



St. Clare's N.S. Ballyjamesduff

Covid-19 Newsletter

September 2020



Welcome Back: We are delighted to reopen and welcome back all our wonderful boys and girls to St. Clare's N.S. Reopening the school following a lengthy closure was a mammoth task. The children are so good and are following all our guidelines and all the things that have become "our new normal". This newsletter will give you an idea of what we have been up to since we returned to school. It will also recap on procedures and practices in relation to Covid19.

Attending School and Covid 19

Your child can attend school if:

- They have a runny nose or sneeze.
- If they do not have a cough.
- If they have not been in close contact with a confirmed case.
- If their temperature is below 38c on three consequent checks.

Children cannot attend school if:

- They have a temperature of 38c or above.
- If they have a cough/shortness of breath/loss of taste or smell.
- If they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid 19.
- If they have travelled to a country not on the Green List.
- If they are living in a home where a family member has been referred for a test or awaiting a test result.
- If they have been advised by their GP not to attend.

What to do if your child has Covid-19 symptoms:

- Isolate your child by keeping them at home until they have been clear of symptoms for 48 hours.
- Contact your GP for advice.
- All other occupants of the home should restrict their movements until after the child is given a diagnosis by a doctor or had the Covid test result.

If your child presents with symptoms while at school:

- Your child will be moved to our Wellness room.
- They will be asked to wear a face mask and refrain from touching surfaces etc.
- Parents will be contacted to come to the school immediately to collect your child.
- Parents will have to contact the G.P.
- Parents are requested to keep the school informed of any further action (Covid testing/result etc.)

How St. Clare's N.S. is a little different

- Children are now arriving and departing school at 5 different times each day.
- We are following a drop and go system. Please drop your child at the designated time only and refrain from standing or parking in the drop-off area. Your child/ren will proceed straight into the school at their designated time.
- We have installed sanitising stations at all entry and exit points and common areas within the building. Each classroom has a sanitising station, access to hot water and hand washing facilities, paper towels will be used for the foreseeable future in all classrooms.
- We have created a Covid notice board for the pupils and our teachers are constantly working with the children to ensure procedures and proper etiquette is followed within the school.
- Classes have been divided into pods. Class bubbles are not mixing with each other.
- Children have been provided with storage boxes for all their personal belongings.
- Lunch time is staggered and class bubbles are playing with their class only on the yard.
- Social distancing is practiced and encouraged in as best means as practical and space permitting.
- All staff have completed Covid training.
- We have appointed a Lead and Deputy Lead Covid Officer.
- We have formulated a Covid Response Plan, Risk Assessment, Contact Tracing Log and a Covid Policy Statement.

Curriculum: Our teachers are very mindful about the adjustment the return to school has on our pupils. Children have been out of school since March and while online learning was offered, we know that this is no substitution for the real thing! St. Clare's N.S. will be offering a reduced curriculum as per Department Guidelines. Children's learning will be prioritised in English, Irish, Maths, PE, SPHE and Wellbeing. Other curriculum areas will be covered but a greater emphasis will be placed on the subjects listed above.

Extracurricular Activities: In an effort to have our school week as normal as possible we hope to restart some of our extracurricular activities in the coming weeks. Children who have paid for activities during the last academic year will be prioritised. We will then have some of our other classes participate. Our visiting coaches will be following all procedures and guidelines. Equipment will be sanitised and we will be offering the activities on a reduced scale with limited classes taking part on a particular day.

Useful links:

- <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/73ed20-covid-19-coronavirus-information-for-parents/>
- <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/covid-19-schools-and-parents-resources/>
- <https://www.parentsplus.ie/post/resources-for-individuals-families-and-parents-during-covid-19-crisis/>
- School Website: <https://scnsbid.com/>
- School Social Media: @stclarensballyjamesduff (Instagram)
St Clare's NS Ballyjamesduff (Facebook)

Homework: As a school we have decided to refrain from sending work home for the first few weeks. We feel this will facilitate pupils to settle back into a school routine and help parents adjust too! Our homework policy will be reviewed at our staff meeting at the end of September.

Contacts: Now more than ever we need to ensure we have current and up to date contact information for parents. If you have changed your phone number it's vital you email the school with your name, new number, child/ren's name and class. We will also be communicating with you via email. Please ensure you check your spam folder and contact the school if you are not receiving emails.

Plan B! In the event of our school having to close again or particular bubbles/classes having to self-isolate, we will be setting up our online classroom in the coming days. Parents will receive an activation code via email on Monday, 21st September. Further details will be provided on the email.

Thanks: Once again I wish to reiterate my thanks to everyone who have supported us with our re-opening. We are delighted to have our staff and pupils back. St. Clare's N.S. is a much brighter and happy place when it is full of children. Let's continue to work together to ensure we are all safe and well and that our school can remain open.

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Karl Mc Cartin
Principal

