, children are asked to walk or cycle to school if at all possible.
- Each group should aim to arrive at the school in the 10 minutes immediately preceding their start time, but not before this time:

Arrival Time Group 1 – 8.50 – 9:00

Arrival Time Group 2 – 8:55 – 9:05

- **Please note:** For convenience, siblings of pupils in Group 1 who are in classes in Group 2 i.e. 2nd class, 5th and 6th class, may accompany their siblings at the arrival time for Group 1 and go straight to their classrooms also.
- We ask for your co-operation with these times as it will mean that the numbers congregating outside the school and on the school grounds at any one time will be minimised.
- Each class should go straight into their classrooms and to their designated seat with social distancing observed.
- Pupils will be supervised in their rooms by the Principal, Deputy Principal and SNAs until class starts at the designated start time for their group.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
- Messages for teachers can be sent via a note in the homework journal.

End of the School Day

- Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait in their cars, where appropriate, or outside the school grounds adhering to social distancing guidelines and wearing face coverings.
- When the school day is over the following arrangements will apply:
 - **Junior/Senior Infants** - the class teacher will bring the children to their designated collection point at the front of the school. The class teacher will release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them outside the gate of the school.
 - **1st – 6th Class** – the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately at their classes' school finishing time in order to minimise contact. Pupils will walk out of their classrooms via the entrance/exit points for their class as outlined above and will walk out of the school grounds to meet the adult there to collect them outside the school grounds, or in their cars where appropriate.

Please note: Pupils in 2nd, 5th and 6th classes who will be travelling on the Busy Fingers bus will be accommodated at the bus departure time.



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Break Time/Yards

There will be staggered break times for each group and each class bubble will have access to the yards during their allotted break times. Yards will be sub-divided into designated class play areas for each class bubble.

Collection of Children during the School Day

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

- The parent can input a note for early collection through Aladdin Connect or write a note in the pupil's homework journal with the collection time.
- When the parent arrives at the school they should phone the office to alert the office that they have arrived.
- The child will be brought from their class to the parent by a member of staff.
- This member of staff will sign the child out in the Secretary's Office.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

School staff are encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the school will follow the procedures as outlined in the Department of Education Covid 19 Response Plan:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area (Kitchenette in the school hall) by a member of staff who will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child.
- Parents are asked to collect their child from the designated isolation area, i.e the kitchenette in the school hall, as soon as possible.
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.
- A nominated member of the school management team will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

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.



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Personal Equipment

- In so far as possible, it is requested that children from 1st to 6th Class will have a pencil case prepared containing their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., which can be left in school each day.
- Lunch boxes and re-usable water bottles should be washed at home every evening.
- It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.
- 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.

Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including laptops, class readers 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.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Under current public health advice, face coverings are not recommended for children under 13 years of age.
- Every staff member will be provided with a box of disposable medical/surgical grade masks in the EN14683 category. Disposable face masks will also be available in various locations in the school.
- All school staff must wear face coverings where 2 metres distancing cannot be maintained.
- Visitors to the school will be required to wear face coverings.
- Staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves and face masks.
- The use of disposable gloves in the school by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for intimate care settings. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves. Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

Visitors

Visitors to the school will be restricted to essential visits. All visitors to the school, including parents, will be required to make an appointment, wear a face covering and to record their visit using a School Contact Tracing Log.

Library

The school library and class libraries will not be in use until further notice. Pupils will be asked to bring in their own books for independent reading in class and initiatives such as 'DEAR' (Drop Everything And Read) time.



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Drama

Drama classes with Mary Power Cooney have been postponed for the present time and the situation will be subject to ongoing review.

Swimming

Swimming classes have been postponed for the present time and the situation will be kept under review.

Extra-curricular Activities

The provision of extra-curricular activities is postponed for the present time and the situation will also be kept under review.

All pupils, parents and staff are asked to adhere to the updated School Covid 19 Response Plan.