**Ballinacarriga NS covid-19 return to school Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **Will all pupils be able to return to school together?**
Yes unless otherwise instructed by the HSE.
2. **Will there be staggered times for the pupils?**
No, only staggered breaks and collection times (see logistics plan).
3. **What should my child bring to school on Day 1, Monday 31st August?**
Bring new pencil case with all items labelled. This pencil case stays at school. Bring in all new books (if possible). If you do not have all items on this day, you can bring them in as soon as you have sourced them.
4. **Where can I drop my child every morning and collect every evening?**Please park in the carpark only, accompany your child across the road and let the child walk up to school from either side, while maintaining a social distance where possible. We ask that parents do not enter the school unless invited to or with an appointment.
5. **What time can my child arrive to school at?**
Children are allowed arrive from 8.50am-9.10am. In the past, the drop offs are quite staggered so we feel there is no need to instruct further on this. Children are asked to go directly to their room, put down their belongings, wash their hand and then remain in their rooms.
6. **Can Social Distancing work in Ballinacarriga NS?**

Yes, social distancing is a requirement from 3rd-6th and we have organised the rooms in such a way that we are maximising the space. Some furniture (with teacher resources) may have to be removed in some classrooms to ensure 1m distancing. All classes will remain in their own class grouping (Bubble) and there will be smaller groups within the class also (Pods). All class groupings/Bubbles will take their breaks outside in their own designated area at staggered times (see logistics plan).

**What has Ballinacarriga NS done to implement the Covid 19 Road map for a Full Return?**

- An outdoor corridor is being erected so that pupils & staff can move around the school without going into multiply classrooms while staying safe and dry.

-Elbow operate taps will be installed in the children’s toilets and classrooms to minimise touch.

-Wall mounted hand sanitizers have been purchased and installed in each classroom, resource room, and inside both doors.
-Pupils will follow a strict hand hygiene timetable and regular use of sanitizers will become routine.
-The school will be cleaned on a daily basis.
-We have re-designated our toilets and all toilet areas have soap dispensers, paper towels and child friendly ‘wash your hands’ posters.
-Teachers have prepared their classrooms to maintain 1m distancing between pupils.
-All staff members have PPE to use, when necessary, during the school day.
-New yard supervision and staggered break timetables have been set up, to allow for good & safe space outdoors for all pupils and staff.

-Staggered collection times have been created to minimise overcrowding.
-The Board of Management have met on multiple occasions to discuss and implement the policy guidelines.

- Each class will have their own set of toys to play with a lunch break.

-The staff have had meetings to ensure that they are aware of new changes to keep us all safe.
-New signage to display Covid 19 information has been displayed all over the school, inside and outside, to advise and remind us about the virus and keep us safe.

**-**We have purchased a buzzer/intercom system so that any person wishing to enter the school can contact the office.

-Catherine (our secretary) has increased hours to man the intercom, prepare meetings and supervise.

1. **What is the visitor/contact log?**
All visitors to the school must make an appointment, approved by the Principal/Secretary. They must sign the visitor log at the front door.
2. **How can I contact a teacher?**
Email the teacher or ring Catherine and he/she can pass on the message or agree a time with the teacher to phone you back. We ask that you do not send paper notes where possible.
3. **What about the school uniform?**
Pupils will wear the school uniform on a Monday, Tuesday & Thursday. Pupils may wear their PE tracksuit on a Wednesday and Friday.

Please ask your child to change their clothes immediately after school to keep it ‘safe’ for school only. We ask you to wash their school clothes on a regular basis but daily washing is not necessary.

Shorts may be worn in warm weather in September, May and June. We ask that children do not wear inappropriately short shorts to school.

1. **Will pupils and teachers be wearing face masks?**
No for pupils, but this is a live document and guidelines may change. Masks and visors have been purchased for staff and will be worn daily.
2. **What if my child forgets a book/lunch?**
Ring Catherine to arrange to drop the item labelled in a clear bag inside the main front door, sanitise and leave. This is for emergencies only as visits must be kept to a minimum.
3. **Can my child share or borrow pencil case items?**
No. We would ask that each child has 2 pencil cases. Leave one at school, with all items clearly labelled and the other at home.
4. **Can my child bring toys/ball/ games to school?**
Unfortunately no. Toys, etc are not allowed from home. Extra toys, sports equipment, board games, etc will be purchased for each classroom. They will be wiped clean before being given to another pod/group in the class/bubble.
5. **What if my child needs to leave school early?**
Inform the school via email or phone Catherine in the office. The child will be brought to the school gate by a staff member.

1. **Have staff members received any extra training to keep us all safe?**
Yes, staff will have completed Compliance Training prior to 31/08/20 and completed Return to Work forms. Regular meetings have been taking place during August.
2. **Will all these new procedures relax when staff and pupils are settled back?**
The simple answer is no until guidelines are no more and a vaccine is found. Ballinacarriga NS cannot stop the virus from entering our school but we have a duty of care, to stop the spread of it and minimise its impact.
3. **What is the Lead Worker Representative?**
Each school must have a Lead Worker Representative (LWR). The LWR (Barry O Driscoll) will work closely with the Principal to implement the measures to prevent the spread of Covid 19 as well as communicating health advice around the virus in the workplace. A Deputy Lead Worker has also been appointed (Stella O Driscoll)
4. **What will happen if my child cannot return to school, due to an underlying condition or are in a ’high risk’ group?**
Email info@ballinacarriga-ns.ie as soon as possible and your teacher will be in contact with you regarding a plan. Your child will be supported, rest assured.
5. **Has your child/family been affected by Covid-19?**

If you feel that the class teacher needs to be aware of any information (health wise, impact of this Covid 19 on the family etc) please contact your class teacher and your concerns will be listened to in a confidential manner.

1. **Is the school prepared for a return to online/distance learning?**
Yes, we are prepared. We will continue to work via Seesaw and email and we hope that we would increase our Zoom communication, so please ensure that you are technically ready for such an occasion. However, we really hope that the school will not close.
2. **What will September’s learning be like?**
Important concepts and lessons from last year’s online learning will be revised during September. Teachers will observe and assess where their pupils ‘are at’. Teachers will take their time and ease into the month so as not to overload the pupils, too quickly. Teachers will do their best to catch up on lost time. No written homework/books will be sent home for the first few weeks in September.
3. **What are the best ways to contact the teacher?**
Email the teacher:

Infants: ailish@ballinacarriga-ns.ie

1st & 2nd: roisin@ballinacarriga-ns.ie (subject to change)

3rd & 4th class: eleanor@ballinacarriga-ns.ie

5th & 6th class: barry@ballinacarriga-ns.ie

Special Education: claire@ballinacarriga-ns.ie (subject to change)

 Or ring Catherine on 023-8845944 and she will ask the teacher to phone you.

1. **What happens if my child has a temperature/coughing/feeling sick?**
Stay at home, do not take any chances. You know your child best and you may be certain that he/she does not have Covid 19 but by allowing your child to school may be the wrong thing to do. Staff and pupils need to feel safe at Ballinacarriga NS. We all have a responsibility to minimise the spread of this.
2. **What happens if there is a suspected case of Covid 19?**
First of all, the school staff are not medics. We will do our best to assess the child in a calm manner. We will check his/her temperature and will call you immediately. We will isolate the child in the sensory room (beside office), away from other pupils. We will follow the guidelines and checklists, as outlined in the Logistics Plan.
3. **As a parent, how can I prepare my child for a return to school?**
Children are excited about returning to school, some more than others! Talk to your child about keeping themselves clean, ask them to follow teacher instructions on using hand sanitizers and staying 1 metre apart from their friends, in order to protect themselves and also to protect their friends. Keep open lines of communication to assess how they are settling in. Make sure your child tells you if they are not feeling well. Watch for symptoms of Covid 19 or any other illness and isolate them at home.
4. **Will my child be learning the tin whistle this year?**

No, wind instruments are advised against. We hope that Ger Wolfe will return to teach the children the Ukulele (3rd-6th class) and the xylophone (Juniors-2nd class) but we still need to secure sponsorship for these instruments and purchase them. If you are in a position to help with sponsorship, please contact Roisin at roisin@ballinacarriga-ns.ie.

1. **Any other questions that we have not thought about?**
Email infor@ballinacarrig-ns.ie and we will get back to you as soon as we can.