

SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA AN DROMA
DROM NATIONAL SCHOOL

AG FÁS LE CHEILE

Covid-19 Response Plan & Policy



📍 Drom National School, Drom, Templemore.

☎ 0504 – 51688

✉ dromns@hotmail.com

💻 www.dromns.com

DECEMBER 2021

COVID-19 Policy Statement

Drom 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**
- **keep a contact log to help with contact tracing**
- **ensure staff engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education**
- **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 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), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: Fr. Martin Murphy
Chairperson to the Board of Management

Date: 2nd December 2021

School Timetable

- The school opening hours are 9.00am to 1.40pm for Infants and 9.00am to 2.40pm for all other classes.
- Supervision is provided from 8.50am to 9.00am.
- The teaching staff for 2021 – 2022 are as follows:
Junior Infants, Senior Infants & First Class: Ms. Margaret Butler
Second and Third Class: Ms. Amadean Moore-Walsh
Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Class: Ms. Sarah Dervan
Special Education Teacher (SET): Ms. Charlotte Scanlan
Special Education Teacher (SET): Ms. Felicity Murphy
CLASS Special Education Teacher (SET): Mr. Jonathan O' Connor

Dropping Off

- Upon arrival, students should enter through the gate nearest to their arrival point only when the gate area is clear and it is safe to do so.
They should then proceed directly to their designated line in the junior yard. The students will then be directed by their teacher along designated routes to their classrooms. Social distancing markers will be placed along designated routes to ensure that students do not congregate as they enter or exit the school.

Designated Routes

- Junior Infants to First Class students will enter the school via the Parent / Visitor Entrance.
- Second to Sixth Class students will enter the school via the Student Entrance.
- Students using school transport will enter the school via the bus gate and then proceed to their designated route.
- Parents / Guardians are respectfully asked not to enter the school grounds without an appointment and not to congregate along entry / exit routes to the school.
- To help to maintain social distancing, students may not come onto the school grounds before 8.50a.m. The Board of Management accepts no responsibility for students who enter the school grounds prior to this time.

Collection

- The school day will end at 1.40pm for Infants and 2.40pm for all other students.
- Class Bubbles will exit the school in their Class Pods along the designated routes listed below. Social distancing markers will be placed along

designated routes to ensure that students do not congregate as they exit the school.

Designated Routes

- Junior Infant to Third Class students will exit the school via the Parent / Visitor Entrance.
- Fourth to Sixth Class students will exit the school via the Student Entrance.
- Students from Junior Infants to Third Class will exit the school through the main gate and proceed straight to their parent / guardian. Students from Fourth to Sixth Class will exit the school through the bus gate and proceed straight to their parent / guardian. Students travelling on the school bus will exit the school through the bus gate and proceed straight to the bus. Teachers will ensure that other Class Bubbles have cleared the area in front of the school before allowing their Class Bubble to exit the school grounds.
- Parents / Guardians are respectfully asked not to congregate along entry / exit routes to the school.
- Where it is necessary to speak briefly with a member of staff, parents / guardians are asked to maintain a distance of 2m from the staff member and other members of the school community.

Break Times

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

- It is the policy of the school to supervise the school yard at all times during regular lunch breaks:
 - 11.00am – 11.10am: Children are supervised in the school yard.
 - 12.30pm – 12.35pm: Children are supervised by the class teacher in their classroom.
 - 12.35pm – 1.00pm: Children are supervised in the school yard.The supervision rota remains unchanged from previous years.
- Students, accompanied by their class teacher, will leave their Class Bubble in their Class Pods through the following routes:
 - Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class: Parent / Visitor Entrance → Straight ahead to the front of the school → Junior Yard
 - Second and Third Class: Parent / Visitor Entrance → Left around the back of school → Middle Yard
 - Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Class: Student Entrance → Right to the back of the school → Basketball court

When a class teacher is on duty, his / her class will be the first group to exit for lunch.

- Students will line up along socially distanced lines at the end of each break period and will be accompanied by their teacher along the routes listed above to their Class Bubble in their Class Pods.
- Provision will be made within the school timetable for hand hygiene and social distancing measures.
- Students will eat their lunches at their desks and continue to bring home all lunch litter in their lunch boxes. Parents / Guardians are respectfully asked

to ensure that students bring their lunches to school. Students are not permitted to share their food or drinks with other children.

Lunch boxes and reusable drinks bottles should be washed each day.

Leaving School Early / Leaving School For An Appointment

- **Parents / Guardians should inform their child's / children's class teacher with a note in the back of their Homework Journal should it be necessary for their child / children to leave early or leave for an appointment. (See Notes to / from Teacher)**
- **Parents / Guardians should collect their child / children from the Parent / Visitor entrance. Parents / guardians are asked to maintain a distance of 2m from the Parent / Visitor entrance when their child is brought to the door for collection.**
- **The student is the responsibility of their parent / guardian while away from the school.**

Changes to Room Layout and School Practices

Increasing Separation

- Classrooms have been reconfigured to maximize physical distancing. Rooms have been cleared of all unnecessary furniture.
- Students and their teachers have been structured into Class Bubbles (i.e. a class grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible) and discrete groups or “Pods” within those class bubbles.
- Where possible, we have sought to ensure that there is 1m distance between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and between individuals in the pod.
- Teachers’ desks will be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupils’ desks.

Class Bubbles are as follows:

- Junior Infants, Senior Infants & First Class
- Second and Third Class
- Fourth, Fifth & Sixth Class

Class Pods are as follows:

- Junior Infants – 1 pod with 4 students
- Senior Infants – 1 pod with 6 students
- First Class – 2 pods with 4 students in one and 3 students in the other
- Second Class – 1 pod with 6 students
- Third Class – 2 pods with 5 students in one and 4 students in the other
- Fourth Class – 1 pod with 6 students
- Fifth Class - 1 pod with 5 students
- Sixth Class – 1 pod with 6 students

Decreasing Interaction

- Teachers will seek to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles (and Pods within those Class Bubbles)
- Collaborative learning activities will be designed to take place within Class Pods.
- Sharing educational material between Pods will be avoided / minimised where possible.
- Participation in events outside of the school are temporarily paused.

- Activities involving the use of an external instructor will take place in line with the school's Covid-19 response plan and current government guidelines.
- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) will be discouraged.

Team Teaching / Special Education Teachers

- Special Education Teachers 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, support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal.
- 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.

First Aid / Intimate Care

- Appropriate PPE – mask and gloves - will be available for dealing with intimate care needs and for first aid. Teachers will be advised to wear their mask on supervision duty at break times.
- Standard First Aid and agreed Intimate Care procedures shall continue to apply. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, the school will call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

Hygiene Measures

Hygiene Measures to Avoid the Introduction of Covid-19 into the School

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above) - including having chills
- dry cough
- fatigue (tiredness)

Less common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this could mean they're completely gone or just different to normal
- nasal congestion (runny or blocked nose)
- conjunctivitis (also known as red eyes)
- sore throat
- headache
- muscle or joint pain (aches and pains)
- different types of skin rash
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhoea
- chills or dizziness

Symptoms of severe COVID - 19 disease include:

- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- loss of appetite
- confusion
- pain or pressure in the chest
- fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- Students that have symptoms of COVID-19 are advised not to attend school. Parents / Guardians are advised to phone their child's doctor and to follow HSE guidance.
- Students are advised to follow the HSE guidance if they are identified as a close contact.
- Visitors to the school during the day will be by prior arrangement only and will be received at the Parent / Visitor entrance only. Physical distancing of 2 metres will be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.
Visitors to the school are required to wear a mask at all times.

Cleaning

- The school setting will be cleaned at least once per day. Additional cleaning will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities. There

will be a daily collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility. See School Equipment and Materials for further details.

Respiratory Hygiene

- We will promote good respiratory hygiene and posters will be displayed throughout the school on how to maintain good respiratory hygiene.
- Students will be asked to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their bent elbow when they cough or sneeze. They must then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.
- Students will be asked to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Foot operated pedal bins are provided in all classrooms, in the staff room, in the office and at entrances and exits for the disposal of tissues

Hand Hygiene

- We will promote and demonstrate good hand hygiene to students. Laminated posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing will be placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities.
- Wash hand basins, cold running water, liquid soap dispensers and hand drying facilities in the form of disposable paper towels or hot air hand dryers are provided in all toilets, mainstream classrooms and in the staff room. Hand washing facilities will be maintained in good condition and supplies will be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them.
- Foot operated pedal bins are provided in all classrooms, in the staff room, in the office and at entrances and exits for the disposal of paper towels.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers are provided at entry and exit points to the school, in each classroom and in the staff room. Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser.

Students will perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school
- Before eating or drinking
- After using the toilet
- After playing outdoors
- When their hands are physically dirty
- When they cough or sneeze
- After handling shared materials and equipment

Face Masks and Face Coverings

- Teachers and staff will wear a face-covering when a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff or children cannot be maintained.
- **It is not recommended that children from Junior Infants to Second Class in primary school wear face-coverings. From 1st December 2021, students**

from Third to Sixth Class are required to wear face masks / coverings in school.

Exemptions

The following categories of children are exempt on medical grounds from wearing face masks/coverings; the categories include:

- any pupil with difficulty breathing or other relevant medical conditions
- any pupil who is unable to remove the cloth face mask/covering or visor without assistance
- any pupil who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the cloth face mask/covering or visor, for example pupils with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

Where the school is aware, having consulted with the parent/guardian, that a child's needs are such that mask-wearing is not appropriate, no medical certification is needed.

Doors and Windows

- Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces.
- Windows will 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.
- Classrooms will also be ventilated when students are singing and when they are playing musical instruments. Tin Whistles not be shared between pupils.
- Note: Singing and tin whistle are temporarily paused until the end of Term 1.

School Equipment and Materials

Personal Items

- Students are not permitted to share their personal items with others:
 - Stationary
 - Text Books
 - Copybooks
 - Tin Whistles
 - Helmets and hurling sticks
 - Lunch Items

- We continue to encourage students to label all personal items with their name. Parents / Guardians are asked to ensure that all books and copybooks are covered with a plastic cover.

Learning Resources

- Students will be provided with individual learning resources where possible. Where this is not possible, resources will be provided to individual pods within classroom bubbles.
- Students will assist with distributing learning resources to and collecting learning resources from the students in their pod only. Students will perform hand hygiene before and after assisting with the distribution or collection of learning resources.
- Students will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.
- Resources will be placed at the back of each classroom after use and sanitized or cleaned and sanitized if visibly dirty between uses. Resources will be returned to central storage areas after sanitizing / cleaning only.

Art

- Students will be provided with individual art materials where possible. Each classroom will be provided with sufficient scissors and paint brushes for each child.
- Where it is not possible to provide each child with their own art materials, materials will be provided to individual pods within classroom bubbles.
- Students will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.
- If suitable for cleaning, shared materials will be cleaned by the members of each pod in line with social distancing guidelines and then cleaned by the classroom teacher using hot water or in the dishwasher before being stored, ready for re-use.

Sports Equipment

- Classroom teachers and coaches will seek to minimise equipment sharing.
- Where it is not possible to provide each child with their own piece of equipment, equipment will be provided to individual pods within classroom bubbles.
- Students will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned between uses.

Electronics

- A timetable for the use of the school iPads will be drawn up.
- Shared electronics such as tablets, touch screens and keyboards will be cleaned between use.
- Students will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Library / Guided Reading Books

- Library books which are used in the classroom or school library setting can be returned to the shelf and made available again without any delay.
- Students will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Toys

- All toys will be cleaned after each use using anti-bacterial wipes or spray by the class teacher. Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or body fluids will be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.
- 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.
- The manufacturer's cleaning instructions should always be followed.
- Soft modelling materials and play dough where used should be for individual use only

Uniforms/Tracksuits

- The usual practice in relation to uniforms and tracksuits will be followed. Uniforms will be worn every day, except on P.E. days, or when otherwise requested by teachers. It is advised that school uniforms should be washed regularly.
- Students are advised that they should wear their school uniforms or tracksuits only for school related activities and to change out of their school uniform as soon as possible after school. Uniforms should not be worn in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

Money

- Parents / Guardians are asked to place all money in a paper envelope with their child / children's name on it.

Appointments

At Drom National School, we believe it is vitally important for teachers and parents to work together. Therefore, should you have any concerns regarding your child / children, please contact the school to arrange a meeting with your child / children's teacher.

Parents / Guardians are asked to:

- **Make a prior appointment before meeting with a teacher**
- **Remain at home if they have any Covid-19 symptoms**
- **Follow the agreed Covid-19 protocols for the school**
- **Wear a mask**
- **Sanitise before entering the premises**
- **Complete the Contract Tracing Form**
- **Adhere to social distancing requirements**

Teaching and Learning

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 using the Seesaw App.

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 students 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.

Illness and Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

Parents/guardians must keep children at home if they display any Covid-19 Symptoms. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>

Isolation Area

- The corridor linking the 1958 area to the 2011 area of the school is the designated isolation area. The second special education room will be used in the event of additional cases
- The following will be available in each of the isolation areas:
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Disinfectant/wipes
 - Gloves/Masks
 - Waste Bags
 - Bin

Isolating a Student

If a student displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following procedures will be implemented:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and asked to make arrangements to have their child collected from the school as soon as possible.
- Parents / guardians will be asked to provide the school with the name and contact details of a person who can collect their child in the event that they are unable to do so.
- The student will be isolated and accompanied by the class teacher to the designated isolation area via the isolation route. The Special Education Teacher will supervise any class left unattended in the event that the class teacher has to accompany a symptomatic student to the designated isolation area.
- The teacher accompanying a symptomatic student to the isolation area will keep at least 2 metres away from them and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic student at all times
- If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2 metres, a staff member caring for a student will wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin.
- The student presenting with symptoms will be provided with a mask. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.

Arranging for the Affected Student to Leave the School

In arranging for the affected student to leave the school the following procedures will be implemented:

- If the student who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by their parents / guardians, their parents / guardians will be advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their child's symptoms and continue self-isolation at home.
- The student presenting with symptoms will be facilitated in remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home. The student should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Students will be advised 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.
- Public transport of any kind should not be used.

Follow-Up

- The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.
- 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 student confidentiality is essential at all times.

Antigen Testing

From 29 November 2021, if a parent or guardian receives a positive (detected) PCR COVID-19 test result for their child, they are asked to contact the principal immediately to let her know on (0504) 51688.

The principal will then inform you, that she will be contacting the parents of the other children in your child's pod, to give them details of how they can order free antigen tests for their children using a Freephone number. The principal will not share any personal information relating to any other child with parents.

Antigen tests are potentially an extra measure to help protect against transmission of COVID-19 (coronavirus). You do the tests yourself at home. The test sample does not have to go to a lab. You usually get your results in 15 minutes.

If just one pod is involved, only the children in this pod will be offered antigen tests. If there are two pods with separate confirmed cases of COVID-19, then

parents or guardians of children in the whole class will be contacted and provided with the information on how they can request antigen tests.

You will need to provide your child's name and home address together with the school's roll number, which will be provided by the school when contacting the Freephone number to order the test.

These tests will be delivered free of charge directly to you at your home address and the child's parent can decide if you want to do the tests. The HSE has prepared instructions and a video for parents. Full details will be in the antigen test pack.

The HSE advises that parents/guardians should carry out the first antigen test for their child on the day that they receive the test kit, they should do a second test 2 days later, and a third test 2 days after that.

The children in the pod of the confirmed COVID-19 case can continue to attend school as long as they have no symptoms and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test result (antigen or PCR). If at any time, your child develops symptoms they should isolate at home and you should book a COVID-19 PCR test for them. Do this even if the antigen test has a negative (not detected) result.

If an antigen test is positive, it is important that your child isolates at home and that you book a COVID-19 PCR test online at the HSE test portal.

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

COVER YOUR COUGH AND SNEEZE



Stop the spread of germs that make people sick



When you cough or sneeze
cover your nose and mouth
with a tissue



or

Cough or sneeze into your
elbow, not your hands.



Throw away your tissue!

Clean your hands after
coughing or sneezing.

Thanks!



Building a
Better Health
Service

Seirbhís Sláinte
Níós Fearr
& Foirfe



Handwashing Technique

