



Rathduff NS: Covid 19 Response Plan

School Profile

270 pupils

10 Mainstream classes

5 Special Education Teachers

4 Special Classes

Administrative Principal

10 full time SNA's/ 1 Part-time

Full Time Secretary

Part Time Caretaker

2 Cleaners

The biggest classroom in the school is 67 metres squared.

There are no toilets in the classrooms in the old building. Toilets are outside each room.

There are toilets in each classroom in the new building and prefabs. Every room has a sink.

Additional Challenges

Only one entrance/exit to the school grounds is available. Each classroom on the ground floor has an independent entrance. Each prefab has an independent entrance. Rm 11 (upstairs) is accessed through the main building.

Human Resources allocated through additional funding from DES

Aide – 2 days

Deputy Principal – 10 Leadership and Administration Days

Assumptions

School will re-open for all pupils on Monday 31st August 2020

Lead Worker Representative: Triona Barrett

Deputy Lead Worker Representative: Norah Sexton

Key facts for Parents:

COVID – 19 is a new illness that can affect the lungs and airways and is caused by a new virus called the Coronavirus.

Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets. To infect you, it has to get from an infected person's nose or mouth into your eyes, nose or mouth. This can be direct or indirect (on hands, objects, surfaces). If you come into close contact with someone who is shedding the virus and who is coughing or sneezing or if you touch - with your hands - surfaces or objects that someone who has the virus has coughed or sneezed on, and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes without having washed your hands thoroughly you may contract the virus.

As COVID-19 is a new illness, we are still learning about how easily the virus spreads from person to person and how to control it, so it is important to keep up to date and make sure you are using the most up to date guidance available. This information is available from the following links:

- HSE-HPSC: <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>
- HSE Hub: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
- Department of Health: <https://www.gov.ie/en/news/7e0924-latest-updates-on-covid-19-coronavirus/>

COVID-19 can be a mild or severe illness. Severe illness is much more common in older people (especially older than 70) and in people vulnerable for other reasons. Severe illness is much less common in children and young adults in good health. (See below)

The most common symptoms of Covid 19 are:

- Cough - this can be any kind of cough, usually dry but not always
- Fever - high temperature over 38 degrees Celsius
- Shortness of Breath
- Breathing Difficulties
- Lack of smell.

Symptomatic people appear to be most infectious for other people in the early days after symptoms begin. Infection can also spread from people in the day or two before they get symptoms and it can spread from some people who get an infection but have no symptoms or such mild symptoms that they take little notice of them (asymptomatic spread). People are no longer infectious for other people 14 days after they have developed symptoms.

Best practice for Parents and Pupils: In order to prevent the spread of the virus _

- if you have been in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms
- If you have coughed or sneezed
- if you were in contact with someone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing)
- if you have been on public transport,
- if you have been in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)
- if you have handled animals or animal waste

- If you move from one room to another room or from inside to outside areas
- If you have physical contact with a child from another group other than their own group
- if your hands are dirty
- when you arrive and leave buildings including your home or anyone else's home
- After using the toilet
- Before having a cigarette or vaping before and after eating
- Before and after preparing food
- Before and after eating your own food – breaks/lunches
- After assisting a child to use the toilet or using the toilet themselves
- After contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, spit, vomit, blood, faeces)
- After cleaning tasks

You must - Wash your hands with soap and water (which is the best method to get rid of germs) and or use a hand sanitiser

You must -Practice good respiratory hygiene: that is, when coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – discard tissue immediately into a closed bin and clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

You must - Maintain social or physical distancing: that is, leave at least 2 metres (6 feet) distance between yourself and other people where possible, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.

Must not engage in handshaking or hugging

Must avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth – if you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself. Keep your hands in good condition. Moisturise them often. Any basic product that is not perfumed or coloured is OK.

The staff will complete multiple lessons on correct hygiene, lining up, the importance of hand sanitising, staying within their pods/bubbles etc. with the children during the first weeks back in school.

Role of Parents:

It is important that parents have a clear understanding of the benefits and risk of childcare and that it is not possible to guarantee that infection can be prevented in any setting either in a childcare centre, school or in the home.

The following are protocols that are put in place to safeguard the health and safety of each other. Parents are expected to abide by them and failure to do so may result in a parent being instructed to remove a child from the school building/yard, and or to leave the school premises themselves. If serious breaches of safety measures occur, the board and or the Gardai may be informed or called if needed.

Under no circumstances is a parent to bring a child to school if -

- **if the child is exhibiting any symptoms of Covid 19-**
- **If the child has a temperature, is sneezing, coughing, who has been vomiting or has diarrhoea.**
- **If a child has been outside of the country in the 14 days prior to August 31st, they are not to attend school but must isolate**
- **If the child has been in contact with any family member and or other person who has Covid.**

Key Dates

Week beginning Monday 3rd August

Organise BOM, ISM and Staff meetings to discuss and allocate tasks (Possible tasks listed at the end of this document)

Contact PA Committee and ask for questions/concerns from the perspective of parents. These can be addressed in the BOM's final plan.

Contact the school community and inform everyone that the BOM's COvid-19 Response Plan will be published on August 18th, two weeks in advance of school re-opening.

Appoint 'Aide'

Elect Lead Worker Representative and Deputy Lead Worker Representative.

Draw up list of required PPE, etc. so that it is ready when the Procurement process opens.

Week beginning Monday 10th August

Organise BOM, ISM and Staff meetings to monitor progress against tasks.

BOM to finalise and sign COvid-19 Response Plan

Week beginning Monday 17th August

Publish Covid-19 Response Plan to school community

Organise BOM, ISM and Staff meetings to monitor progress against tasks.

Week beginning Monday 24th August

Organise BOM, ISM and Staff meetings to monitor progress against tasks.

Encourage all staff members take some time for themselves and their families this week.

Week beginning Monday 24th August

Wednesday – all SNA's & ISM team on site to finalise arrangements

Thursday & Friday- all staff on site to finalise arrangements

School opens to pupils on Monday August 31st.

Usual School Hours

9.20 – 2.00p.m. Infants

9.20 – 3.00p.m. First to Sixth

Under normal circumstances parents/guardians have access to the school yard both before and after school.

Staggered Drop Off and Collection Times

To help with reducing the amount of traffic around the school gates, children are asked to walk/cycle/scoot to school if it is at all possible

. Arrival and departure procedures for children and parents:

- **Parents must arrive on time for dropping and collecting their child.**
- Only parents or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 14 days where advised are allowed to drop off and collect children.
- Any parent who is in a high risk category should not drop off or collect children in order to protect themselves. (This of course is at the discretion of the individual parent/carer/grandparent's)
- Staggered arrival/departure times will be put in place
- Parents are not to congregate in groups or stand around chatting.
- All must leave immediately after collection.

- No parent will be allowed within the school building.
- **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.
- At arrival and departure times of children, social distancing is to be maintained by children and parents.
- Under no circumstances are parents and carers to gather in groups while waiting for the bell to sound
- Arrival and collection times will be staggered to avoid groups of parents/children congregating together

All the children in mainstream classes will enter and leave the grounds through the main gate. All pupils in Special classes will enter and leave through the staff car park.

Pupils arriving from Rathduff OOSS will go directly to their bubbles at 9:05am from Ted's Hall. They will be escorted by staff members from the OOSS. At 3pm staff members from the OOSS will collect children attending from their bubbles and escort them to Ted's Hall.

Unfortunately, it will not be possible for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before/after school. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing, the children may not come onto the school grounds before the school doors open at 9.00a.m. *(Separate, special arrangements will be put in place for our Junior Infants and their Mams and Dads at the beginning of the school year.)*

Morning:

All class teachers will be in their classrooms by 9.00a.m.

Parents are asked to 'drop and go' in the car park anytime between 9.00a.m. and 9.30a.m. **No parking will be allowed.**

Children will go directly to their classrooms on arrival. 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.

Afternoon:

(Special arrangements will be put in place for Junior Infants for the first two weeks of the school year)

From 14th September onwards:

1.50p.m. Class teachers will bring **Junior Infants** to the school gate. Mams/Dads are asked to drive in, 'pick up and go' until 2.00p.m. No parking will be allowed.

From 31st August onwards:

2.00p.m. Class teacher will bring **Senior Infants** to the school gate. Mams/Dads are asked to drive in, 'pick up and go' until 2.10p.m.

A staggered collection will be arranged from 2:40pm until 3:10pm daily for pupils from 1st-6th classes. This will be arranged alphabetically

2:40pm: All children with surnames from A-D

2:50pm: All children with surnames from E-M

3:00pm: All children with surnames from N-P

3:10pm: All remaining pupils

Bus pupils will leave with SNA's via the staff car park on station road at 3pm.

Pupils in special classes will leave via station road.

Parents who walk to the school to collect children are asked to maintain a social distance outside the school gate.

This system will apply rain, hail or shine so please make sure that your child comes to school prepared for the weather!

Summarised Timetable for Drop Off and Pick Up

9.00	All staff to be present to support arrival of pupils Class teachers to be in their classrooms SETs, SNAs and Principal to support arrival of pupils
9.05	Arrival of pupils from the OOSS
9.10 – 9.30	Arrival of pupils – Stop, Drop, Go system. No adults to enter the school yard. Children to go straight to their classrooms on arrival.
1.50	Stop, pick up go – Junior Infants
2.00	Stop, pick up, go – Senior Infants
3.00	Collection of Pupils by the staff of the OOSS from classrooms/bubbles
2.40-3:10	Stop, pick up go – First – sixth classes

Breaktimes

The DES guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

11.00-11.10 & 1:00-1:30 Junior/senior Infants (Yard in front of school-split in 3), First, second & third (middle yard-split in 3), Fifth (Yard behind old building-split in two), fourth & Sixth classes (Upper yard –split in 2)

Yard Supervision

A rota will be organised based on Class Bubbles and the SETs allocated to those classes.

Changes to Classroom and School Layout and to School Routines

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.

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class Bubble is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until the children go home at the end of the school day.

Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants

Staff members (particularly Learning Support Teachers and SNAs) can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work as far as possible, within the confines of a bubble.

- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending.

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 all pupils will be seated within Pods with a

maximum of 6 pupils per pod. As far as possible, each Pod will be at least 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 1 metre distance from the next Pod. All unnecessary furniture will be removed from these classrooms to create as much space as possible.

Corridors and Stairwells

Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.

We will observe our usual practice of keeping to the left when on the stairs and in the corridors.

Additional Measures to Limit Interactions

Children will go straight to their classrooms from the yard and will not congregate in the corridors or hallways.

While we will all be delighted to see each other again, hand shaking and hugging will not be allowed.

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 should be opened when children are singing as a group, or when they are playing musical instruments. Tin Whistles should not be shared between pupils.

Cloakrooms and Toilets

All classes will use their assigned toilets. Additional soap dispensers, paper towels and sanitiser have been installed in every toilet/room.

Lunches

Parents must 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 will eat their lunches at their desks, as per our usual practice.

Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.

Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, etc. and as far as possible should not share with other pupils.

Uniforms/Tracksuits

There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms or tracksuits should be washed every day and this is probably not practical for most families.

We will follow our usual practice in relation to uniforms and tracksuits. Uniforms should be worn every day, except on P.E. days, or when otherwise requested by teachers.

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.

Office

Children should not be sent to the Secretary's Office to deliver messages.

As far as possible, staff members should not enter the Office area.

Photocopying.

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

ICTs

A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICTs. Devices should be cleaned after use and before they are returned to the charging trolley.

Visiting Teachers/Coaches

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities such as Dancing, Coaching for games, Safe Cycling course, etc. will be explored. However, it is not recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time, for example, during music lessons.

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.

Physical Education and P.E. Equipment

Physical Education lessons will take place outside when the weather allows.

Staff members and pupils may take additional breaks outside during the school day. All classes are encouraged to participate in 'Go Noodle'.

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. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, 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.

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 Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.

Each child will be in 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.

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 Special Education Teacher, where relevant) will provide work to support the child's learning at home and this will be shared with parents/guardians.

The majority of parents have already provided an email address at which the school can contact them to support Home Learning. This will be especially important if the school, or parts of the school have to close due to HSE advice. Parents, if you have not already done so, please email us and you will be added to the Contact List for Home Learning.

Wellbeing of the School Community

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff. These are promoting:

- A sense of safety
- A sense of calm
- A sense of belonging and connectedness to school
- A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy
- A sense of hope

Our usual practice is to provide support to pupils based on what is known as the Continuum of Support. This is a tiered system that provides Whole School and Classroom Support for all pupils, additional School Support for some pupils, and School Support plus extra targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Staff members are not required to wear PPE. 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. This might include roles such as:

- Assisting with intimate care needs
- Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised as people in very high-risk groups or may be living with those who are in the very high-risk category.
- When staff members have to move between classrooms to support children with learning needs.

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment, they will apply standard precautions as per usual.

Masks

The children are not required to wear masks or face coverings.

The guidelines do not recommend that staff wear masks or face coverings as these would hide facial expressions and make communication with the children more difficult. However masks & visors will be provided to staff members who wish to wear them.

Gloves

There is no need for the children to wear disposable gloves. They are considered inappropriate under the guidelines.

Staff members do not need to wear disposable gloves unless they are looking after a pupil's intimate care needs or administering First Aid.

There will be an emphasis on hand hygiene rather than on the wearing of disposable gloves.

Hygiene and Cleaning

40 sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom.

Water, liquid soap & paper towels are available in every toilet, 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.

In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be thoroughly cleaned at least once per day. Particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

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.

Waste will be collected regularly from offices and other areas within the school.

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

Illness and Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

We love to see all of our children at school every day. However, under the current circumstances, parents/guardians must keep children at home if they display any Covid-19 Symptoms. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>

Staff must not attend school if they display any symptoms.

A designated isolation area has been created in the kitchen of the school Hall.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following procedure will be implemented:

The pupil will be accompanied to the isolation area. A distance of 2 meters will be maintained. If this is not possible, the person accompanying the child must wear a face covering.

If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by telephone. To help us in this regard, parents are asked to make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times.

Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal and go to the isolation area.

A face covering will be provided to the staff member/child who is symptomatic.

The staff member or child who is symptomatic should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.

If the staff member/child is well enough to go home, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.

Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.

If the staff member/child is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.

The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.

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 and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

It is important to remember that any of us can get sick or unwell, and if we do, we need understanding and support from those around us. It is essential that anyone who feels unwell makes that known to the Principal/Deputy Principal as soon as possible.

COVID-19 Related Absence Management

COVID-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

Teacher or SNA Absence and Substitution

If a teacher/SNA is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher/SNA for the class/pupil. If a substitute teacher/SNA is not available, it is not appropriate for the class/pupil to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes. In such circumstances, it may not be possible for the class/pupil to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

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.

Tasks Identified to Date

		Completed
Draw up and communicate the school's Covid-19 Response Plan	BOM in consultation with Staff and Parents	✓
Appoint LWR and DLWR	Staff	✓
Provide Return to Work Forms to all staff	Principal	✓
Provide links to training	Principal	✓
Complete and return RTW forms	All staff	
Complete Induction training	All staff	
Draw up list of PPE in advance of procurement process	Principal	✓
Purchase required PPE	Principal	✓

Arrange for installation of sanitising units, provision of PPE to staff and provision of cleaning materials to staff.	Caretaker	✓
Display signage	Caretaker	✓
Create Isolation Area	Caretaker	✓
Review of S,H and W Policy and Covid-19 Risk Assessment	BOM	✓
Timetable for toilets	Staff	✓
Plan for coat racks	Staff	
Agree timetable for SETs and SNAs e.g. . Keep withdrawal to a minimum. In-class support as far as possible.	SETs/SNAs/All staff	✓
Agree sanitising routines for LSTs/SNAs moving between Pods or Class Bubbles	LSTs/SNAs	✓
Provide Notes to all school staff	LWR	✓
Agree classroom layouts	All staff	✓
Timetable for ICTs and plan for sanitisation	ISM Team member	✓
Plan for provision of ICT needs to pupils in case we need to return to Home Learning	ISM Team member	✓
Staffroom – arrange for social distancing.	Staff member	✓
Organise and distribute Book Rental books to classrooms	SNA's	
Agree daily timetable to include staggered breaks	Staff	✓
Agree supervision rotas	Staff	✓
Agree and plan for morning drop off and afternoon pick up routines	Staff	✓
Plan for the possibility of remote learning if the school/part of the school is advised to close by HSE	All staff	✓
Plan for how P/T meetings, General Information Meetings might take place.	All staff	✓
Arrange cleaning and sanitisation of the building before school re-opens	BOM/Principal	✓
Plan for the management of substitutes	Principal/DP/Secretary	✓
Plan for enhanced daily cleaning routines	ISM Team member and Principal	✓
Plan for Teaching and Learning – September, October	All staff	✓
Plan for Staff and Pupil Wellbeing	BOM, ISM Team	✓

