



## **Covid-19 School Response Plan For Oylegate NS**

This document has been prepared on the basis of current public health advice and will continue to be updated as further public advice is received.

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## Introduction

This *Covid-19 Response Plan* is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Oylegate National School

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol', the Department of Education and Skills plan for school reopening and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHE continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and re-opening of our schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents.

This document aims to provide details of:

1. **COVID-19 School Policy**
2. **Planning and Preparing for Return to School**
  - a. **School Building**
  - b. **Signage**
3. **Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**
4. **Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative(s)**
5. **Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**
6. **General advice to prevent the spread of the virus**
  - a. **Wash your Hands Frequently**
  - b. **Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitiser**
  - c. **Avoid Touching your Eyes, Nose and Mouth**
  - d. **Physical Distancing**
  - e. **Practice Respiratory Hygiene**
  - f. **Do**
  - g. **Do Not**
  - h. **People at Very High Risk (Extremely Vulnerable)**
7. **Managing the Risk of Spread of Covid-19**
8. **Control Measures**
  - a. **Return to Work Form**
  - b. **Induction Training**
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  - d. **Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
  - e. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - f. **Wearing of Gloves**
  - g. **Cleaning**
  - h. **Access to the School Building / Contact Log**
  - i. **First Aid / Emergency Procedure**
9. **Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**
10. **Staff Duties**
11. **Covid related absence management**

## 12. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.

**Note:** The plan is a live working document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from [www.Gov.ie](http://www.Gov.ie), [www.dbei.ie](http://www.dbei.ie), [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie), [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie); [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie);

## 1. Oylegate N.S. COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others.

### COVID 19 Policy Statement

**Oylegate National School** is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. 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. 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 and Skills
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and pupils engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Skills
- 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 and Skills advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s): Fergal O Seochrú & Caitríona Whelehan (DLWR)

## 2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government.

The school has had a health and safety review looking at the school building, equipment and mechanical items, training for staff on Covid-19 and cleaning processes and standards that must be adhered to and clearly displayed signs for children and staff as constant reminding of hygiene etiquette.

Details for the reopening of the school facility and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

## 3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (School) [RTW(s)]** form, which is available electronically or from the Principal.

A RTW form should only be completed **at least 3 days** prior to any proposed date of return to the workplace.

On receipt of the completed form the Principal will provide: details of the **Induction Training** for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

Staff will be asked to confirm the information provided in the RTW form has not changed after school closures of 2 weeks or more.

**Note: Induction Training for staff will be developed by the Department in consultation with stakeholders and made available for all schools and staff.**

## 4. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and the School Leadership.

The Return to Work Safely protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint a Lead Worker Representative to carry out a specific role.

The role of the worker representative(s) is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows

- Work collaboratively with the employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19.
- Promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice.
- Assist with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Make representations on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan and control measures or the adherence to such control measures by staff, parents/guardians, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact the lead worker(s) who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

Name(s) of Lead Worker representative:	Contact details
Fergal O Seochrú Caitríona Whelehan	oylegatens@gmail.com

All staff, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

## 5. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. IPPN has commissioned an independent Policy Statement and Risk Assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings

- Oylegate NS Risk assessment policy has been reviewed to include Covid-19 as a risk. First policy has been updated also to reflect proper current practices, Behavioural policy and critical incident policy has also been reviewed by the board of management prior to the return to school.

## 6. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. They are:

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a school is to minimise the risk of introduction of the disease into the school setting in the first place.

This can be achieved through the following measures:

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other acute infectious diseases not to attend school, to phone their GP and follow the HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have been identified by the HSE as contact of a person with COVID-19 not to attend schools and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.
- Ensure that staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
- Everyone entering the school building should be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
- Visitors to school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contact point.

Staff, pupils and visitors should at all times adhere to the up to date advice and instructions of the public health authorities in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

Updated advice from the HSE is available on its website – <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools. Oylegate NS will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

## 7. Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19

### a. *Wash your Hands Frequently*

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19.

Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

For advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link will be helpful:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

### b. *Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers*

Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of hand sanitisers (when hands are clean).

Children will be instructed to wash their hands when they come back into the classroom after break times and after some other outdoor activities.

Hand sanitisers are more readily deployed in school settings to avoid disruption to teaching and learning and to avoid congestion of staff and pupils waiting to use hand washing facilities.

They will be available at entry and exit points and in each classroom.

### c. *Avoid Touching Eyes, Nose and Mouth*

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.

### d. *Physical Distancing*

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace.

**Note: Guidance on the physical distancing requirements will be informed by public health advice for schools and will be updated as appropriate.**

### e. *Practice respiratory hygiene*

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly and regularly can help stop the spread of the virus. It is, therefore, crucial that all staff adhere to this advice and adopt the following practices as strictly as possible.

### f. *Do*

- Wash your hands properly and often
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

### g. *Do Not*

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.

### h. *People at Very High Risk (Extremely Vulnerable):*

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are defined as being at very high risk. The HSE has set out these groups:

List of people in very high risk groups include people who:



- are over 70 years of age - even if you're fit and well
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and you are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Staff who are in this group should self-declare on the Return to Work form if they believe that they are at very high risk. Details of the leave arrangements that will apply will be updated by the Department of Education and Skills.

If the Board/Principal is unsure whether or not staff fall into the very high-risk category, advice will be sought from the Occupational Health Service.

## 8. Control Measures

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors as far as possible within the school.

These control measures are outlined in this document and in the logistics plan and staff guidance document that are being issued.

The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

*Staff, in particular, should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.*

The following control measures have been put in place:

### a. Return to Work Form

Staff will be required to complete a RTW form at least 3 days prior to any return to the school facility (see section 2 above). The purpose of the RTW form is to get confirmation from staff that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has no symptoms of Covid-19 and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.

### b. Induction Training

All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. The aim of such training is to ensure that staff have full knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health
- Covid-19 symptoms
- What to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school
- Outline of the Covid-19 response plan

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of Covid-19 and with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the Covid-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal.

**c. *Induction Training for Return to School***

The Department has prepared short induction training for schools operating the summer provision this year. It is intended that this training will be updated and become more comprehensive to cover all aspects of the return to school safely protocols. The Induction training for the Summer Provision may be of interest in the context of the kind of training which staff will need to undertake is available at the following link.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/summer-education-programme-2020.html#SchoolBased>

**d. *Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette***

It is crucial that all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Guidance documentation and Information posters will be available at various locations within the school facility. Information posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school facility including offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilet areas. Such are intended to inform but also remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations within the school facility and should be available in each classroom.

**e. *Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)***

PPE will not be required to be worn within the school facility according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

Such include roles where:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. This will be updated in line with advice from the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre)

Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they 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 a school 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.

Staff will wear face coverings at all times except when eating or drinking. Staff may remove their face covering from time to time but only where a distance of 2m can be maintained (Teacher only zone or outdoors)

**f. Cleaning**

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school will be made.

2 new staff members have been employed to carry out sanitizing in the school daily to enhance the cleaning and sanitization of the school. One of these new staff members sanitises frequently touched areas in the school yard between break times and between teaching staff and SNA/Secretary breaks in the staffroom.

Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces shall be conducted, in particular, toilets, door handles and kitchens. Cleaning will be performed regularly and whenever facilities or surfaces are visibly dirty.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building.

Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.).

**g. 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 should be maintained. The school will maintain a log of staff and students Contacts.

**h. First Aid/emergency procedure**

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in **Oylegate NS**.

In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999

Contact the principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident.

**9. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. The following outlines how Oylegate NS will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of work.

A designated isolation area should be identified within the school building. This will be the staff room. Should there be more than 1 child in need of the isolation room there are contingency rooms available if needed.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in **Oylegate NS** the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately
- Isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times
- Provide a mask for the person 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
- Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
- Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner 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, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
- Arrange 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 and staff confidentiality is essential at all times.

## 10. Staff Duties

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. In order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the School Covid-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing
- Self-isolate and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid-19
- Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
- If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work
- Must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to Covid-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace
- Must complete Covid-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school

- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

### Practical guidance for every day in school

Pupils arrive in **three** staggered groups.

- **9.10am group.** Families with surnames from **A – Fle**
- **9.15am group.** Families with surnames from **Fly – N**
- **9.20am group.** Families with surnames from **O – Z**
- **Siblings of junior infant children can arrive at 9.40am.**
  - Children from **Ms. Kirwan, Ms. Breen & Ms. O Leary's** classes use the **front door**
  - Children from **Mr. Ó Seochrú, Ms. Lawlor-Cotter, Mr. Gilbane's** classes use **back door** opposite the basketball court.
  - All children must leave at least 1m between them and any other child walking in front/behind them
- Class teachers will be in their room from 9.10am to facilitate the staggered arrival of students.
- Other staff members will oversee arrival of groups. Pupils will walk directly into their classroom using either the front or back door maintaining social distance. (**Front door are Ms. Breen's, Ms. O Leary's & Ms. Kirwan's** and **Back Door (off basketball court) are Mr. Gilbane, Ms. Lawlor-Cotter & Mr. Ó Seochrú**)
- All children are asked to make a socially distant queue if there are multiple children at the door.

**For the first two weeks Mr. Ó Seochrú's Junior Infants will be arriving at 9.40am. Mr. Ó Seochrú will meet them at the gate to bring them into their classroom. After two weeks Junior Infants will arrive in the staggered groups based on their surname. i.e. Group 1: Children with surname A – Fle. Group 2: Children with surname Fly – N. Group 3: Children with surname O – Z. Please see email dated 24/8/20.**

### SCHOOL COLLECTION TIMES:

To facilitate the collection of all pupils safely, this will be done in three pick up stages.

- 2.50pm – **Group 1.** Children with surname **A - Fle**
- 2.55pm – **Group 2.** Children with surname **Fly - N**
- 3.00pm – **Group 3.** Children with surname **O - Z**
- Senior Infants will be guided and supervised by the staff out to the gate at 2pm. After two weeks Junior Infants will be joining them at this time. For the first two weeks Junior Infants will be collected at the earlier time of 12pm.

**While we encourage walking to/from school, we ask on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> that children do not walk to/from school. Email permission must be submitted to [oylegatens@gmail.com](mailto:oylegatens@gmail.com) before a child will be allowed to walk home.**

**On wet days all children will still leave the school at their allocated time so please ensure they have suitable footwear and clothing. All children are to stay socially distant until they are collected. Collection is only being facilitated at the bottom gate.**

**THIS IS SUBJECT TO REVIEW AFTER THE INITIAL 2 WEEK SETTLING IN PERIOD**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: NO CHILDREN ARE ALLOWED ONTO SCHOOL GROUNDS BEFORE 9.10AM. NO GATHERINGS AT THE GATE. NO PARENTS ALLOWED ON SCHOOL PREMISES WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT.**

**All teachers will go through these new procedures with their classes on the first day of school.**

### **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 intercom at the front door of the school to alert the office that they have arrived
- The child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff
- The person at the front desk will record who collected the child, date and time.
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so

### **The new school day**

- All children return to school and classes operate within a Pod system with at least 1 metre between each pod indoors.
- All excess furniture will be removed from the classrooms to enable social distancing in all classes.
- Hand Sanitizing stations are at every door and every classroom in the school. Frequent handwashing and sanitizing will be encouraged by the teacher.
- A Covid-19 response plan, risk assessment and Covid-19 policy have been drawn up and will be ratified by the board to ensure safety procedures are being implemented and followed and will be displayed on the school website.
- An increased cleaning regime is being implemented with checklists to ensure proper sanitization every evening and a wipe down of all surfaces.
- All staff will have completed a training module and a return to work form before returning to work
- Checklists for all Staff, Ancillary staff have been created and will be used to maintain standards in the school.

### **Curriculum**

All teachers will start from where the children are. Teachers will have 'Handover meetings' to inform the new teacher of the needs and strengths of each child. The SET team will provide support for each class in accordance with our SET policy.

On returning the staff will promote a sense of safety so the children can learn in a secure and happy place, develop that sense of belonging again and know we are here to support them.

*There will be no homework given for the first 2 weeks to ensure a clean transition back to school.*

### **Blended learning please see our Remote teaching and learning policy**

Oylegate NS will use the platform 'Seesaw' should:

- A child have to self-isolate for 2 weeks
- If a child is in the very high risk category and cannot attend school
- If a child has a long term illness
- If there is a full or partial closure of the school

**Before a child can engage in online learning due to medical reasons, certification from a medical practitioner will be required.**

## **Yard**

### **Breaktimes**

- Break times will remain the same with clear areas marked for each class 'bubble'.
- No 'bubbles' are allowed to interact on yard time.
- When the bell rings all classes will freeze on the spot and the staff on duty will guide each class in gradually allowing for social distance.

**All teachers will go through these new guidelines with the children on the first day.**

### **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
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
- The child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents and parents should 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 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.

### **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

### **Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school**

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, the class teacher (and/or the learning support teacher, where relevant) will send home suggested work to support the child's learning at home and plans will be shared with parents.

### **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 by the HSE
- Public health advice will be sought and followed

### **Personal Equipment**

- It is requested that children from all classes bring a pencil case to school and leave it in school so that as little as possible goes between home and school every day.
- It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.
- All children should bring hand gel to school for use. The school will supply hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the school.
- Your child should bring the minimum into school every day i.e. Lunch box, drink and coat. Lunch boxes and drinks bottles should be washed thoroughly each day. Children **cannot** refill their water bottles in school.
- Uniforms should be changed and washed as much as possible.
- No homework will be assigned for the first 2 week of September.

### **Shared Equipment**

By necessity, some classroom equipment may need to be shared including tablets, laptops and the equipment used for structured activities such as PE. Cleaning of such shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place after each use to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

### **PPE**

Staff members will wear face coverings and appropriate PPE when necessary. **SNAs and SET teachers will wear medical grade masks only. Medical grade masks will also be provided for all staff members in the school.**

### **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, a SET teacher may be used in class.

### **Singing**

**Singing will only take place outside, in pods and with adequate social distancing to minimise the risk of contracting Covid-19**

### **PE**

Weather permitting, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment should be confined to the sets that have been distributed to class groupings. All equipment used will be wiped down and cleaned/**quarantined for 72hrs** after use. School hall is now being used as a classroom to facilitate social distancing.

### **What you can do to prepare your child for reopening?**

- Talk to your child about the changes in daily activity in school...new system in the morning, lunch time yard timetable, line up on first day, different door entry points.



- Discuss, social distancing, Each class is a bubble and within the classes we will have pods of up to 6 children.
- Teach your child and talk to them about proper hygiene etiquette, coughing into elbow, washing hands properly and frequently etc. This will be reinforced in school by each class teacher.
- Send as little as possible in from home... lunch box, bottles and coat.
- If you need to contact the school, please do so by email: [oylegatens@gmail.com](mailto:oylegatens@gmail.com)

## **11. Covid related absence management**

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with DES.

## **12. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

The Board of Management aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff (physical, mental, spiritual etc.) both at work, whether in the school facility or at home and outside of work. The Board of Management is mindful that the support and promotion of staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.

The Board of Management aims to foster a culture and work environment that support healthy behaviours and staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to staff as well as organising suitable support programmes, initiatives and events.

These are challenging times for everyone. Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the principal.