

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

ST. ATTRACTA'S JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

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REVISED COVID 19 RESPONSE PLAN ST ATTRACTAS JNS

20th September 2021

This Response Plan revises and updates the plan adopted by the Board of Management for the opening of St Attracta's JNS on August 27th 2020, and complies with current DES guidelines which were issued to schools on Wednesday 23rd February 2021 and on 18th August 2021. Further updates will be made in line with DES guidelines over the course of the 2021/22 school year.

Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make an effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – children, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.
- Assuming it is in keeping with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills and NPHET, it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week and for a full school day. This plan has been formulated to achieve that aim.
- It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the cooperation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread.
- As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented.

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Return to Work/Education Declarations

A Return to Work Declaration Form for staff, and a Return to Education Declaration form for pupils should be completed as follows **prior** to the reopening of St Attractas JNS on Friday 27th August 2021:

- All staff members will be required to complete a Return to Workplace Declaration form prior to their return to work not later than 3pm on Friday 27th August 2021. Staff will also have to confirm verbally or in writing that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.
- Return to Education Facility Declarations may be required for children as the Board determines over the course of the school year.

Assumptions

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system i.e. each individual class will operate as a single unit and will not mix with other classes
- School will open for all classes as normal at 8 50 am and will close at 1 30p.m for infant classes and 2 30p.m for first and second classes. Each separate class (bubble) will enter and exit through the exterior door of their own classroom when arriving and leaving school.
- The day will include 2 breaks which will be staggered to ensure compliance with social distancing.

Since it is recognised that social distancing is difficult to implement in junior classes, explicit social distancing will not apply. However the children will be placed in groups of six or less within their own classrooms (as is normal classroom practice in the school currently) and a distance between groups of at least one metre will be maintained if feasible. While the children will be encouraged to remain at their own group throughout the day, it is recognised that given their age a level of flexibility will have to be employed.

Handwashing/Sanitizing:

- Parents are asked to ensure that the children have washed and sanitized their hands before coming to school every morning.
- Children will be explicitly taught how to wash and to sanitize their hands by their class teacher or where applicable by an SNA:
- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all classes and support rooms, but parents also have the discretion to provide their child with their own personal hand sanitizer. Hands will be sanitized:

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- At the start of the school day
 - Before and after break times
 - Prior to going home
 - Following visits to the toilets
 - And at any other period in the day that is deemed appropriate using the classroom sanitiser e.g if hands are soiled following sporting, gardening, art activities.
- Teachers and SNA (where applicable) will also explicitly teach appropriate hand washing practices as per HSE advice. Children will be reminded to wash hands:
 - Before and after eating food
 - After using toilets
 - When hands are dirty
 - Before and after wearing gloves if appropriate
 - Before and after using public transport
 - Before leaving home
 - Upon their arrival at school
 - After touching potentially contaminated surfaces
 - If in contact with someone displaying COVID- 19 symptoms
 - Staff are advised that alcohol based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame

Coughing/Sneezing

Explicit teaching of appropriate (protocols surrounding coughing/sneezing will be taught by teachers and SNAs (where applicable). Children will be taught:

- How to cover a cough or a sneeze cough into the elbow
- To use a tissue and dispose of it immediately in the bin provided or in the toilet
- To wash/sanitize hands following episodes of coughing and sneezing

Routine for a typical school day:

Key to Entrances & Exits

- The children will enter and leave the school premises using the normal routes. However a one way system will operate at each entrance. These will be signed in the days prior to our return to school and parents/guardians are asked to visit the school grounds with their children to identify these entry/exit routes.

Entrance & Exit Points for Specific Classes

All classes will enter and exit the school through the existing exterior classroom doors. Each door will be clearly labelled with the class teacher's name.

Arrival at school

- Teachers and SNAs will be in their classrooms from 8 40 to carry out any 'final checks' that might be necessary before children are admitted to classrooms
- Exterior Classroom doors will be opened at 8 50 am sharp every day, ***including wet days***

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- Each group should aim to arrive at the school as close as possible to 8 50am. However in order to avoid large groups congregating at the same time, classroom doors will be open from **8 50 until 9 am** to receive children.
- We ask for co-operation with these times as it will mean that the numbers congregating on school grounds at any one time will be minimised.
- Staff will supervise the yard to ensure groups do not congregate
- Each child should go directly to his/her own classroom and avoid playing with other children in the yard/on patios - in order to discourage play on the yard or patio areas before school starts, parents are advised to bring their children onto the school grounds as close as possible to 8 50 am, and if they are accompanying their child to the classroom door they must keep him/her by their side at all times.
- Where children arrive unaccompanied they must line up outside their own classroom door until the teacher opens it at 8 50.
- Parents of **First** and **Second class** children may consider allowing their children to go to their classroom unaccompanied from the school gates to encourage independence, as well as to reduce the potential for large groups of parents congregating outside class doors.
- Adults/older teenagers who accompany the children onto the school **must** wear **face masks**- *parents are asked to inform child minders of this requirement*
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
- 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 if necessary.
- Messages for teachers can be sent by email, or by phoning the school office.
- Children are encouraged to walk/cycle/scoot to school if at all possible

End of School Day

At the end of the school day following arrangements will apply –

- Adults, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day, should wait outside the exterior class doors as normal.
- Again, we encourage just **one** adult to collect, and advise that they arrive outside the classroom door no sooner than 1.30p.m in the case of infant classes and 2.30p.m for first and second classes.

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- Adults who arrive to collect children must comply with social distancing protocols of **2 metres** and they **must** wear face masks while waiting outside classroom doors.
- As is currently the case, children from first and second classes are allowed to leave the school unaccompanied provided that an email notification has been received by the class teacher.
- The class teacher will display a list of children who can leave the classroom by themselves, beside the exterior classroom door in case there is a substitute teacher in the classroom on a particular day.

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 adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so
- Adults collecting children are asked to maintain appropriate social distancing protocols.
- If for any reason they are entering the building they must hand sanitise, and must wear a mask when engaging with a member of school staff
- Children **cannot** be collected from the school during break/yard times-they should be collected at least 10 minutes before or after a school break

School Hours:

Junior/Senior Infant Hours: 8 50 am to 13 30pm

First/Second Class Hours: 8 50 to 14 30 inclusive. Thereafter home time will be 14 30

Meetings with Parents/Outside Professional:

- Meeting with Parents and outside Professionals who working with children will take place via Zoom, Microsoft Meets by telephone and in exceptional or sensitive cases on a face to face basis

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- Face to face meetings will be limited to 15 minutes in duration, they will be socially distanced, mask wearing will be required and surfaces will be cleaned at the end of the meeting. A contact tracing log will be completed for any such meeting.

Breaktimes/Yard

- The DES guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas are low. The children will go to the yard twice a day for two 15 minute breaks.
- The yard will be divided into sections so that each class (bubble) will have their own defined space in which to play.
- They will be supervised by class teachers or the learning support teachers and SNA's working within the class bubbles.
- Yard will be supervised by class teachers, learning support teachers.
- In so far that it is safe to do so classes will access the yard via their external door where possible. In the cases where this doesn't apply the children will be led by a member of school personnel to the yard via the school hall.
- Children will have an opportunity to explore their 'yard space' in the company of their own teacher and SNA (if applicable) prior to being brought to the yard along with the other classes in their stream.

Yard Supervision

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

- Class teachers - Junior Infants, Second Classes, SETs allocated to those classes to work together
- Class teachers- Senior Infants and First and SETs allocated to those classes to work together
- Three teachers (together with relevant SNAs) will supervise break times
- The children will go to the yard twice a day for two 15 minute breaks. Each stream will have their own 15 minute period in the yard, before being replaced by the next stream over the course of an hour.
- The yard will be divided into sections so that each class (bubble) will have their own defined space in which to play. Hearty congratulations

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- It is essential that staff have the children ready to go to the yard promptly when the 'bips' sound, and that supervising staff are waiting in the yard to receive the children.

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.
- While it is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors, every effort will be made to maintain a physical distance within their Class Bubble.
- However the children will be organised in pods of 6 or less within their own classroom. Where possible a distance of at least 1 metre will be observed between pods. Similarly the teacher's desk will be positioned 2 metres from those of the children.

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 wearing masks and 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.
- Support teachers will collect and return children to their classrooms before and following SET teaching

The School Hall

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Where the school hall is used for Physical Education or for any other gatherings e.g. staff breaks windows/doors will be opened for the duration. For the present, it will continue to be used as additional storage space for classroom furniture and for storage of P.E. equipment.

Assemblies/Announcements

School Assemblies will be held via Zoom or announcements through the intercom system.

Corridors

- 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. Because every class has an exterior classroom door movement among children in corridors will be minimal.
- Adults moving through corridors will observe the practice of keeping to the left when passing through 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. Coats will be hung on corridor as usual. However a strict rotation will ensure that children or staff from each bubble will meet when coats are being hung out or collected.
- While we will all be delighted to see each other again, hand shaking and hugging will not be allowed.

Toilets

- Since all classrooms have en-suite toilet facilities children will only use toilets in their own classroom. Children must use the toilet before going to the yard. All toilets are fitted with soap dispensers and hand dryers.
- Children (with the exception of those with SEN) should be able to self-toilet
- Parents are asked to consider sending a change of underwear and a pair of track suit bottoms in a labelled (Zip Lock Bag) in your child's school bag should he/she have a toileting accident.
- School staff (e.g. SNAs who assist with toileting will be provided with appropriate PPE including, masks, visors, gloves, aprons)
- ***Please note that school staff cannot change children who have soiling accidents and parents/guardians will be called immediately***

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Staff Toilets:

Staff will use the toilet facilities in:

- The main Foyer
- The Library
- Staff toilet on the Left Hand Side off the main hall (Toilet on the RHS will be used as an isolation area)
- A classroom toilet within their own bubble

Lunches- Children

- Mams and Dads must make sure that children bring their lunches to school to avoid adults having to come to the school during the day. Children need to be reminded not to share food or drinks with other children. Please ensure that your child can open and close lunch boxes and water bottles as well as food packaging e.g. cheese strings. Children should not bring 'Frubes' (they tend to destroy clothes) or nuts, and products containing nuts to school as part of their lunches. Ideally fruit should be peeled and chopped if necessary.
- Children will eat their lunches at their desks.

Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.

- As far as possible children should not share school items with other pupils. We ask that every child has his/her own pencil case containing a selection of 'twistables' from the start of the school year. Pencil cases will be kept in school to avoid items being brought to and from school. The school will provide pencils, scissor, white board markers, glue sticks etc. for each child. Parents are asked to label their children's personal belongings either with the child's name or a distinguishing mark if the child is unable to recognise his/her name.

Homework:

- Homework will be limited to revising basic skill e.g. sounds, sight words, reading etc. with limited emphasis on written tasks. As the weeks progress, we will review our approach as the developing needs of the children emerge. The Seesaw App will be used for some homework assignments.

Shared/Spaces and Equipment:

Library:

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- The school library will be out of bounds while Covid-19 restrictions are in place. Instead staff will direct parents to online options that they might consider as appropriate to the child's reading ability

CAPER:

- CAPER lies at the heart of the literacy programme in St. Attracta's JNS. CAPER books will be stored for 72 hours when returned to the school before they can be borrowed again. In addition staff will advise parents on appropriate supplementary reading materials appropriate to the child's level of ability that can be accessed on line or bought privately.

Uniforms

- There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms should be washed every day and this is probably not practical for most families. It is therefore at the discretion of each parent/guardian how often a uniform is worn to school.
- We will follow our usual practice in relation to uniforms. Uniforms should be worn every day, with runners on P.E. days, or when otherwise requested by teachers.
- As a school we strongly advise that children should wear their school uniforms only **for school related activities.** Uniforms 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. **Please label items of clothing- in particular coats, cardigans and jumpers.**

Office

- An online payment system has been set up to minimise the amount of cash that needs to be handled. Parents/Guardians are asked to co-operate in helping to keep school staff safe by arranging for contactless payments through the school office.
- Children should not be sent to the Secretary's Office or to the Reception area to deliver messages.
- As far as possible, a maximum of 2 staff members should access the office at once. Staff should speak with the Secretary at the Reception area.

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Photocopying/Staff Room computer.

- Staff are advised to not to use the computer in the staff room and to collect printed items immediately. In advance of using photocopiers or printers staff should sanitize their hands. Copiers/Printers should then be cleaned down with the wipes provided.

ICT Equipment

- By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, laptops and the equipment used for structured activities and play in Infant classrooms. Cleaning of such shared equipment with alcohol wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection. A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICTs. Children will not be allowed touch interactive boards.

Visiting Teachers/Coaches

- Extra-curricular activities such as Dance, GAA coaching, Ukelele classes will not resume until the Board of Management is satisfied that based on Public Health Advice, it is safe to do so.

Substitute Teachers and SNAs and student teachers on placement

- 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. Teachers are advised to keep several items of PE equipment in their classroom for PE lessons, and to leave it for 72 hours before returning it to the storage area behind the curtains. Where possible items (e.g. hoops should be sanitized before they are returned to the storage area)
- Staff members and pupils may take additional breaks outside during the school day. All classes are encouraged to participate in 'The Burke Run' at least one per day.

Science/Maths/ IT Resources:

- Science and Maths equipment that is borrowed from the Equipment/Strong Room should be sanitized/washed before it is returned.

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Educational Games:

- Teachers are encouraged to have an adequate amount of educational games to minimise sharing of games and activities among class groups. Where possible items should be sanitized or washed at 60 degrees, and dried after use. The use of soft toys is discouraged.

Teaching and Learning

- As a staff, we are very aware that the children have missed a considerable of school time since March 2019. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning during lockdown periods, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.
- Some children will be 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 for the remainder of the 2021/2022 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.
- Emphasis will be place on Literacy, Numeracy, Physical Education, and supporting the Wellbeing of pupils

Learning Support

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach which will be predominantly on a withdrawal basis, with very limited in-class support. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work within the confines of a bubble. Learning Support Staff will be assigned a stream with which they will work for the duration of the Covid 19 restrictions.

- Only children from the same class (bubble) will be taken to the Learning Support Room together
- Books which are borrowed from the LS rooms will be stored in a sealed box for 72 hours and sanitized before being used by another child
- Where staff have to move between bubbles, appropriate hygiene protocols will be followed

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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 an overview of work to support the child's learning at home, that 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.

The 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)

- All staff members are required to wear masks, unless they are precluded from doing so for medical reasons. Medical grade masks in the EN16483 and FFP2* category will be provided to staff who by necessity need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs. Visors may also need to be worn in such instances. Additional PPE, including gloves and aprons 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

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- 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.

First Aid:

- The current procedures will apply if children have playground accidents. Very minor cuts and bruises will be dealt with by the class teacher at the end of break time. When more serious incidents occur the class teacher who will be called to attend to the child immediately, will form a judgement as to whether to notify parents or not.

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.
- Where gloves are worn, hands must be sanitized beforehand.

Hygiene and Cleaning

- Hand sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom. All staff members are advised to sanitize their hands upon their arrival to and departure from school. Likewise children's hands are sanitized upon arrival and departure.
- Water and soap is available in all of the toilets throughout the school building.
- Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.
- Following 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,

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handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities. A written cleaning schedule is in place for cleaning staff, and a cleaning check-list completed daily.

- Rooms will be 'Fogged' with disinfectant spray on a regular basis and immediately following suspected or confirmed Covid 19 outbreaks.
- 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 or bring them home (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)
- Co2 monitors installed in all classrooms
- HEPA filters installed in all mainstream classrooms from 20th December 2021**

Physical Distancing:

- Staff are advised to maintain a physical distance of two metres insofar that this is practicable when interacting with other staff, pupils and parents. Likewise parents are advised to maintain a physical distance from other adults/children on the school grounds at delivery and collection times, and to leave the grounds promptly- Staff will supervise the school grounds at delivery and collection times to monitor and enforce this protocol.

Visitors/Deliveries to the School

- Visits to the school will be severely restricted and visitors will be asked to:
 - Make a prior appointment before visiting the school
 - Remain at home if they have any Covid-19 symptoms
 - Follow the agreed Covid-19 protocols for the school
 - Sanitise before entering the premises
 - Attendance to be recorded on entry to building
 - Wear PPE
 - Adhere to social distancing requirements
 - Not to loiter – complete their business and leave premises

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- Fill in contact tracing details
- Where possible arrange meeting via Microsoft Teams, Zoom or by telephone

Staffroom/Communal Areas

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 or photocopying room and arriving to work.

- Staff members should bring their pre-prepared lunches, and drink to school and avoid sharing utensils from the kitchen as far as possible. Staff breaks will take place in the hall and staff room, with social distancing of 2 metres being observed.
- Staff meetings/staff sub-committee meetings/SET planning meetings will be held in the hall to facilitate physical distancing.

Ventilation:

- In line with public health advice 'Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools' the following protocols will apply in St Attractas JNS
- To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will remain open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break times) and also at the end of the school day. Exterior doors will be kept open as often as possible ***if it is deemed safe to do so.***
- Where ***practical and safe,*** all internal doors will also be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces.
- CO2 monitors will be deployed as per DES guidance

Infection Prevention Control Measures - To prevent introduction and spread of Covid-19 in schools:

- Under the current circumstances, **staff and children at home must stay at home** if they display any Covid-19 Symptoms.
<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>
 - Staff and pupils must self- isolate or restrict their movements at home and contact their family doctor to arrange a test.

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- Staff and pupils are not to attend school in the event of the following:
 - If they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19 (except in the case of those who are fully vaccinated and symptom free)
 - If they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus (except in the case of those who are fully vaccinated and symptom free)
 - If they have travelled outside of Ireland- if having consulted government advice on international travel, they are advised to self-isolate <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/77952-government-advice-on-international-travel/>
 - Staff and parents of pupils are advised to co-operate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school
 - Staff must undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

Illness and Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

- Staff are encouraged to download the HSE Covid-19 tracker App to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting
- A designated isolation area has been created in the **toilet area adjoining 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, Mams and Dads 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.

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- 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.
- While in normal circumstances parents often ask staff to 'keep an eye' on a child who may have been unwell prior to coming to school or on the previous evening, such requests will not be entertained and the child will not be admitted to the school

COVID-19 Related Absence Management

- COVID-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the DES (details of which have been distributed to all staff members).

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.

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- 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.

Final Message:

We all want to come back to school safely and to enjoy a safe and healthy school experience for the months ahead. To help make this to happen parents and guardians and staff are asked to cooperate with the BOM by ensuring that:


- Every child/adult coming to school or work in St Attracta's is healthy and well and not showing any signs or symptoms of illness (Staff are advised by BOM not to admit children to school if they have been unwell in the previous 24 hrs). Those returning to school following an illness should be symptom free for 48 hours before their return.
- Parents/Guardians should consider checking children's temperature every morning before leaving home
- Appropriate protocols concerning social distancing, hand sanitizing and coughing and sneezing etiquette are continuously practised both at home and school
- Please remember to complete return to Work/Education forms as necessary

This plan was adopted by the BOM of St Attractas JNS on Monday 20th September 2021. It will be disseminated to all staff and families on Wednesday 21st September 2021.

Signed:



Paddy Gough, Chairperson BOM



Tommy Neary, Principal.

*January 10th 2022

**December 14th 2021

*January 10th 2022
**December 14th 2021