

Covid Emergency Closure Policy

Aim:

To develop a clear and concise Emergency Closure Policy to be activated by the Principal in the event that we do not have enough staff available to provide a safe school environment for our students and a safe work environment for our staff in the current context of a pandemic. This policy reinforces the elements of the school vision which advocates providing a happy, safe, holistic learning environment for each member of the school community, allowing each student to reach his/ her full potential .

Rationale:

Given the additional leave requirements under Covid-19 (10 day isolation for confirmed case, time off while waiting for a test, 48 hour isolation or until symptom free after a negative test, 5 day isolation period if a household close contact tests positive etc), along with other non-Covid absences, the school needs to have a Covid Emergency Closure Policy in place to allow us to close in the event that we cannot provide a safe school environment for our students and a safe work environment for our staff.

Following the latest public health guidance and Department of Education and Skills circulars we have set this number at 50% of our staff. As we currently have 2 Class Teachers and 9 Special Needs Assistants, we will have to enact the Emergency Closure Policy if 6 or more familiar staff members are unable to attend work due to Covid-19 or other categories of unscheduled leave. Other staff on site will support classroom staff where necessary and dependent on the needs of the children presenting. Due to the Pod system in place as part of our Covid-19 response plan it may also be necessary to close single Pods/ Classrooms if we do not have 50% of the staff available within the Pod or to ask 50% of the children in the class to attend on alternating days as after previous school closures. This decision will be taken by the Principal in conjunction with the chairperson on a case by case basis as and when the situation arises dependent on the needs of the children and on a case by case basis.

We will also have to enact the Emergency Closure Policy if mandated to do so by a Public Health Team following an outbreak of Covid-19 in the school.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school rests with the Principal. The staff have a responsibility to contact the Principal and let her know as soon as possible that they will be unable to attend work, and the length of that unavailability (if known). The Principal and secretary assume the responsibility to notify every parent about the school closure, as soon as is practicable after the Emergency Closure Policy has been enacted.

Ratification:

This **Covid-19 Emergency Closure policy** was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on **13th December 2021**. An invitation to view has been communicated by the

BoM to all stakeholders by means of agreed minutes. It will form part of the school plan which is located in reception and can be emailed on request. It is envisaged that this policy will be reviewed as necessary but no later than the second term of the school year 2024/25

Signed by Principal _____

Signed by Chairperson of the Board _____

Date _____