

25th August 2021

St. Malachy's Boys' National School

Current School Arrangements (Covid-19)

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In line with current government Covid-19 guidelines, our school will continue to implement all aspects of our Covid-19 Policy and follow the updated Department of Education Response Plan that can be found on our website. We have put in place a large number of measures to keep our school community safe and we completed a Covid compliance inspection (SSPS) in December 2020 that indicated that all relevant safety protocols were being met. As we are fully aware, the situation as regards Covid-19 in the community is ever-changing and as a school we will review all practices and procedures regularly. Any updates will be communicated to parents. To achieve the best opportunity for safety for all school users the following practices will be in place.

COVID-19 Advice for Parents

Please ensure that pupils do not attend school if they:

- are a close contact of a person with COVID-19
- are awaiting a test result
- are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19
- live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- have travelled outside of Ireland (see latest Govt. advice)

Pupil Absence

A written absence note must be submitted on return to school following every absence. Children will be provided with a standard absence note in the back of their homework folders that parents can complete. Parent's may also wish to contact the school in advance to advise of a child's reason for absence. This can be done via email: office@stmalachysbns.ie or telephone: 042 9338145.

Morning drop-off and After school pick-up

2nd class: On 1st September 2021, our new 2nd class pupils will start at **9.30am**. Teachers will meet their new pupils in the 'big yard'. Pupils should enter this yard through the Mulholland Avenue gates. From Thursday 2nd September, 2nd class will start at the normal time of **9.05am** and follow the arrangements below. Staff will be on hand at all gates to direct and assist children.

3rd-6th class: School starts at **9.05am**. The morning 'drop-off' timeslot is between 8.45 – 9.05am, with no facility to drop children off any earlier. Parents may drop off their children at any of the following entrances:

- Anne Street gate (keep to Boys' School right hand side footpath)
- Mulholland Avenue gate
- Rear entrance gate (walkway alongside Friary field)

There will be no access to walk through the Boys' school yard to the Infants or Girls school. Likewise, boys will not be permitted to walk through the Infants or Girls school yards.

Children cycling to school must wear a helmet and dismount when entering the school yard.

Pick-up times at home time are currently staggered to avoid people congregating at this busy time. Children can be picked up from the most convenient gate – Anne St., Mulholland Av. or Rear of school gate and will be walked there by their teacher.

Children will leave school at the following times:

2nd class & older brothers	@2.35
3rd & 4th class & older brothers	@ 2.40
5th & 6th class	@ 2.45

**We encourage parents not to congregate at the school gates and to leave promptly after collecting your child to avoid congestion at this busy time.

We ask all parents for their co-operation in not parking in the yellow boxes/lines at any of our gates in the interest of your child's safety.

Face masks: The children are not required to wear face masks, face coverings or gloves in school. There will be a strong emphasis on hand washing and hygiene.

Hand washing: Children will be encouraged to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the day. Washing of hands is the single most useful thing we can do in school to prevent the spread of infection. Hand sanitizer units have been placed in every classroom and throughout the school. There is also warm water and soap in every classroom and in the toilets.

We ask that parents provide their child with a packet of tissues, a packet of anti-bacterial wipes and a small bottle of hand sanitizer. These items should be labelled with the child's name and will belong to the child but will remain in school for daily use.

Uniform: Pupils are asked to wear a fresh uniform every day, if at all possible, to reduce the risk of infection. To make this a little easier for parents we have agreed that for the period in which the school is operating under Covid-19 prevention guidance, all pupils may wear their tracksuit on any day of the week. Parents have the option of alternating between the formal school uniform & school tracksuit or having two school tracksuits.

Coats: In bad weather pupils should bring their coat as normal. Pupils are also encouraged to 'layer-up' underneath their uniform in the cold weather as there will be increased 'outside time' and classrooms will be well ventilated.

Lunch: Lunchboxes containing healthy lunches should be brought each day. Unfortunately, no sharing of food/drink will be permitted. Children must be able to open/peel all items in their

lunchboxes themselves. All packaging will be kept in the lunchbox for disposal at home. Lunchboxes must be cleaned thoroughly each evening.

Communication: We use the textparent system (please download the textparent app to your phone <https://app.textparent.ie/get/app>), school website: www.stmalachysbns.ie and email to communicate with parents. Please ensure your details are up to date and inform the school of any changes to parents or emergency persons contact details.

Parent appointments: While the school is operating under Covid-19 prevention guidance, parents are asked to remain outside the school grounds at all times to reduce footfall and the potential spread of the virus. Contact with the school will be by phone: 042 93 38145 or email: office@stmalachysbns.ie.

Early Collection: In the event that early collection is needed, parents must phone or buzz the school secretary, Arlene, from the porch area at the front entrance of the Boys' School. Your child will be brought out to meet you and the sign-out book should be completed.

Wellbeing Resources: The Department of Education has updated their wellness resources that may be useful to parents and pupils. They can be found online at: gov.ie - [Wellbeing advice and resources during COVID-19 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://gov.ie)

These are our current school arrangements and may be subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to parents at the earliest convenience. If you have any concerns, please contact the school on 042 9338145 or office@stmalachysbns.ie.

Yours faithfully,

Keith Farrell

Principal