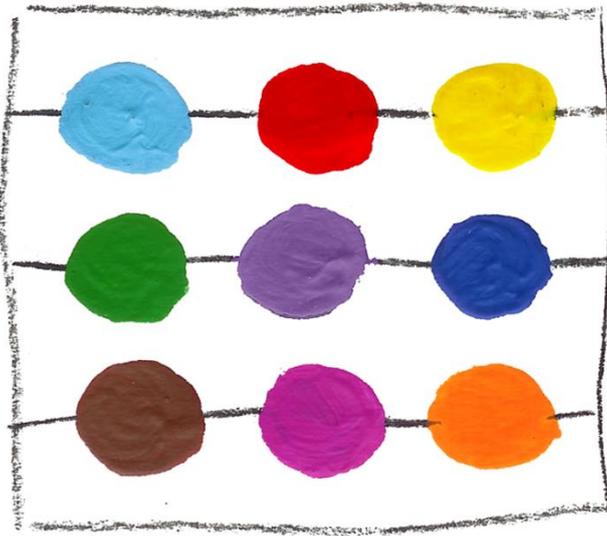


COVID-19 Policy



Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS) in relation to COVID-19. It is intended to help parents and guardians understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

Version	Description	Authors
August 2020	First version of policy	Board of Management

School Contact Details

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COVID-19 Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was drafted as a collaborative exercise between Board of Management (BoM) and Middle Management team in response to government guidelines regarding reopening the school during the COVID-19 pandemic. This policy is reviewed on a regular basis in line with the most up-to-date public health advice. The Board of Management, staff and parents are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

Rationale

The policy as outlined is being put in place to:

- Clarify areas of responsibility
- To give clear guidance about COVID-19 policy within our school
- To indicate the limitations of such a policy
- Safeguard the school community throughout this pandemic
- Protect against possible litigation

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

The COVID-19 Policy supports the ethos of Carrigaline Educate Together National School. Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. is one of a rapidly increasing number of equality-based schools throughout the country. The representative organisation for these schools is 'Educate Together'.

Educate Together aims to meet a growing need in Irish society for schools that recognise the developing diversity of Irish life and the modern need for democratic management structures. In particular, Educate Together guarantees children and parents of all faiths and none equal respect in the operation and governing of education.

The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Science and work under the same regulations and funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- *Equality-based* i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- *Co-educational* and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- *Child centred* in their approach to education
- *Democratically run* with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (*Source: Educate Together Charter*)

Whilst the concepts of child-centredness and co-educationalism are now widely accepted in Irish primary education, what distinguishes the Educate Together schools is their hard work in developing a culturally inclusive and democratic ethos. This has pioneered unique approaches to inclusion of minority opinions and faiths in the Irish context.

The schools have developed education programmes which open the eyes of children to the naturally positive contribution that social, religious and cultural diversity and difference of viewpoint and opinion make to society.

The other characteristic feature of these schools is that they are democratically organised and governed. This maximises the potential for building a genuine partnership between the professional, objective role of the teacher and the necessarily personal involvement of the parent in contributing to their children's education.

Information taken from the Educate Together website www.educatetogether.ie

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. makes the distinction between denominational education and moral/religious education. The ethical curriculum followed by the school is called the Learn Together Curriculum. It is comprised of four strands: Morality & Spirituality, Equality & Justice, Belief systems, Ethics & the environment.

Denominational instruction will be facilitated by the school insofar as groups will be permitted to use the school premises. This is organised by parents outside of school hours subject to the Department of Education and Skills advice on the use of school buildings.

Aims

The COVID-19 policy aims to:

- Minimise health risks to children, staff and the entire school community while on the school premises
- Fulfil the duty of the Board of Management in relation to Health and Safety requirements
- Provide a framework within school life can be kept as normal as possible for all children while adhering to public health guidelines in this evolving situation

COVID -19 Policy Statement

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our students. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and students on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and students engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representatives, who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Success Criteria

The effectiveness of the school policy in its present form is measured by the following criteria:

- Compliance with Health and Safety legislation and public health guidelines
- Maintaining a safe and caring environment for children, staff and the entire school community
- Positive feedback from parents/teachers/members of the school community
- Ensuring the responsibility for suppressing COVID-19 within our school is that of the entire school community

Roles and Responsibility

The following people have particular responsibilities for aspects of this policy:

- Parents
- Teaching staff
- Principal
- SNAs
- Pupils
- Secretary
- Caretaker
- Lead Worker Representatives
- Board of Management

Implementation Date

The policy was implemented by August 2020. Any amendments will be implemented immediately.

Timetable for Review

The operation of this policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in line with the latest public guidelines and advice from the Department of Education and Skills.

Ratification & Communication

The plan was circulated to the members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting in August 2020.

Notification that the plan is available for viewing will be communicated to the parents via Aladdin. It will be available for viewing on the school website and a copy will be available for all staff on Google Drive.

Date of ratification: _____

Signed: _____
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOM

Date: _____