



*Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál*  
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20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

## **Physical Distancing and Safe School Attendance**

We are currently working on upgrading our procedures and routines within the school to ensure that there is as much physical distancing as is possible in our building. We will apply the physical distancing in a practical and sensible way, recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

### **Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -**

**Increasing Separation.** This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Children in each classroom will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> class will be considered a bubble and will be kept from interacting with other bubbles in the school.

Within the bubbles, children will be organised into pods. A pod is a group of children who will sit together and who will stay in their pod while in the classroom i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> class will be considered a pod and 4<sup>th</sup> class likewise.

**Decreasing Interaction.** This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. There will be marked routes for various bubbles to enter and exit the school and to access their classrooms. Zones in the yard will be marked out for both play time and lining up. Bubbles will have different mid-morning and lunch-time access to the playground. We will make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times. Ms Kinane and Mrs Harrington's classes will have an earlier break/lunch time to the other classrooms.

Children who have travelled from countries not on the Green List should not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period. Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: -

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

Teachers will make children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. We would be grateful if you could also emphasise safe behaviour in this regard to your children at home as part of the preparation for returning to school.

Children will be required to sanitise their hands;

1. Prior to entering their classroom
2. Before/After breaks
3. Before/After using the toilet
4. After they cough / sneeze
5. Exiting the building

Hand Washing facilities are available in all classrooms/ toilets.

Our aim remains to re-open the school in an orderly safe manner, while reassuring the children and making them feel comfortable, safe and relaxed with their friends in the new school environment. This will be achieved by all of us working towards this common goal.

Below is a collage of images illustrating safety procedures put in place to help with the safe re-opening of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál.

Le Meas

Tomas Mc Loughlin







