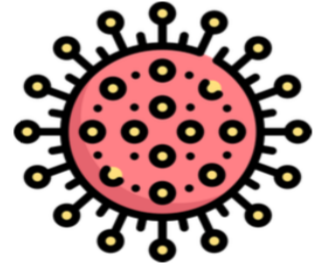




STAY SAFE



RETURN TO SCHOOL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document will be updated as advice changes or further clarification is needed

****Adults please always wear a mask when on the school grounds or inside the school**

Topics covered in this frequently asked questions (FAQ)

1. **General Questions**
2. **Morning Drop Off and Hometime Collection of Children**
3. **What to bring to school**
4. ***New School Routines for Return to School***
5. **Managing Absences from School**

1. General Questions

Do I need to update my details to the school

Yes please check that the school has all necessary contact details and information for your child - please ensure that an emergency contact person is available should your child be unwell and need to go home. Update details via email to secretary@scoilthomais.ie

Is it ok if grandparents are emergency contacts if my child display Covid like symptoms at school and must be collected?

It would NOT be advised for an elderly person or a person in a high risk category to collect a symptomatic child. Please nominate another person who could collect your child in such a case

What is the single most important action staff or pupils should do to prevent the spread of the virus

Stay at home if showing any symptoms and contact a doctor

What is the second most important action?

Hand washing using the proper technique



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Do I need to fill in a return to school form for my child before returning to school on 1st September.

No, the school will not require this but please review a Return to School Health Checklist for your child (on website)

IMPORTANT *Please ensure your child is well and has not visited a foreign country (non green listed) in the last 14 days. If you have visited a green listed country, the BOM further advises that your child does not attend school for 14 days after their return from abroad to ensure the protection of our staff and pupils. Please email the school to inform teacher if your child is remaining at home for isolation purposes and indicate the expected return to school date.*

Do I need to complete a return to school form if my child has been absent for any reason

Parents may need to complete a return to school form - you will be advised if this is necessary by teacher/school

2. Morning Drop Off and Hometime Collection of Children

Are there staggered start and finish times for children?

Yes, please log onto the school website www.scoilthomais.ie for latest information on school start and finish times for your child's class. The times for all classes have been notified on the school website for the week 1st - 4th September. Junior Infant Pupil have separate timetable for their first days and weeks at school. The school is aware that having different starting and home times for classes will cause some disruption for parents and families but please bear with us as the return to school is a very different experience for everyone this year. The timetable for class start and finish times will be revised as we see how we are managing over the first few days of school. It is intended that the staggered morning and hometimes will be readjusted to 'as near to normal times as possible' over the coming weeks.

Can parents accompany children into the school grounds ?

Only the parents of the Infant - 2nd Classes will be permitted to. We ask that only one adult does so and they should wear a mask. Pupils from 3rd - 6th Class should be able to walk through the school gates and meet their teacher or go directly to their classroom. School staff will be in the school yard to help and direct children to the class entrances and at hometime too.

Are there specific entry and exit points for each class?

Yes. These will be notified to you - check with the school website for timetables and helpful maps.

Entrance Gates and routes will be clearly marked and supervised. Please instruct your child on where they should go to meet you when they come out the gate at hometime. All parents/guardians waiting to collect children outside the school gates must observe social distancing rules - please arrange to meet your child at a specific place away from the school gates to help with distancing and spacing of persons at or near school gates.

Will there be supervision for siblings that do not have the same start time ?

Unfortunately not. In following the guidelines, we cannot allow siblings from other class group to come inside the gates early as we are required to keep class bubbles separate

My child is due to start at 9am Can i drop my child at 8:30 to wait at the gate if I need to ?

Please don't. We recognise the difficulties around the staggered start but we need parents co-operation. To avoid congestion please drop off your child within the allotted ten minutes before their start time.

My children have different finish times. is it possible for me to collect them at the same time?

No, Parents can only collect in exceptional circumstances for urgent reasons only and by arrangement with the school office.

Can I wait in the nearby carpark if I have a sibling starting or being collected a later time ?

Yes, but you should remember to socially distance and not congregate with adults at the gates.



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3. What to bring to school each day

Does my child need to wear a freshly laundered uniform each day

The most recent advice is that daily washing of uniforms is not necessary. It is up to parents to decide on how often they want to wash their child's uniforms. However the school advises that children do change out of their uniform as soon as they get home from school. This will help preserve the care of uniform and is a good habit to establish with your child.

What should the children bring to school each day?

Bring lunch box, a drink (in a bottle), a pencil case, mini sanitising gel and perhaps a pocket size tissue pack. Please LABEL each item, make sure your child can identify their own belongings and please reinforce the no sharing message. Children should not bring toys, etc to school. It is best to have rucksack type school bag to be worn on your child's back and hands are then free to be sanitised as necessary. School books should be brought to/from school as directed by the teacher.

NOTE: Lunch boxes and water bottles should be washed before being returned to the school bag each evening. Pencil cases and items used at home should be also sanitised

Does my child need a special box or bag for their coat ?

No. Children will continue to hang coats outside the classroom. Coats hanging close to each other is not identified as a risk.

Can my child wear a mask in school?

Masks are not currently recommended by the HSE or in the DES ROADMAP but this advice may change. However if a child wears one, they must be able to manage the mask themselves. They should feel comfortable about wearing one and they need to know when they are permitted to take it off during the day. They should also have a plastic bag to store it in. School staff cannot help them with any assistance in wearing their mask.

4. New School Routines for Return to School

The focus of school staff and teachers will be on assisting the children to settle back to school. Everyone will be looking out for the children's well being and on helping children to feel happy, safe and secure in school. Introducing the children to new hygiene and safety protocols will also be part of the school routine and they will receive reminders during the day from teachers and SNAs.

Will children be arranged in bubbles and pods?

Yes, Classes are referred to as BUBBLES and kept apart from each other in so far as is possible in a large school. Within each classroom the children will be in smaller PODS. Children from Junior Infants to 2nd are not required to socially distance although every effort will be made to maintain distance between pods. From 3rd - 6th Class pods will be 1 metre apart and children will be asked to limit their interactions to within their own pod.

What about shared teaching and learning resources ?

Children will be asked not to share their own personal items and the sharing of teaching and learning resources will be limited where possible. The focus will be on hygiene and if resources need to be shared, children will sanitise their hands and wipes/sanitiser will be used to clean the resources before and after use



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What do I do if my child forgets something?

Only in cases of emergency can forgotten items be dropped at the school office. Please make sure your child has their lunch and a drink etc each day. Please prepare carefully for the organisation of children for the school day in advance.

What are the new hygiene practices the teacher will implement?

- Children will be required to sanitise and/or wash their hands multiple times a day and teachers will establish these routines within the class.
- There will be additional cleaning services daily especially in the toilets and frequently touched surfaces.
- Windows and doors will be left open for ventilation so when the weather gets colder children will need extra layers.
- If a child goes home with any symptoms during the school day that classroom will be cleaned and disinfected before children re-enter it.

How do I get in touch with my child's teacher if I need to?

If the message is urgent please ring 01 8201022 (school office). Otherwise, please use the homework journal, a note or send an email to the school office and it will be directed to teacher. Please remember teachers may not check their emails during the school day. Face to face meetings may not always be possible but the teacher will email or phone you to discuss your concerns.

How will I collect my child early if I need to ?

Only for important appointments or urgent family reasons. Send a note to the teacher and phone ahead to get clearance from the school office - please do not enter the school without an appointment.

Will children still go out for break ?

Yes. Each class will have an assigned play yards and will remain with their class group for breaktimes. Teachers will undertake extra supervision to allow for staggered break times. Pupils will also have a short mid morning outdoor air break if possible.

What are the changes to the Code of Behaviour?

- All pupils are expected to comply with the new Covid safety procedures and guidelines to the best of their ability
- Pupils who deliberately endanger the health of others by noncompliance will be dealt with in accordance with the school code of behaviour - repeated non-compliance will be regarded as a serious matter and will be sanctioned.
- Negative or threatening behaviour towards another child or adult based on symptoms or a diagnosis of COVID 19 will be dealt with under our bullying and/or Code of Behaviour.
- Deliberate spitting or coughing at another pupil or staff member will be considered a serious offence which may be sanctioned up to and including suspension.

5. Managing Absences from School

The advice from the HSE is if your child is sick do not send them to school. - Please check out this updated link [https://mcusercontent.com/678cc95a0cae678dbaa86b177/files/7e28ea61-7fd5-443e-9b8a-315baf8d9e4a/Information from HSE for parents.01.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/678cc95a0cae678dbaa86b177/files/7e28ea61-7fd5-443e-9b8a-315baf8d9e4a/Information_from_HSE_for_parents.01.pdf)

Will my child be sent home if they have a slight cold or cough?

Yes, we will be following health advice and not allowing any child with Covid-type symptoms to stay in school. It is better not to send your child to school if they are in any way unwell or have any of these symptoms. See hse .ie advice for parents

- Fever, Cough, Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste
- Aches and pains, Sore throat, Headache, Runny or stuffy nose
- Abdominal pain, Diarrhoea, Nausea or vomiting
-



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Will the school be taking temperatures when children arrive?

No. The advice is not to but we may do so if any child is very unwell. It is important you encourage your children to tell the teacher if they feel sick. During the school day.

If my child is sent home with symptoms how soon can they return to school?

The advice is to contact your GP/Pharmacist or HSE if your child has even mild symptoms and follow their advice. Parents may need to complete the return to school form before their child re-joins the class - teacher will advise if this is necessary. If you are in any doubt about sending your child back to school please contact your doctor/pharmacist or HSE

What about siblings of a child who is ill?

If any member of the household has a Covid diagnosis - or Covid like symptoms, all children in the household should remain at home until cleared by a doctor or HSE.

A member of my household has been identified as a close contact of a person who has tested positive. Can my child go to school? *Yes, The current advice is only the close contacts needs to isolate.*

My child is at home with an upset tummy. Do I need to let the school know that day?

Please do so. It is essential for the school to know the reason for the absence so please inform the teacher by email/ note about the reason for the child's absence in writing - this is necessary for school records on pupil attendance

What is the procedure if a child is unwell at school?

You will be contacted by the school office to come immediately and collect your child from the School Hall door. Your child will be brought by designated staff member to the designated isolation area (HALL LOBBY) who will supervise the child (at 2 m distance). You must contact the school office when you arrive to gain entry to the school. Your child will be given a mask to wear whilst awaiting collection and the areas must be cleaned and sanitised afterwards.

What happens if I cannot come to collect my child after receiving a call from the school

You must nominate at least one emergency contact that is available to collect in your absence. This information can be updated on your child's contact details file. Failure to come to the school in a timely manner (within reason) will be noted.

If my child is required to stay home for a 14 day period will the school provide remote teaching?

Any child required to take a prolonged absence for medical reasons will receive some remote teaching support from school appropriate to the child's needs and the capacity of the school.

What will happen if the teacher/SNA is sick or has to self isolate for 14 days ?

The school cannot allow pupils to be placed into other classes when a teacher is absent. The Department of Education has provided improved options to schools to find substitute teachers to cover for staff absences. The school will seek to find a substitute teacher/SNA to cover for staff absences. In some case, the SEN teacher who is linked with the class may be needed to provide substitute cover for the class for a short absence. If a teacher/SNA is self-isolating as a result of being in close contact with a case, they may continue to work from home and advise and support the substitute teacher/SNA.

*******If a situation arises that there are many teachers/SNAs absent on a given day and in the event that the school cannot provide substitute cover a class/children may need to remain at home. If this happens, the school will try to give as prior notice as possible and will offer support for homebased learning for the class/children.**



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Return to School Checklist COVID-19 - For Parents to Complete for their Child

This checklist should be completed by parents in advance of their child returning to school.

If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions,

seek medical advice before allowing your child return to school.

(you do not need to send this to the school but it is an important guide for parents)

If considered necessary the school may request a Return to School Declaration based on this checklist.

Pupil Name *

Class:

Room No.

*Does your child have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu-like symptoms now or in the past 14 days? **

o () Yes

o () No

*Has your child been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days? **

o () Yes

o () No

*Have you been advised by the HSE that your child is a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? **

o () Yes

o () No

*Have your child been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time? **

o () Yes

o () No

*Has your child been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time? **

o () Yes

o () No

*Have you been advised by your doctor that your child is in the very high risk group? If yes, please liaise with your doctor and the School Principal/Deputy Principal re return to school. **

o () Yes

o () No

*Travel from Abroad: Has your child travelled from any location not on the "green list" <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/8868e-view-the-covid-19-travel-advice-list/> **

o () Yes

o () No

If yes, what date did your child return? i.e. has your child completed 14 days self-isolation

Please confirm

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that my child has no symptoms of COVID-19, is not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test.

Please note: Scoil Thomáis is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the school in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Parents Signature *

Date: _____