



Update for School Families on the Management of Covid-19 in Scoil Naomh Feichín

March 1st 2022

Even though the Chief Medical Officer stated on February 17th last that the Covid-19 pandemic is not over, with levels of infection remaining high and a cohort of the population still remaining vulnerable to severe infection from existing and emerging new variants, it has been agreed by government that there is now no longer a public health rationale for the majority of public health measures that have been in place up until this point.

What does this mean for our school community?

In general, Scoil Naomh Feichín will now be resuming normal school routines and resuming normal teaching and learning activities. Obviously, the requirement for both students and members of staff to remain at home if they have symptoms remains in place as we continue to do everything possible to limit the transmission of Covid-19 within the school.

▪ **Physical Distancing in School**

Physical distancing has been implemented in primary schools mainly by structuring pupils and their teachers 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, to the extent that this was practical.

From February 28th 2022, schools are no longer required to maintain class pods and bubbles. This will facilitate a return to team teaching, sports, singing and music, breakfast clubs and inter school activities.

▪ **Staggered Drop Off and Pick Up**

The implementation of staggered drop off and pick up times will cease from Monday next, March 7th.

- ✓ Morning entry to the school will be from 9.05am when the main gate will be opened.
- ✓ Pupils will then enter the school playground to the south of the school building.
- ✓ At 9.15am pupils will line up in their class groups in the playground. They will then be taken to their classrooms by their individual class teachers.
- ✓ At 9.20am classes will begin. All pupils should be in the school before formal teaching and learning commences at 9.20am.
- ✓ Home time for Junior and Senior Infants will be at 2pm.
- ✓ Home time for all other class will be at 3pm.

▪ **Hand & Respiratory Hygiene**

All pupils and staff will continue to adhere to high levels of hand and respiratory hygiene. Hand-washing will be carried out regularly and sanitiser will be readily available in all classrooms and shared areas throughout the school.

▪ **Enhanced School Cleaning**

The school will continue to maintain the current enhanced school cleaning schedule to reduce the risk of the spread of all infections.

▪ **Ventilation**

The school will continue to ensure that all classrooms are properly ventilated to assist in limiting the transmission of the virus in enclosed areas in the school. The CO2 monitors will be used to help us maintain good air quality in each classroom and shared area.

▪ **Antigen Testing Programme**

As part of the transition arrangements the HSE will continue with the current processes to support the provision of antigen tests to primary schools, special schools and childcare settings. The Antigen Free phone number is: 1800 110055 or parents may order antigen tests online via www.hse.ie/schooltest

▪ **Children who are Confirmed Cases (Antigen or PCR)**

All confirmed cases must self-isolate for **7 full days** from the date of onset of symptoms or if asymptomatic, from the date of the positive test. No further testing is required after a positive test result. Positive antigen test results should be registered with the HSE - <https://antigentesting.hse.ie/>

Children should exit self-isolation after 7 full days and once symptoms have fully resolved for the final 2 days of the self-isolation period, they can then return to school.

▪ **Children presenting with Symptoms of Covid-19**

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 or other viral respiratory tract infection, regardless of vaccination status, should immediately self-isolate until 48 hours after symptoms have substantially or fully resolved. Children with Covid-19 symptoms should have an Antigen test administered.

▪ **Children who are Close Contacts of a Confirmed Case but are Asymptomatic (no symptoms)**

Asymptomatic close contacts do not need to restrict movements, regardless of vaccination status. If they develop symptoms, they should self-isolate until 48hrs after the symptoms have fully or substantially resolved.

▪ **Return to School Forms / Parental Declaration**

We will no longer be requesting parents to complete and submit the online Parental Declaration Form before their child returns to school, following an absence.

▪ **Visitors to the School**

Visitors to the school will still need to call to the main reception door. Pupils who are being collected during the school day will need to be signed out by the person collecting them.

Please let me know if you've any queries or require any clarification about the above changes in our school.

Bryan Collins
School Principal
March 1st 2022