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|  | **Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire**  **Ballyleague**  **Co Roscommon**  **N39 PX49**  **Roll Number 18061T**  **Tel: 043 3321906** |

10th of January, 2021.

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

A Happy New Year to all of our families. I hope the Christmas season was restful and enjoyable. I wish to draw your attention to the following points and pieces of information.

* Ballyleague N.S. will operate under the same procedures issued to parents last August which are detailed in our Covid-19 response plan on our website.
* **Symptoms** – **Please do not send your child to school if they have any symptoms of Covid-19 infection.** Symptom profiles are available here <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/symptoms/> and we advise parents to take a precautionary approach, particularly for children less able to articulate their symptoms, that if a child appears unwell, observe them at home and contact their GP as appropriate.
* **Restricted movements** - If your child has been told by the HSE services that they are a close contact of a case of Covid-19, they need to adhere to the advice on the HSE website in relation to restricted movements and testing <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/restricted-movements/> **Children under 13 years who are household close contacts must restrict their movements for 14 days** and they are offered PCR testing at day 0 and day 10. On receipt of a day 10 not-detected PCR test result, they may exit restricted movements. It is important that anyone who has been identified as a close contact, is very aware of COVID-19 symptoms, and isolate and undergo testing should they develop any symptoms.   The rules around self-isolating and restricting your movements are becoming very complicated due to the various scenarios people find themselves in. Please refer to public health and use the resources and information below as a guide to inform you when your child can return to school. The two links are <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/symptoms/> and <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/restricted-movements/> Please also look at the close contact flow chart created by the HSE attached to this email. This will also help to identify the next steps if a child is close contact.
* **Close contact in school-**When we are notified that a child who has been in school during the infectious period has a positive (detected) COVID-19 PCR test result, a text will be sent to the other parents in the pod to let them know how they can access free antigen tests for their children in the identified pod. If there is more than one PCR positive case in a class then antigen tests can be arranged for the entire class. The Antigen Freephone number is: 1800 110055 or parents may order antigen tests online via www.hse.ie/schooltest. **All children in the pod/class can continue to attend school as long as they remain asymptomatic and they do not have a positive COVID-19 antigen or PCR test result.** Pupils who have symptoms of COVID19 are offered antigen tests firstly and they do not book a PCR test unless they get a positive antigen test result.
* **Staffing**- Staffing may become a major issue in the coming weeks for primary schools. Our special education teachers will be covering where we cannot secure substitute teachers and in the unfortunate event the school does not have adequate supervision a class may have to stay at home until a substitute is available. Please email the school if your child is absent due to Covid or if you need to pick up your child early for vaccination purposes. We can only provide work for children who are absent due to Covid and we ask that parents understand that the support is limited due to staffing constraints.
* **Communications campaign from the** **DES – Multilingual** https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/e7a66-students-not-attending-school-if-they-have-symptoms-multilingual/

Thank you for your continued support and diligence in what has been an exhausting time.

We look forward with renewed hope for a bright year in 2022.

Mise le meas,

Caitríona Fallon,

Principal