



Scoil Mhuire Allenwood  
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Naas  
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# COVID19 Response Plan (updated August 2021)

## INTRODUCTION

This *Covid-19 Response Plan* is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Scoil Mhuire Allenwood.

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government's '*Return to Work Safely Protocol*', the Department of Education and Skills plan for school reopening and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHE continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and re-opening of our schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of management, staff, pupils and parents.

This document aims to provide details of:

- 1. COVID-19 School Policy**
- 2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School**
- 3. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative(s)**

4. **Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**
5. **General advice to prevent the spread of the virus**
6. **Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**
7. **Control Measures**
8. **Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**
9. **Staff Duties**
10. **Covid related absence management**
11. **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.

**Note:** The plan is a live working document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from [www.Gov.ie](http://www.Gov.ie), [www.dbei.ie](http://www.dbei.ie), [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie), [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie); [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie);

## 1. SCOIL MHUIRE N.S. COVID-19 POLICY

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others.

### COVID-19 Policy Statement

Scoil Mhuire Allenwood is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. 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 pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct handwashing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative/s who is/are easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff 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 pupils 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 Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: Nicola Carey  
Chairperson

Ciarán O'Toole  
Principal

Date: 24/08/2021

## 2. PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government.

Details for the reopening of the school facility and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

### *School Buildings*

Before re-opening schools in the new school year schools are reminded to check the following:

- Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
- Has school equipment and mechanical ventilation been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
- Have bin collections and other essential services resumed.

### *Signage*

Schools will be required to display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene. The following is a link to the dedicated area of the Health Protection and Surveillance Centre (HPSC) website where there are a number of posters, including those appropriate for primary school pupils, located. Irish versions are also available here.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/posters/> Schools can download the posters and display in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets. Schools do not need to do this now as the posters may be updated during the summer and further information will issue on signage closer to the planned reopening.

### *Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)*

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available electronically or from the Principal. A hard copy is attached also at **Appendix 1**.

The school will request staff (verbally or in writing) to confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

On receipt of the completed form the Principal will provide: details of the **Induction Training** for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

**Note:** Induction Training for staff will be developed by the Department in consultation with stakeholders and made available for all schools and staff.

## 3. RETURN TO WORK SAFELY AND LEAD WORKER REPRESENTATIVE

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and the School Leadership.

The Return to Work Safely protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint a Lead Worker Representative to carry out a specific role.

Note: The process for appointment of the Lead Worker representative in schools will be agreed centrally between the Department of Education and Skills and the education partners. That process, once agreed, will be circulated to all schools in advance of the re-opening of schools.

The role of the Lead worker representative is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows:

- Work collaboratively with the employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19.
- Promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice.
- Assist with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Make representations on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan and control measures or the adherence to such control measures by staff, parents/guardians, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact the lead worker(s) who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

Name(s) of Lead Worker representative:	Contact details
Catriona Tyrrell Maeve Barrett	School office

All staff, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

#### 4. SAFETY STATEMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is attached at **Appendix 2**.

It is important that schools review their emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the school’s COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the schools existing emergency procedures should be documented.

Schools should also review their existing risk assessments to consider any new risks that arise due to the school’s COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school’s current risk assessments should also be documented.

#### Risk Assessment & Amelioration

Exposure to COVID-19 is a public health risk which affects all citizens. The virus that causes COVID-19 disease is spread from people in fluid and in droplets scattered from the nose or mouth of an infected person when the person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or speaks. The fluid or droplets land on objects and surfaces around the infected person. Other people contaminate their hands by touching

these objects or surfaces and then bring the virus into contact with their eyes, nose or mouth by touching them with their contaminated hands.

COVID-19 can also spread if droplets from an infected person land directly on the mucous membranes of the eye, nose or mouth of a person standing close to them. It is still not known how long the virus survives on surfaces in different conditions.

The period of survival may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment). Studies indicate that it can persist on surfaces for hours and up to several days in the absence of effective cleaning.

While people are most likely to pass on the infection when they have symptoms, current information suggests that some infected people spread the virus to others prior to developing or displaying symptoms themselves.

Public health guidance is that a distance of 2m should be maintained between people to reduce the potential of transferring the virus.

Staff will familiarise themselves with the [symptoms of COVID-19 infection](#). Where a staff member has symptoms of COVID-19, they are to self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice. They must also communicate this to the principal.

Staff will only congregate outside the school building, in groups of 4 or fewer, maintaining a 2m minimum distance.

Where multiple staff members are attending school, the principal/ other designated staff member will arrive first, and open the building in such a manner as to facilitate access in line with the fire & emergency evacuation plan in reverse.

No two people should be on the corridor at any one time. Staff are to use toilets in their own buildings, and to wash their hands at regular intervals.

Staff are to spend as little time as possible on the premises.

Staff are required to self-regulate, in relation to any personal individual risk factors, and inform the principal that they are not attending school. In such instances, staff may attend school in their own time, when they are assured that nobody else is present. This must be notified to the principal.

The principal will keep a log of who was on the premises, when, and for how long, to assist with contact tracing as necessary. A sample log is on page 11 of the [NSAI Guidelines for COVID-19](#)

## 5. GENERAL ADVICE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. They are:

- ✓ High temperature
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- ✓ Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a school is to minimise the risk of introduction of the disease into the school setting in the first place.

This can be achieved through the following measures:

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other acute infectious diseases not to attend school, to phone their GP and follow the HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have been identified by the HSE as contact of a person with COVID-19 not to attend schools and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.
- Ensure that staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
- Everyone entering the school building should be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
- Visitors to school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contact point.

Staff, pupils and visitors should at all times adhere to the up to date advice and instructions of the public health authorities in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

Updated advice from the HSE is available on its website – <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools. Scoil Mhuire Allenwood N.S. will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

The Department has been working closely with the HSE and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) to develop health advice which has been tailored to the needs of schools in order to support schools in planning for reopening in autumn. The link to the Interim Public Health recommendations for the reopening of schools can be found here

(<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a0bff-reopening-our-primary-and-special-schools/#returning-to-school>)

The advice will continue to be updated in line with public health advice generally and will inform the development of more detailed guidance for schools by the Department of Education.

<https://www.education.ie/en/covid-19/interim-recommendations-for-the-reopening-of-schools-and-educational-facilities.pdf>

Scoil Mhuire Allenwood will advise staff and pupils to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a test

We will also advise staff and pupils not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:  
if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19  
if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus

If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.

Advise staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;

### *Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19 Wash your hands frequently*

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of

COVID-Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

For advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link will be helpful:  
<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

### *Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers*

Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of a hand sanitisers (when hands are clean).

Hand sanitisers are more readily deployed in school settings to avoid disruption to teaching and learning and to avoid congestion of staff and pupils waiting to use hand washing facilities.

They will be available at entry and exit points and in each classroom.

There is a requirement for access to hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands, for example playing outside or certain sporting activities as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands

- Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame

### *Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth*

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.

### *Physical distancing*

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace.

Guidance on the physical distancing requirements will be informed by public health advice for schools. Interim public health advice has been received from the (Health Protection Surveillance Centre) HPSC and is available at this link as outlined above. This advice will be updated over the summer period and the Department will work with the education partners to implement this advice for the safe re-opening of schools.

### *Ventilation*

The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice '*Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools*' The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are

not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

From September 2021 each classroom will be equipped with a CO2 monitor to ensure that the quality of air flow in the room is adequate.

### *Practice respiratory hygiene*

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid- 19.

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly and regularly can help stop the spread of the virus. It is, therefore, crucial that all staff adhere to this advice and adopt the following practices as strictly as possible.

#### Do

- Wash your hands properly and often
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

#### Do Not

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.

#### People at very high risk (extremely vulnerable):

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are defined as being at very high risk. The HSE has set out these groups, which include people who:

The list of people in very high risk groups include people who:

- are over 70 years of age - even if you're fit and well
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)

- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and you are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Staff who are in this group should self-declare on the Return to Work form if they believe that they are at very high risk. Details of the leave arrangements that will apply will be updated by the Department of Education and Skills.

If the Board/Principal is unsure whether or not staff fall into the very high-risk category, advice will be sought from the Occupational Health Service.

## 6. CONTROL MEASURES

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors as far as possible within the school .

These control measures are outlined in this document.

The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

*Staff, in particular, should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.*

The following control measures have been put in place:

### *i. Return to Work Form*

Staff will be required to complete a RTW form at least 3 days prior to any return to the school facility (see section 2 above). The purpose of the RTW form is to get confirmation from staff that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has no symptoms of Covid-19 and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.

### *ii. Induction Training*

All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. The aim of such training is to ensure that staff have full knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health
- Covid-19 symptoms
- What to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school
- Outline of the Covid-19 response plan

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of Covid-19 and with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the Covid-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal.

**Note: Induction Training for reopening schools in the new school year will be developed by the Department in consultation with stakeholders and made available for all schools and staff.**

The Department has prepared short induction training for schools operating the summer provision this year. It is intended that this training will be updated and become more comprehensive to cover all aspects of the return to school safely protocols. The Induction training for the Summer Provision may be of interest in the context of the kind of training which staff will need to undertake is available at the following link.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/summer-education-programme-2020.html#SchoolBased>

### *iii. Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette*

It is crucial that all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Guidance documentation and Information posters will be available at various locations within the school facility. Information posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school facility including offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilet areas. Such are intended to inform but also remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitisers will be available at multiple locations within the school facility and should be available in each classroom.

The Department has arranged for a drawdown framework to be established to enable schools purchase hand-sanitisers and any other necessary PPE supplies for use in the school. The procurement process for this framework has already commenced and it is intended these materials will be available in early August.

### *iv. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*

#### Medical Grade Masks

Scoil Mhuire Allenwood will provide medical grade masks in the EN16483 category to all SNAs and teachers and those staff by necessity that need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs.

PPE will not be required to be worn within the school facility according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

Such include roles where:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. This will be updated as appropriate in line with advice from the HPSC.

Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

The use of a face covering will conceal facial expression and can make communication difficult and as such may not be practical in a school setting. However the wearing of a visor as an alternative to a facial covering may be considered where there is a concern that physical distancing cannot be maintained, there will be prolonged close contact and/or that exposure to fluid/respiratory droplets is likely.

#### **Wearing of Gloves:**

The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by pupils or staff is not appropriate. It does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves. Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

#### *v. Cleaning*

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school will be made.

Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces shall be conducted, in particular, toilets, lifts, door handles and kitchens. Cleaning will be performed regularly and whenever facilities or surfaces are visibly dirty.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building.

Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

Shower facilities shall not be available for use by staff or pupils due to the increased risk associated with communal shower facilities and areas. This shall be reviewed in line with government guidance.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.).

#### *vi. Access to the school building /contact log*

Access to the school facility will be in line with agreed school procedures.

Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents/guardians will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities should be maintained. The school should maintain a log of staff and students contacts. In addition see visitor contact log at **Appendix 3**.

#### *vii. First Aid/emergency procedure*

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in the Scoil Mhuire Allenwood N.S.

In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 Contact the principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident.

## 7. DEALING WITH A SUSPECTED CASE OF COVID-19

As outlined above, a staff member who has symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the school premises. However, COVID-19 may have a rapid onset. Where a staff member realises that they are symptomatic while on the school site, they should immediately close the internal door of the room in which they are. Due to the risk amelioration outlined above, they will be alone in the room.

The staff member should contact the principal immediately, whether by mobile phone call, or message.

The principal will attend at the room with appropriate PPE as is available, wearing the same, disposable tissue, and a waste bag, and escort the staff member to their transport, advising that they contact their GP enroute home.

Where the staff member does not have personal transport at the school, they will remain in the room with the window open until a family member arrives to collect them. The staff member will be facilitated to contact their GP during this time.

The staff member will be advised to cough/sneeze into disposable tissue and dispose of that into the bag provided.

### **Contact with Confirmed Cases**

If a confirmed case is identified in the school, staff who have had close contact will be asked to stay at home for 14 days from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case and follow the [restricted movements guidance on the HSE website](#).

If the person develops new symptoms or their existing symptoms worsen within their 14-day observation period, they should call their doctor for reassessment.

Personnel who have been in close contact with a confirmed case include:

- any individual who has had greater than 15 minutes face-to-face (<2 metres distance) contact with a confirmed case, in any setting
- household contacts
- passengers on an aircraft sitting within two seats (in any direction) of a confirmed case, travel companions or persons providing care, and crew members serving in the section of the aircraft where the index case was seated
- for those contacts who have shared a space with a confirmed case for >2 hours, a risk assessment will be undertaken by PH taking into consideration the size of the room, ventilation and the distance from the case. This may include office and training settings and any sort of large conveyance

Personnel who have been in casual contact with a confirmed case include:

- any individual who has shared a closed space with a confirmed case for less than two hours
- Passengers on an aircraft sitting beyond two seats (in any direction) of a confirmed case
- Any individual who has shared a closed space with a confirmed case for longer than two hours, but following risk assessment, does not meet the definition of a close contact

### **Dealing with a confirmed case**

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The following outlines how a school should deal with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting.

A designated isolation area should be identified within the school building. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of COVID-19 should be considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases put in place. The designated isolation area should be behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils. If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately;
- Isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times;
- The isolation area does not have to be a room but if it is not a room it should be 2m away from others in the room;
- If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m, a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;
- Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
- Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;
- Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided;
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used;
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved – (*details at Section 7*).

The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times. School staff should be encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes. Both in and out of the school setting (see section 5.1).

## **8. STAFF DUTIES**

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their

colleagues and other parties. In order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Adhere to the School Covid-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play.
- ii. Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- iii. Make themselves aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- iv. Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid-19.
- v. Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
- vi. If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- vii. Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- viii. Must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to Covid-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- ix. Must complete Covid-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- x. Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- xi. Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- xii. Not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
  - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
  - If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- xiii. Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school
- xiv. Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

## 9. COVID RELATED ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with DES.

## 10. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE AND WELLBEING PROGRAMME

The Board of Management aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff (physical, mental, spiritual etc.) both at work, whether in the school facility or at home and outside of work. The Board of Management is mindful that the support and promotion of staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.

The Board of Management aims to foster a culture and work environment that support healthy behaviours and staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to staff as well as organising suitable support programmes, initiatives and events.

These are challenging times for everyone. Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the principal.

# Appendix 1

## Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19

### Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19

This questionnaire must be completed by staff at least 3 days in advance of returning to work.

If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to work.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

	Questions	YES	NO
1.	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu like symptoms now or in the past 14 days?		
2.	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3.	In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19?		
4.	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time?		
5.	Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time?		
6.	Have you been advised by your doctor that you are in the very high risk group? If yes, please liaise with your doctor and Principal re return to work.		
7.	Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?		

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test. Please note: The organisation is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 2

COVID-19 Risk Template (List identifies COVID-19 as the hazard and outlines control measures required to deal with this risk)

Hazards	Is the hazard present ? Y/N	What is the risk?	Risk rating H=High M=Medium L=Low	Controls (When all controls are in place risk will be reduced)	Is this control in place?	Action/to do list/outstanding controls  *Risk rating applies to outstanding controls outlined in this column	Person responsible	Signature and date when action completed
Covid-19	N	Illness	H	School Covid19 Response Plan in place in line with Department of Education and Skills guidance and the Return to Work Safely Protocol and public health advice		<i>Examples of Actions</i>  Follow public health guidance from HSE re hygiene and respiratory etiquette  Complete School COVID-19 Policy Statement  Return to Work Forms received and reviewed  Undertake Induction Training  Maintain log of staff, student and visitors	Name of staff member	

If there is one or more High Risk (H) actions needed, then the risk of injury could be high and immediate action should be taken. Medium Risk (M) actions should be dealt with as soon as possible. Low Risk (L) actions should be dealt with as soon as practicable.

Risk Assessment carried out by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: / /

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