

Scoil Mhuire, Horeswood
COVID-19- Measures for a Safe Return to School
Parent Bulletin 2

Please see the following additional information for parents regarding a safe return to school. The information below clarifies or is in addition to information supplied in our initial correspondence.

School Bus

- The school buses will arrive as normal and children travelling on the school bus must adhere to Bus Éireann guidelines.
- On arrival at the school the children will alight from their bus and **walk** to their designated entry point. (See below)
- Older siblings may walk with their younger brother or sister to the relevant external door and drop them off there, but cannot enter the school there.
- Pupils can only enter and exit the school using their designated entry point.
- If two buses arrive at the same time, the first bus in the car park will allow all pupils off the bus.
- The second bus will wait in the car park and only will allow pupils to leave the bus once the first bus has emptied. Children must remain in their seats at all times if waiting for children to leave another bus. Please inform your child of this new procedure.

Entry to School

There are 4 designated entry points. Children from the classes listed below will enter the school at these points

Point 1: Bottom door exit to playground

Junior Infants
Senior Infants

Point 2: Door at back gate

1st Class
2nd Class
2nd & 3rd Class

Point 3: Door at 4th Class Room

3rd Class
4th Class
4th Class

Point 4: Door at 6th Class Room

5th Class
5th & 6th Class
6th Class

- As outlined in the previous information bulletin, children will be dismissed from these points also, **except for Senior Infants** who will be dismissed from the door at the back gate.
- Parents of Junior and Senior Infants, please see the Information Sheet for Infant parents on the website. They will be notified of their child's colour group by **text message** on Monday, August 24th. Procedures for the first day in school for Junior Infants will be sent to parents on Monday also.

Classroom Information

- Children will remain in their assigned seats on arrival to school.
- Their belongings must be clearly labelled, and not shared with others.
- Children can hang their coats on the back of their chair.
- Parents are asked to provide a small plastic box/basket for their child's books in school.
- Children will use one copy for all subjects each day. They will complete any written homework in this copy also and will return the copy to school the following day. These copies will be stored in a sealed container for 72 hours before being marked.
- Handwashing and sanitising will all be explicitly taught in each class.
- It is hoped in conjunction with financial support from our Parents Association and the support of our parent body that we can further enhance our outdoor classroom to comply with social distancing requirements and to make additional use of what will now be an excellent resource.

Lunches

- Fresh Today will continue to deliver school lunches as normal.
- Water bottles will be sent home the first day back in school. Please send in a drink with your child on the first day.
- Parents are asked to fill your child's water bottle each morning before coming to school.
- Please clearly label all water bottles.

Uniform

- Uniform will be worn as normal.
- Parents are asked however, to please ensure that children take off their uniform immediately after going home.
- We have not been advised by the DES to insist on washing uniforms daily. Should this advice be issued we will update parents accordingly.

Visitors to the school

- Unfortunately, many of the really worthwhile initiatives that the school has provided for children over the past number of years will now not take place.
- Our school band and choir is not operational for the foreseeable future.

- Other activities such as Cycle Right, Music Generation, Drama, Modern Dance, Irish Dancing, Tag Rugby and Hurling 365 will not take place for the moment.

Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs

- Providing a structured and safe return to school for all pupils is very important, but in particular for pupils with SEN.
- SEN staff will be allocated to pupils as normal, being split between the junior and senior end of the school and working mainly in these classes where possible.
- SNA staff will also be allocated to pupils as normal.

Other important information

- Parents are requested to please observe social distancing at all times when on the school grounds.
- A cleaning plan and additional cleaning staff have been appointed by the Board of Management of the school to ensure the safety of children and staff.
- Masks or visors will be worn by staff in the school as per the DES guidelines.
- Please inform the school in writing of any child who cannot return to school due to a medical condition that would place them in the very high risk category. Provision can be made in exceptional circumstances to provide educational support for these pupils.
- If children display symptoms of COVID-19 and are isolated and sent home, they can only return to school on the advice of their GP/HSE.
- Children who are unwell should not be sent to school under any circumstances.

Reminder to anyone attending school who has travelled abroad:

- Government policy, which is based on official public health advice, continues to advise against non-essential travel overseas for everyone.
- **It is a requirement for anyone coming into Ireland, from locations other than those with a rating of 'normal precautions' ("green"), to restrict their movements for 14 days, and this includes school staff, parents and children or other students coming from abroad to attend school in Ireland.**
- Restricting your movements means staying indoors in one location and avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible.

It is very important to note that the Scoil Mhuire is doing it's very best to follow the guidelines and implement the recommended procedures laid down by the Department of Education and Skills.

We ask for your patience and your understanding over the coming weeks as we implement the very different rules and protocols in the school.

We assure you that the children are at the centre of all our decisions and we will be positive about returning to school.

As you are aware this is a challenging and anxious time for parents and for staff.

Working together is what will see us through this. There is no definite right or wrong answer to many aspects of what we face. We do ask however, that you as parents work with us and understand we are working very hard to try to ensure that returning to school works, and everyone is as safe as possible.

I wish you all the very best and look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Thursday, August 27th.

Le dea-ghuí,

Brian Flood
Principal.