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08/03/2020

**Re: Covid -19 and the latest position of Scoil Chroí Naofain relation to the matter.**

Dear Parents and Staff,

I realise this is quite an anxious time for you and your families and justifiably so. I am a parent of young children myself. I also have elderly parents, therefore I can totally empathise with your concerns.

However I wish to assure you that Scoil Chroí Naofa is doing all it can to ensure that the Coronavirus (Covid-19) does not enter our school. I've every confidence in all the measures we are taking. It would be remiss of me not to share with you what these measures are and how they apply to our school. This should help to comfort you all and allay some of your fears.

The Department of Education and consequently all schools in the country are taking instruction from the Chief Medical Officer (and his team) of the HSE, Dr Tony Holohan in relation to this matter. I advise you all to view [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) and [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) (the Dept. of Education's website) where the latest relevant school information in relation to Coronavirus (Covid-19) is posted. The link you require is the first item you'll see on each landing page of both websites. Please also note that a letter to parents from Dr Holohan was attached as part of our most recent issue of the school newsletter that was emailed to you all last Tuesday.

We have undertaken many practical steps in school to ensure we do and continue to do all we can to ensure the health and safety of all our pupils and staff. Here is the most up-to-date list of the actions we have taken:

1. Newsletter circulated with letter from Dr Holohan.
2. This letter/statement that you are reading now.
3. Posters re how to wash your hands properly have been circulated to all class teachers and all teachers have taught these necessary skills to their pupils.
4. Soap levels are being checked regularly and ordered in advance.
5. A special assembly was held this morning to once again teach the children good hand washing skills and appropriate sneezing etiquette. Also pupils were reminded not to touch their nose or mouth with their hands.
6. Hand sanitizers have been ordered for the main points of entry to the school where hand washing facilities aren't readily accessible.

7. Student tables are being cleaned with an antibacterial surface cleaner daily. All door handles are being sanitized daily also.
8. Staff and pupils are advised to stop shaking hands and giving high fives.
9. You will receive an email today from the National Association of School Psychologists (N.A.S.P.) re. talking to children about COVID-19 (coronavirus). It's a must read for every parent.
10. Covid-19 notices have been posted at the main entry points to the school.
11. All families traveling from or travelling to overseas destinations in the coming weeks are asked to call the school and speak to me directly where details mentioned in the websites above will be explained and discussed in detail. I understand that no family has travelled from or is travelling to the places where there is currently a high outbreak of coronavirus ie China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Iran, Japan or Northern Italy.

Finally, can I urge you all to keep a calm disposition. This would be most helpful and appreciated. Calm adults will help lessen anxiety among children. Together we will continue to work on this as best we can both at school and at home. Please don't send your child to school wearing gloves or a mask. This will only add to the general anxiety levels of everybody. For any parent that's concerned enough to send either gloves or masks to school with their child, they should probably keep their child at home.

The truth of the matter is that Coronavirus (Covid-19) will be here for a while but we will cope and continue to support each other as best we can. It is important that we listen to the advice of the experts. It is a constantly evolving situation. Make it your business to be informed. I would advise any parent who wants further clarifications to contact the HSE help-desk directly on 041 6850300 and I'll be in touch immediately should the situation relating to S.C.N. change in any way.

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Fergal Naughton, principal and secretary of the B.O.M.