

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál

Creagh,

Ballinasloe

Roll Number: 17198S



School Covid-19 Response Plan

School year: September 2021- June 2022

| | Date |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Ratified By BoM: | August 2020, March 2021 |

Signed: Frank Gallagher: Chairperson BoM.

Noel Lohan: Principal, Creagh N.S.

Date: August 2020 (Updated August 2021/ December 2021)

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1) Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and helpful guidance for the safe operation through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19 in Creagh National School. It provides key messages to minimize the risk of COVID-19 for staff, pupils, families and the wider community while recognising the importance of education for the health and wellbeing of pupils and society as a whole.

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken in our school to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself.

It is intended that arrangements and protocols in this Response Plan will be clearly and regularly communicated to staff, parents, pupils and community through a variety of methods including: text a parent, website, Aladdin, newsletters, phone-calls, posters and signage and emails.

Documents used to inform our Response Plan include:

- [COVID-19 Interim Recommendations for the reopening of schools and educational facilities; HPSC](#)

The Following Documents can be accessed at [gov.ie/back to school](https://www.gov.ie/back-to-school).

- [Roadmap for the Full Return to School; DES](#)
- [Covid Response Plan for Primary and Special Schools; DES](#)
- [Supporting The Wellbeing of School Communities; DES](#)
- [Returning to school Curriculum guidance for primary school leaders and teachers; DES](#)
- [Circular 0045/2020 : COVID-19 operational supports for the full return to school](#)
- [Illustrative primary classroom layouts as referenced in the Roadmap for the Full Return to School](#)
- [Maintaining Physical Distance in the Classroom](#)
- [Illustrative SEN Classroom layouts as referenced in the Roadmap for the Full Return to School](#)
- [Guidance for Primary Schools & Special Schools on PPE, Consumables and Equipment](#)
- Circular 0049/2020 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools.](#)
- **(August 2021 Update)** Updated Response plan
[gov.ie - COVID-19 response plan for the safe and sustainable operation of primary and special schools \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/covid-19-response-plan-for-the-safe-and-sustainable-operation-of-primary-and-special-schools)
- Letter from Deirdre Shanley to schools on 12 August 2021 – click [here](#)
- [Circular 42/2021](#) “*Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools*”
- Updated [Ventilation Guide May 2021](#)

Guidance on Contact Tracing in Primary Schools (November 2021)

Face Coverings guidance: (December 2021)

- [Face Coverings in Primary Schools](#) :
- Letter from CMO to parents via school
- [Face Covering Poster](#)
- [FAQ on face coverings:](#)

This plan will be published on our school website creaghsonline.com and updated regularly as a live document.

2. The Purpose / Rationale of the Creagh N.S. Covid Response Plan

Our Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management of Creagh National School in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our school environment.

It details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government's '*Return to Work Safely Protocol*', the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

We are determined that the resumption of school-based teaching and learning and the reopening of our school facilities complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department. By doing so, we minimise the risk to pupils, staff and others.

Our response plan supports the sustainable reopening of school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the pupils in our school. The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice as appropriate for primary and special schools.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, pupils and parents. Some of the steps that we have taken to ensure this collaborative approach include;

- The formulation of a **Re-opening planning committee** consisting of Senior and Middle management members of staff, the chairperson of the BoM, the school Principal, the caretaker and the Chairperson of the P.A..
- Regular communication with all staff members via text, phone and Aladdin.
- The setting up of a designated website page detailing procedures for re-opening the school.
- Weekly information letters to parents during August.
- An induction day on August 31st for children before the school year begins on September 1st. Information sent put to parents and pupils prior to the March re-openings via website/ seesaw/ text and email.
- An information day for all staff on Friday the 28th of August (Croke Park hours... a venue with accommodation to suit the whole staff has been sourced) (**March update**) Staff meetings were organised prior to the re-opening for infants to 2nd class and again prior to the re-opening for 3rd – 6th class in March 2021.
- An FAQ section regarding school re-opening on the school website.
- The draft Covid Response Plan has been published on the school website prior to ratification by the Board and contributions have been welcomed from both staff and parents.

- Regular updates and discussion of protocols during staff meetings.
- Parents of 'at risk' pupils will be consulted as to the specific requirements for their child.
Likewise, 'at risk' staff will be contacted by the principal in order to ensure that their needs are met.
- The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan.

3: Creagh N.S Policy Statement

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál (Creagh National School) 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 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 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 (Majella O Rourke and DLWR Siobhán Carty), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed:

_____ Aine Ni Chollerain (Bleahene) Principal: Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál

_____ Frank Gallagher, Chairperson BoM Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál

Date: August 2021/ March 2021/ August 2021

4) Planning and Preparing for Return to School

Planning and Systems:

Dissemination of Information:

- The school will ensure to keep up to date with public health advice, changes to any government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education Updates. This will be done by checking into [gov.ie/back to school](https://www.gov.ie/back-to-school). On a daily basis as well as using the IPPN and INTO websites. The Principal and Deputy will have responsibility for this.
- When new information or advice is issued, it will be passed on in a timely manner to staff via Aladdin and to parents using text a parent alerting them to new items on the school website. The school is currently in the process of collecting a database of emails from parents so that relevant documents could be forwarded in this manner too at a future date. Pupils will be advised of any relevant new information by the class teachers and where appropriate or by the school principal. A dedicated Covid-19 page will be used on the website. The Deputy Principal will also liaise regularly with the chairperson of the P.A. to ensure effective communication between school and parents.
- Mrs. Áine Bleahene will act as **Covid-19 Return to Work Co-coordinator** for Creagh National School in September 2021.
- The Covid Response Plan has been published on the school website prior to ratification by the Board. It has also been shared with all staff via Aladdin. Contributions have been welcomed from both staff and parents.

4.1 Induction Training

- There has been induction training for all staff on the Staff induction day on the 31th of August 2021 revising practices used in the school year 2020/2021. **New staff attended induction before this date. Staff who return to school after this date will be forwarded these materials and expected to become familiar with the schools before they return.** These inductions are co-ordinated by the deputy principal/principal.
- The Following materials are used for the purposes of this training.
 - A revision of the training materials provided by the Department of Education

Government Induction Training

- Outline of Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health
- Summary of Covid-19 symptoms;
- Procedure for what to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school;

- Updated Covid-19 Response Plan.
- The control measures in place in the school. (Social distancing, Hand Hygiene, Contact tracing, P.P.E)
- The duties and responsibilities for all staff in preventing the spread of Covid-19.
- Explanation of the Covid-19 contact tracing form.
- 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, who is supported in this role by the BOM.

4.2 Procedure for Return to Work:

- In order to return to the workplace, staff of Creagh National School must complete a COVID-19 [Return to Work \(RTW\)](#) form. This form will be in the format of a digital document in the school year 2021/2022 and the link will be circulated to all members of staff in advance of opening.
- After all subsequent staff absences, staff will also fill in this digital form. All students on work experience will also be required to fill in this form.
- The principal/ deputy principal will also provide details of the **Induction Training** for completion by staff 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.
- Teachers will be referred to circular 0049/ 2020 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools.](#)
- There is some school staff that may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at **very high risk**. This following list has been updated in line with Circular 0049/2020.

People at very high risk (extremely vulnerable):

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

- are over 70 years of age - even if 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
- have severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means they 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 are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, which will be in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, will be updated by the Department of Education following consultation with management bodies and unions and a circular will issue to all schools. Currently this is [Circular 0049/2020](#)

(4.3)Lead Worker Representative

The Protocol provides for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in each workplace. The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

Majella O Rourke has been appointed as LWR. (October 2021)

Miss Siobhan Carty has been appointed as Deputy Lead Worker Representative.

This section sets out how the provisions will operate in schools. The process for appointment of the lead worker representative in schools has been agreed centrally between the Department of Education and the education partners.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management/ Education and Training Board and school management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach are key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared responsibility in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

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

Role of the Lead Worker Representative

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, 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 school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

In our school, a Deputy Lead Worker Representative will be appointed in addition to the LWR. The role of the Deputy LWR will be to:

- deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent.
- assist the LWR in their duties as set out above; and
- deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of lead worker representatives: | Contact details: |
| LWR: Majella O Rourke DLWR: Siobhan Carty | (Numbers and emails available on request) |

All staff, pupils, parents, 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.

Full details of the arrangements which will apply for the L.W.R. in primary and special schools are set out at *Appendix 3*.

4.4) Signage

The Schools will display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene. These signs will be displayed in the following areas:

- ✓ Entrances and Exits
- ✓ Classrooms and SEN rooms
- ✓ Offices and non-tutorial rooms (Library, Hall, Meetings Room, Photocopying Room)
- ✓ Toilets and sink areas
- ✓ Staffrooms
- ✓ Corridors

(The Department will provide printed posters to schools, with age appropriate key health messages – hand washing, sneeze and cough etiquette etc. This will be made available to all schools and staff in advance of school reopening. These have not yet been issued.

The signs will cover the following area

- ✓ General advice to schools
- ✓ Cough etiquette
- ✓ Child hand washing
- ✓ Hand hygiene adults
- ✓ Use of Face coverings
- ✓ Stay safe at Work
- ✓ How to use hand sanitiser
- ✓ Visitors at reception

The school will use [this link](#) to these posters to source additional signage

(March update) The school has invested in additional signs with a great deal of the information in pictorial format in order to cater to the families with EAL. These signs are distributed around the outside of the school, adjacent to the gates, in order to guard against congregating. (March 2021)

4.5. Preparing the School Building for Re-Opening:

○ Review of the school Building (Systems and Mechanics)

The School caretaker in consultation with the principal will ensure that the following are in place.

- ✓ Flushing the water system at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
- ✓ Checking the school equipment and mechanical ventilation for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
- ✓ Ensuring the bin collections and other essential services resumed.

○ Making Changes to Our School Layout to support Physical distancing:

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19 . The School will reconfigure classrooms and other areas in line with the guidance issues to support physical in advance of school reopening. These areas include:

- ✓ School Hall
- ✓ Staffrooms
- ✓ Library
- ✓ Classroom and outdoor areas
- Any unnecessary cabinets, furniture etc. will be removed to maximise the space in the classroom. (This will be done by the aide and the school caretaker once staff have identified essential requisites)
- A central storage area in the schools for teacher resources will be provided to help maximise the space available within the classroom (The School hall/ School Library)
- Desks and chairs in classrooms will be reconfigured to maximise physical distancing as best as possible using the Department’s illustrative layouts which provide guidance on how best to maximise physical distancing. [Illustrative primary classroom layouts as referenced in the Roadmap for the Full Return to School](#)
- Marking on the floor will be used to ensure distancing between children’s desks.
- An area 2m around the teacher’s desk and whiteboard area will also be marked. This area will be designated for sole use by the teacher.
- Each classroom will be treated as a Class Bubble. There will be limited contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles. (Separate play areas, particular entrances and routes to and from school)

- Classroom pods may be used within classrooms if necessary. 1 m. distance will be kept between pods. This is more likely to occur in younger classes to facilitate the use of physical resources to assist learning.
- In as far as possible, Classes from 3rd Class upward are allocated to the largest classrooms (as, in line with the public health advice. **(March update)**: In our school, we are advocating a minimal distance of 1m between all children in all classes.
- The Junior and Senior Infant Classrooms are spaced at opposite ends of the school to minimize parental gathering at reception and collection times. (Infant classes to use separate gates and entry points)
- The hall and library will be used to store excess furniture and teacher resources. Additional staffroom accommodation will be created using the meeting room and the back of the school hall.
- **(March Update)**The library has been re-configured to act as an additional staffroom to ensure a minimal distance of 2m between staff/ adults at break times.

The following guidance will be used to facilitate these changes.

[Maintaining Physical Distance in the Classroom Checklist for Primary Schools & Special Schools](#)

Entrance and Assembly areas:

- Each classroom /bubble will be allocated a specific reception point/ play area. They will also be designated a specific entry and exit route to and from their classrooms. **(See appendix 10 for school map indicating areas)**
- These areas will be indicated by signs and ground markings and will be communicated to parents and children before returning to school using the school website/ text a parent and Seesaw.
- An additional exit to the school (To the left of the basketball court) has been created for 6th class.
- Additional play/reception outdoor areas have been created to the front and side of the school. (2nd and third class)

Staggered opening times:

In order to ensure that social distancing can occur and children can enter the school premises in a manner that complies with health and safety guidelines, it will be necessary to stagger opening times in the school in the following manner.

- **The school day for 1st to 6th class begins at 9:20 am. and finishes at 3 pm.**
- **The school day for Infant classes begins at 9:25 am and finishes at 2:05 pm**

4.6) Health and Safety Risk Assessment:

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment.

- The school will review our 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 school's existing emergency procedures will be documented and incorporated into the school's safety statement.
- The school will also review our 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 will also be documented and incorporated into the school safety statement.
- Our School's Covid-19 Risk assessment is available to view on the school website and is regularly updated by the school's safety officer (Caroline Gallagher) and the Covid Response Officer (Áine Bleahene)

4.7) Access to School and Contact Log

- Access to the school building will be in line with agreed school procedures.
 - All visitors to the school will enter via the main entrance.
 - All visitors will be admitted by the school secretary or school principal
 - Children will enter and exit the school via allocated entry and exit points.
 - All exits will be locked following reception of the children.
 - Visitors need to hand sanitise on entry.
 - All visitors should wear face coverings.
 - All visitors to the school will sign in and out using the school contact log (see Appendix 6) Visitors should provide their own pens. This will facilitate 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.
- **Where possible, all meetings between parents and teachers will be held remotely. Staff meetings will be held remotely and BOM meetings will be held remotely.**
- Arrangements for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the principal.
- The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools and centres for education to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

- The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found here: <https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-work-safely-protocol>
- All school records and data must be maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts. The responsibility for compliance with the legislation rests with Creagh N.S. School (or ETB) in its role as data controller.

5.) Control Measures –To prevent Introduction and spread of Covid-18 in Schools

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student-student, teacher-teacher and teacher-student and must be managed in all settings.

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 and visitors as far as possible within the school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an on-going basis.

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

- ✓ *Staff 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.*

Minimising the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into Creagh National School:

- **(March update)** Parents will be expected to complete the online Parental Declaration Form (Available at <https://www.creaghsonline.com/parental-declaration-form.html>) before their child returns to school following any absences.
- We will promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms (*details at Section 5.1*);
 - High temperature
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
 - Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

- We 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 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 is 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;
- Staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school are advised to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly.
- Staff and pupils will be informed of the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (*details at Section 8*);
- Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- Essential visitors to the school during the day will be by prior arrangement. This will usually mean arranging an appointment through the school secretary. Visitors will be received at the main entrance, where they will wait until admitted by the school secretary or school principal and sign the contact form.
- Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors.
- **All visitors to the school will** be asked to wear a face covering in line with guidance issues to schools [Guidance for Primary Schools & Special Schools on PPE, Consumables and Equipment](#)
- **All parents/ guardians will be asked to wear a face mask when dropping off or collecting a child from the school. (March update)**
- **Children from 3rd class to sixth class will be required to wear facemasks from December 6th 2021. See**
- **Know the Symptoms of COVID-19**

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms of coronavirus (which includes the DELTA variant).

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).

- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
- Fatigue
- Aches and Pains

Other uncommon symptoms of coronavirus include:

- sore throat
- headaches
- runny or stuffy noses
- feeling sick or vomiting
- diarrhoea

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of [cold](#) and [flu](#).

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), [self-isolate](#) (stay in your room) and phone your family doctor straight away to see if you need [a free COVID-19 test](#).

Getting an early diagnosis means, you can get the help you need and take steps to avoid spreading the virus, if you have it.

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE [Website](#). Symptoms may be subject to change so regular review of the HSE Website is advised. If you **do not** have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a [COVID-19 walk-in test centre](#).

COVID-19 Tracker App

COVID Tracker app is a free and easy-to-use mobile phone app that will:

- alert you if you have been in [close contact](#) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)
- keep other app users safe by alerting them if you test positive for COVID-19
- give you advice on what to do if you have symptoms

You can download the free app from [Apple's AppStore](#) or the [GooglePlay store](#)

Employers and workers must keep themselves up to date on Public Health information as this can be updated on a regular basis. Public Health information on [close contacts, casual contacts and testing](#) is available from the HSE website.

5.1) Respiratory Hygiene

We will make sure that every member of the school is reminded to follow good respiratory hygiene.

This means:

- ✓ Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- ✓ Disposing of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.

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

5.2) Hand Hygiene

Staff and pupils will understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.

Our school will promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the schools on how to wash your hands. We will follow the HSE guidelines on hand washing: <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

How to wash your hands with soap and water

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together palm to palm until the soap forms lather.
3. Rub the back of one hand with your palm and fingers spread so you wash between fingers. Repeat with the other hand.
4. Interlock the top of your hands and rub your fingertips - this cleans your fingertips and knuckles.
5. Then finally grasp your thumb tightly and twist to make sure your thumbs are cleaned. Repeat with the other hand.

6. This should take at least 20 seconds.
 7. Rinse your hands under running water.
 8. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel.
- Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).
 - ✓ We will manage the use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins so as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.
 - ✓ There will be three sinks with warm running water in each classroom.
 - ✓ There will also be 3 hand towel dispensers in each classroom with 3 bins to hold used towels. These will be emptied regularly.
 - ✓ Each classroom will also be fitted with wall mounted hand sanitisers.
 - ✓ SEN rooms, offices and other general rooms will be fitted with wall mounted hand sanitisers.
 - ✓ In order to facilitate more efficient entry into the school, each teacher will also be equipped with a hand held sanitiser for dispensing by the teacher.
 - Children will be required to wash their hands 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.
 - We will use hand sanitiser dispensers at exit and entry points of the school and classrooms. Care will be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risks of falls. (**March update: Alcohol-based sanitizer will not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.**)
 - Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities will be provided in all toilets, kitchens and any food preparation areas.
 - Hand washing facilities will be maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels will be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them. **The school care taker will have responsibility for this.**
 - Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing will be laminated and placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities.
 - Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean).
 - Evidence of effectiveness is best for alcohol based hand rubs but non-alcohol based hand rubs can be used too.
 - When hand rubs/gels are being used in school care should be taken to ensure that pupils do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic.

- Young children will not have independent use of containers of alcohol gel.

Frequency of Hand Hygiene

Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing outdoors;
- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.

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 school will procure hand sanitisers and any other necessary PPE using this procurement. We will also be guided by the [Guidance for Primary Schools & Special Schools on PPE, Consumables and Equipment](#) issued by the DES on August 7th.

“It is recommended that teachers and staff in primary schools wear a face-covering when a physical distance of 2 meters from other staff or children cannot be maintained.

“In certain situations the use of clear visors should be considered, for example staff interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.

5.3) Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will be usefully applied in our school setting allowing for some flexibility when needed. It will be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing will look different across the various ages and stages of learning. Care will be taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at times.

It is also recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from pupils and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the pupil i.e. if a child sustains an injury and requires first aid.

- **However, where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m.**
- **They should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.**

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

- Increasing separation
- Decreasing interaction

Increasing separation

The guidance documents provided by the Department of Education on optimal school layout and referenced at **Section 4.5** above will be used by our school to increase separation to the greatest degree possible

To maintain physical distancing in the classroom our school will

1. Reconfigure class spaces to maximise physical distancing
2. Utilise and reconfigure all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing.
(*This is laid out in section 4.5*)

Funding will be used where appropriate under the enhanced minor works grant to facilitate this classroom re-configuration works.

The teacher's desk should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks. This area will be marked by tape as described in section 4.5

Decreasing interaction

The extent to which decreasing interaction is possible in our school will depend on the school setting and a common-sense approach is required recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between pupils.

- ✓ **In our school 1m will be maintained between desks or between individual pupils from 3rd – 6th class.**
- ✓ **It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors. Therefore this 1m distance will not be required from Infants – 2nd class.**
- ✓ Where possible work stations should be allocated consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces which are shared.
- Sometimes, where necessary, pupils/ teachers may be structured pupils into Class Bubbles (i.e. a class grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible) and discrete groups or “Pods” within those class bubbles, to the extent that this is practical.
- If the class is divided into Pods, there should be at least (1m distance) between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible.
- Generally speaking the objective is to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles (and Pods within those Class Bubbles) as much as possible, rather than to

avoid all contact between Pods, as the latter will not always be possible. **To facilitate this, the school has invested heavily in topping up banks of books in the school so that each class will have its own supply and each pupil will be allocated their own individual numbered copy, therefore limiting the need for sharing of resources. (Mrs Gallagher has responsibility for this area)**

- The aim of the system within the school is that class grouping mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until departure at the end of the school day. The Pods within those Class Bubbles is an additional measure, to limit the extent of close contact within the Class Bubble.
- Pod sizes will be kept as small as is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context.
- To the greatest extent possible, pupils and teaching staff will consistently be in the same Class Bubbles although this will not be possible at all times and there will be some flexibility with younger classes and SEN.

The Following are the specific measures to be taken during SET interventions:

Ready Steady Maths

- The sessions occur between 11:45am. And 12:05 pm every morning in a variety of rooms, including the child's classroom, in order to conform to 'Prevention of Covid-19 Protocols' as per our Plan and Risk Assessment.
- Each group does one different activity per day (5 activities per week)
- Groups do not be moving from station to station during the sessions.
- The teachers ensure that all items are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised after use by each group.
- The seating areas and tables are wiped down before and after each session.
- Children are spaced out during sessions as they will not be in their usual groupings.
- Children do not be sharing resources.
- Participants are confined to children from class at a time.

Literacy Lift-off

- The sessions occur between 9:50 am. and 10:30 every morning in a variety of rooms, including the child's classroom, in order to conform to 'Prevention of Covid-19 Protocols' as per our Plan and Risk Assessment.
- Groups do not move from station to station during the sessions. Each teacher has the same group of children for all stations throughout the 6 weeks.
- Each SEN teacher brings a group to a room big enough for the support to take place. Teaching materials will be left in this room. The Classroom is used for 2 groups.
- Books are quarantined for 72 hours between use by children
- Teachers/ staff members wear a mask where 2m physical distancing is not possible. .
- Children sanitise hands before and after intervention and the seating areas and tables are wiped down before and after each session.
- Children are spaced out during sessions as they will not be in their usual groupings.
- Children do not sharing resources.
- Participants will be confined to children from Ms one class at a time.

- Each Different Class Bubbles will or have separate areas at break or meal times. **When a teacher is on duty, the SEN teacher assigned to their room will be responsible for bringing that class to and from the designated areas at break times and at the end of the school day.**
- Sharing educational material between Pods will be avoided/minimised where possible.
- Staff members who move from class bubble to class bubble should be limited as much as possible. **To facilitate this SNAs and children with access to SNA support have had to be redistributed so that they are working in a minimal amount of different settings**
- **All classes will enter the school through a designated entrance, through a designated route and in a staggered manner : (see map : Appendix 10 for details)**

Staggered opening times

In order to ensure that social distancing can occur and children can enter the school premises in a manner that complies with health and safety guidelines, it will be necessary to stagger opening times in the school in the following manner.

- ✓ **The school day for 1st to 6th class begins at 9:20 am. and finishes at 3 pm.**
- ✓ **The school day for Infant classes begins at 9:30 am and finishes at 2:10 pm**

(The infant day will be reviewed after two weeks)

- **There will be minimal interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas as only one class will be moving through an area at a time.**
- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) will be discouraged.
- Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it will be organized by the teacher to the greatest degree possible to minimize congregation at the shared resource. **Teachers will practice these procedures and routines with the children in the opening days of school.**
- Staff and pupils will avoid sharing of personal items. **Each pupil will be supplied a box. They will keep all their requisites/ books in this box. Coats/bags/gear will all be stored by the pupil in their own area (Cloakrooms will not be used as coats will hang on the backs of chairs and bags will under the table or on the backs of chairs)**
- Pupils will be encouraged to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth).
- Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device should be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged. Children will not be sharing iPads. Children will not be allowed to collect or transport the iPad trolley throughout the school. Ms Power has responsibility for this area. **(March update)** Additional iPads will be sourced so that there will be enough for two classes at a time to use them.

Ventilation (March update)

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.

- ✓ In our school windows in classrooms will be opened as wide as possible at the start of every day before the reception of pupils and again at the end of each day for a period of 15 minutes.
- ✓ Windows in the staffrooms will be open at these times too.
- ✓ Windows will be kept ajar throughout the day and opened as wide as possible again at break times.
- ✓ Wherever possible, doors will be kept open at break times.
- ✓ The heat will be kept on longer during the day and pupils will be encouraged to wear extra clothing during colder weather,

Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school

School drop off/collection

- Each class will be allocated a specific gate and reception area. This will be communicated to parents via text/ website prior to re-opening in March. Walking and cycling to school will be encouraged as much as possible.
- Children from 1st – 6th class are expected to enter the gate and go to their assigned areas unaccompanied.
- Stewards from the Parents Association and teaching staff will be available to assist children in the first few days of return/reopening.
- Parents of children in Infants should accompany their children to their designated areas on the school grounds. This is where these children will also be collected at the end of the school day. 2m social distancing must apply. We ask that only one parent accompany each child.
- It is expected that children in first class should be able to make their own way to their designated areas.
- **Parents should not congregate at the school gates.** Parents should also wear masks/ face coverings to the school gates/ vicinity whenever they are dropping off/ collecting children from/ to

school. Children are encouraged to walk from their cars/ houses if possible. **If parents need to go to the gate, they must wear a mask and socially distance from other adults by 2 metres.**

- Children will wait in their designated areas **on specified marks** (March update) in a distanced manner until brought into their classrooms by their class teacher. They should remain in their areas at all times. **Please ensure that children wear weather appropriate outer gear as it will not be possible for children to wait indoors in the corridors in wet weather as was previously the case.** As routines become more established, it may be possible for some classes to move directly to their classrooms but with over 400 children and 9 entrances, that is not possible at the moment.
- **Parents of infant classes are asked to avoid moving onto the school grounds until 9:15 am to allow for the staggered opening time (Infant Day: 9:25 am – 2:05 pm) and to ensure physical distancing.**

Staff

- **A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff.** This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as the staff room and arriving to work.
- If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much as distance as is possible and guidance on face covering should be observed.
- Physical distancing will be observed between staff members. Additional staff room facilities will be organised.
- Staff meetings should be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing.
- The school has a no hand shaking policy.
- School staff are not encouraged to gather at the beginning or end of the school day.
- Staff can rotate between areas/classes but this should be minimized where possible.

Corridors

- Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.

Yard/Supervision

- The risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.
- Entrance and exits from outdoors breaks will be organised to minimise crowding at the entrance and exits. (see appendix 10 for details_)

- It is not possible to maintain physical distancing when pupils in primary or special schools play together outdoors, but in so far as practical it is helpful to keep to consistent groups.
- Children will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities.
- If equipment is shared, it will be cleaned between uses by different people. **The person finished using the equipment has responsibility for cleaning the equipment** to avoid teachers doubling up on tasks.

5.4) Use of PPE in Schools

The Department has published “[Guidance to Primary and Special Schools on PPE consumables and equipment](#)” on www.gov.ie/backtoschool

This provides schools with the information needed on the appropriate quantities of PPE consumables and equipment to support the safe and sustainable operations of schools.

The updated advice from the HPSC to the Department of Education has recommended that face coverings should be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils. The Department has accepted this recommendation. Accordingly, it is now a requirement for face coverings to be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils. (Please see note re medical grade masks)

Workers should be trained in the proper use, donning/doffing, cleaning, storing and disposal of PPE. The HPSC has produced posters and videos on the correct donning and doffing of PPE available on the HPSC and HSA websites https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/covid-19_business_supports/business_supports/hse-hpsc_posters_and_videos/

PPE will also need to be used at certain work activities or work areas. These might include roles such as:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not in the list of those categorised as people in very high risk groups, or may be living with people who are in a very high risk category
- Administering first aid

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

Reception Areas

Consideration should be given to the use of Perspex in reception areas where it is not possible for staff to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff or pupils. Minor works funding grant can be used for this purpose.

Face Coverings/Masks

The wearing of face coverings or masks in general is not a substitute for other measures outlined below (physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, adequate ventilation, minimising contacts) but they may be used in addition to these protective measures, especially where maintaining physical/social distancing is difficult.

Cloth face coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face coverings coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact. In childcare and educational settings, the implementation of mandatory face-covering usage is challenging, as it is known that children will have a lower tolerance and ability to use the face covering properly, and use of face-coverings by teachers and staff caring for very young children may cause undue stress to the children.

- It is not recommended that children attending primary school wear face-coverings.
- It is now a requirement for face coverings to be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils.
- In certain situations the use of clear visors should be considered, for example staff interacting with pupils with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.

Cloth face coverings should not be worn by any of the following groups:

- Any person with difficulty breathing
- Any person who is unconscious or incapacitated
- Any person who is unable to remove the face-covering without assistance
- Any person who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

Further advice from the HPSC on the use of face coverings in educational settings was received on the 6th August 2020. This advice is available [here](#).

All staff wearing face coverings should be reminded to not touch the face covering and to wash or sanitise their hands (using hand sanitiser) before putting on and after taking off the face covering.

Information should be provided on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6ZqdpLfSqw>

- Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.
- Face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.
- Schools should consider having additional disposable face coverings available for staff in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day.

Whilst staff may wish to utilise their own face covering on a day-to-day basis, schools should have available a stock of additional disposable or multi-use face coverings, or if appropriate face visors, available for staff in case a back-up face covering is needed throughout the day or where required on an ongoing basis.

Medical Grade Masks

Schools must provide medical grade masks in the EN14683 category to all SNAs and teachers in special schools and special classes and those staff by necessity that need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs including School Bus Escorts.

Wearing a face covering or mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic.

Gloves

The use of disposable gloves in the school by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate but **may be necessary for intimate care settings or first aid**. Routine use 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.

- Each member of staff will be provided with a box containing PPE and cleaning equipment as follows:
 - Face masks (Disposable)
 - Gloves (For first Aid and in intimate care settings)
 - Anti-bacterial wipes
 - Aprons
 - Visor/ goggles
 - Antibacterial spray
 - hand gel

- While these will be replenished regularly, **it will be the responsibility of each staff member to let the caretaker know if and when additional requisites are needed.**

6) Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities

Choir/Music Performance

Choir practices/performances and music practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher level of risk and special consideration should be given to how they are held ensuring that the room is well-ventilated and the distance between performers is maintained. For this reason:

- Singing will take place outdoors
- Recorder and tin whistle playing will be deferred until we are advised otherwise.

Sport Activities

We will refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here for guidance. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07253-return-to-sport-protocols/>

In line with the ‘[Returning to school Curriculum guidance for primary school leaders and teachers](#)’ p. 18, we endorse the following:

- Pupils’ physical education is a central part of their wellbeing: it should form a significant component of timetabled programmes upon returning to school.
- We will emphasise strands such as **Athletics or outdoor and adventure activities with particular focus on the strand units of running, jumping, throwing and orienteering.**
- ‘Games’ may also provide suitable learning experiences.
- We will choose learning experiences where pupils can work individually or in small groups (for example, in their pods) with minimal equipment
- We will promote physical activity and movement of a non-contact nature. Opportunities for both indoor and outdoor activity will be exploited during break-times, transitions, play, PE lessons, and across curricular areas.
- During PE lessons we will continue to ensure all pupils engage in aerobic activities as well as skill development, with an emphasis on fundamental movement skills.
- We will actively encourage pupils to be creative, to cooperate with others, to create and modify games, to solve problems, make decisions, engage in peer and self-assessment, and to reflect as part of the planned physical education programme.

SPHE and Wellbeing

Each pupil will start or return to school with his/her own experience of the Covid-19 pandemic. The wider physical, mental, emotional and relationship implications of social distancing, lockdown and possibly bereavement may be significant for some pupils. There will therefore be a focus on wellbeing as a foundation for learning. Teachers will play an important role in supporting positive interactions and routines for the children and in encouraging healthy behaviours as the pupils make sense of their new realities and come to feel safe and secure in their school surroundings. SPHE is particularly important in responding to how Covid-19 has impacted on children in terms of their feelings, thoughts and behaviours. Learning experiences that support children to focus on their strengths, positive attributes and qualities to enable reconnection with the school community will assist in easing the transition back to school. SPHE curriculum content will also be useful in providing general and specific support to pupils who are finding the transition back to school difficult. While teachers will be best placed to consider what aspects of their SPHE programme should be prioritised or revisited in light of the particular context of their class or pupils, we will definitely focus on some of the following Strand Units:

- Self-identity
- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection
- My friends and my family
- Developing citizenship

We will also give Particular attention should be to:

- The importance of personal hygiene and how to wash hands thoroughly, coughing/sneezing according to the medical guidance, and how and when to wear face coverings/masks
- Supporting pupils in managing their feelings, resolving conflicts and coping with uncertainty, as well as new situations brought about by Covid-19 such as loss of a loved one
- Revisiting the Stay Safe Programme or Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Allowing pupils adequate time to re-connect with one another and to (re)establish relationships with peers. Co-operative games and the incorporation of drama activities such as role play and improvisation can support this process.
- Providing children with opportunities to talk about and make sense of their experiences

The school SPHE policy will be updated to reflect this new curricular timetable.

Shared Equipment

Aistear:

- ✓ The infant teachers will meet to agree a timetable for Aistear topics which will ensure that only one class will use topic materials at a time.
- ✓ A period of 72 hours must pass before a new class can use the same materials.
- ✓ Materials/ toys need to be either left for a period of 72 hours or cleaned before another group in the same class uses them
- ✓ (**March update:** An outdoor Aistear area will be facilitated to the rear of the school for all infant classes. Estimated time of delivery April 2021)

The same rules will apply to maths manipulatives.

Toys

- ✓ All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis for example weekly. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.
- ✓ Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.
- ✓ When purchasing toys choose ones that are easy to clean and disinfect (when necessary).
- ✓ If cloth or soft toys are used they should be machine washable.
- ✓ Jigsaws, puzzles and toys that young pupils to those with special educational needs may be inclined to put into their mouths should be capable of being washed and disinfected.
- ✓ All play equipment should be checked for signs of damage for example breaks or cracks. If they cannot be repaired or cleaned they should be discarded.
- ✓ Clean toys and equipment should be stored in a clean container or clean cupboard. The manufacturer's instructions should always be followed.
- ✓ At this time soft modelling materials and play dough where used should be for individual use only.

Cleaning Procedure for Toys

- Wash the toy in warm soapy water, using a brush to get into crevices.
- Rinse the toy in clean water.
- Thoroughly dry the toy.
- Some hard plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher.
- Toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up should be wiped with a damp cloth and dried.
- In some situations toys/equipment may need to be disinfected following cleaning for example: toys/equipment that pupils place in their mouths. Toys/equipment that have been soiled with blood or body fluids or toys where a case of COVID-19 has been identified.

- If disinfection is required: A chlorine releasing disinfectant should be used diluted to a concentration of 1,000ppm available chlorine. The item should be rinsed and dried thoroughly.

Art – Where possible pupils will be provided with individual art and equipment supplies.

Electronics – Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between use and consideration could be given to the use of wipe able covers for electronics to facilitate cleaning. (See procedures for ipads)

Musical Equipment/Instruments – Instruments will not be shared between pupils and if sharing is required, the instruments should be cleaned between uses.

Library Policy – **The School library will not be in operation for the 2020-2021 academic year.**

Instead each class will receive an allocation of library books which they will keep in their classroom. Where practical pupils will have their own books. Textbooks that are shared should be covered in a wipe able plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Pupils will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Shared Sports Equipment –

- The sharing of sports equipment will be minimised.
- **The school hall will not be in use for PE or drama in this academic year therefore all PE for will take place outdoors.**
- **Shared equipment will be cleaned by the teacher after use.**

7) Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools

- Funding has been allocated to schools to support the enhanced cleaning required to minimise the risks of COVID-19.
- The specific advice in relation to school cleaning is set out in the HPSC advice and will be covered in the induction training. This advice sets out the cleaning regime required to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected cases of COVID-19. Schools are asked to carefully read and understand the cleaning advice and to apply that to all areas of the school as appropriate.
- Our School will take particular care of the hygiene arrangements for hand washing and toilet facilities.
- Our school setting will be cleaned at **least once per day**.
- Additional cleaning if available will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

- 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 will 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.
- Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils or bring their own to and from school. (Cup, cutlery, plate etc.)
- Staff will be allocated the staff room area closest to their classroom. Staff should enter and exit the school through the exit nearest their classroom.

Cleaning/Disinfecting rooms where a pupil/staff member with suspected COVID-19 was present

- The room should be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.
- Once the room is vacated the room should not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.
- Disinfection only works on things that are clean. When disinfection is required it is always as well as cleaning.
- Person assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household gloves and a plastic apron.
- Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with chlorine based product (household bleach).
- Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.
- Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.
- If a pupil or staff diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a canteen, play area or if they used the toilet or bathroom facilities, then the areas should be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant (as outlined in the HPSC interim health advice) as soon as is practically possible.

8) **Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19**

- 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 has been identified within the school building. (Disabled Toilets)The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of COVID-19 has been considered and to facilitate that, screens will be erected. Additional cases will use the meeting room. The designated isolation area is behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils. It is also close to the main entrance and the principal's office.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If a teacher in a classroom has a suspected case of Covid/ recognised symptoms, they must alert the principal or the school secretary using either their mobile phone or Aladdin.
- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately;
- The person will be isolated and accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by the principal (or deputy principal) keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person, wearing a mask if applicable and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times. If the principal is unavailable the deputy principal will be alerted and do the same.

Remember that the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same 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;
- The person presenting with symptoms is provided with a mask. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
- The principal/ deputy will 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;
- The person presenting with symptoms will be facilitated to remain in isolation if they cannot immediately go home. They will also be facilitated to call their doctor if necessary. The individual will be reminded and encouraged to avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice will 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, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and they will be advised 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, 999 or 112 will be contacted and informed that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
- The principal/ deputy will carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
- Arrangements will be made 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.

(March update)

School staff will 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.

9) Special Educational Needs

Additional considerations for those with Special Educational Needs

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or appropriate to implement. The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection and where symptoms are present children should not attend school. Similarly staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or symptoms of respiratory illness.

Hand hygiene

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.

Equipment

Some children may have care needs (physical or behavioural) which requires the use of aids and appliances and/or medical equipment for example toileting aids, moving and handling equipment, respiratory equipment. Where cleaning of aids and appliances is carried out in the school it is recommended that a cleaning schedule is provided, detailing when and how the equipment is cleaned and the cleaning products to be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

The following points can guide the development of such cleaning schedule:

- Equipment used to deliver care should be visibly clean;
- Care equipment should be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. Cleaning is generally achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water.
- Equipment that is used on different children must be cleaned and, if required, disinfected immediately after use and before use by another child e.g. toileting aids;
- If equipment is soiled with body fluids:
 - First clean thoroughly with detergent and water;
 - Then disinfect by wiping with a freshly prepared solution of disinfectant;
 - Rinse with water and dry.

1) 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. 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. In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the School COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work (By the 25th of August)
- Must inform the principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
- If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- **(March update)** 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.
- 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
- Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

13) **COVID-19 related Absence Management**

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education. Circular 0049/2020

These can be accessed here: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools.](#)

11) Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective self-care. Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE’s Health Promotion Team.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of ‘Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile’.

Under the EAS, employees have a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc. Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home). A bespoke wellbeing portal and app which offers access to podcasts and blogs on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition is also available. In addition online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided. As part of the services provided by Spectrum Life a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. They will also be providing a series of webinars and presentations to promote staff wellbeing in schools as schools reopen and during the upcoming school year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Template COVID-19 School Policy Statement

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Appendix 2 | Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19 |
| Appendix 3 | Lead Worker Representative |
| Appendix 4 | School Contact Tracing Log |
| Appendix 5 | Checklist for School Managers |
| Appendix 6 | Checklist for Managing a Suspected Case of COVID-19 |
| Appendix 7 | Checklist for Lead Worker Representative |
| Appendix 8 | Checklist for Cleaning |
| Appendix 9 | Risk Assessment Available as a separate document on the website |
| Appendix 10: | Summary of entrance areas |
| Appendix 11: | Schedule for classes entering and leaving classrooms/ Playground |

Appendix 1:

Creagh N.S Policy Statement

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál (Creagh National School) 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 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 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:

_____ Noel Lohan, Principal: Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál

_____ Frank Gallagher, Chairperson BoM Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál

Date: _____

Appendix 2 (Available as a digital document from August 2021)

Updated Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19 (PRW)

Creagh National School

This questionnaire must be completed by staff 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: Creagh NS

Name of Principal: Mrs Aine Bleahene

Date: _____

| | Questions | YES | NO |
|----|--|-----|----|
| 1. | Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, difficulty breathing, loss or change in your sense of smell or taste 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 | Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test? | | |
| 4 | In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19? | | |
| 5 | Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time? | | |
| 6 | Have you been advised to restrict your movements at this time? | | |
| 7 | Have you been advised to cocoon at this time? Note: if you're at very high risk (extremely vulnerable) from COVID-19 you may be advised to cocoon. | | |

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 and have not been advised to restrict my movements.

Please note: The school 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 this data will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed: _____

(This form is available as a digital form from August 2021)

The COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol is designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The Protocol was developed following discussion and agreement between the Government, Trade Unions and Employers at the Labour Employer Economic Forum.

The Protocol provides for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in each workplace. The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

The purpose of this section is to set out the provisions in respect of the LWR in schools. The operation of these arrangements will be kept under review by the parties.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- the [COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol](#);
- the [Guidance and FAQs for Public Service Employers during COVID-19](#);
- COVID-19 Response Plan for Primary and Special Schools (available on the Department of Education website).

1. Collaborative Approach

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management/ Education and Training Board and school management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach are key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared responsibility in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 Response Plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, students or others, they should contact the LWR who will engage with school management.

2. Role of the Lead Worker Representative

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, 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 school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

3. What can a Lead Worker Representative Do?

The LWR may consult with, and make representations to, school management on any issue of concern in relation to COVID-19. These include issues in relation to:

- Cleaning protocols and their implementation
- Physical Distancing
- Implementation of one-way systems in the school to ensure social distancing including when entering and exiting the school
- Hand Hygiene facilities including their location and whether they are stocked and maintained
- Hand sanitising
- Staff awareness around hand hygiene in the school
- Respiratory hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- At Risk Groups

- Visitors/Contractors

4. Lead Worker Representative

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

5. Deputy Lead Worker Representative/ Assistant Lead Worker Representative

In schools with less than 30 staff, a Deputy Lead Worker Representative will be appointed in addition to the LWR. The role of the Deputy LWR will be to deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent.

In schools with 30 or more staff and in all Special schools, an Assistant Lead Worker Representative will be appointed in addition to the LWR. The role of the Assistant LWR will be to:

- assist the LWR in their duties as set out above; and
- deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent

6. Selection of Lead Worker Representative/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR

The school staff are entitled to select staff members for the LWR, Deputy LWR and Assistant LWR positions as appropriate. The LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role and must be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts. In this regard, if a teacher is selected for the role of LWR, then the Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR should be selected from the non-teaching staff where feasible and vice versa.

The process for the selection and appointment of the LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR as appropriate should be arrived at by consultation and consensus at school level, through the seeking of volunteers to act in that capacity. Where there is more than one volunteer, all school staff should vote to select the LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR.

The LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR will, following selection by the school staff, be formally appointed by the employer. LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR will be required to confirm, prior to taking up the role, that they have completed the provided training and that they are fully aware of the requirements of the role.

7. Supports for the Lead Worker Representative/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR

The LWR/ Deputy LWR/ Assistant LWR shall be entitled to:

- Receive information and training in respect of their role [*further detail to be provided*];
- Be consulted by school management on the control measures being put in place by the school to minimise the risk of being exposed to COVID-19;
- Regular communication with school management on issues related to COVID-19;
- Be informed of changes in practice arising from COVID-19 response measures;

Where the LWR/ Assistant LWR is a teacher (including a post holder), the 10 Croke Park hours which can currently be used for planning on other than a whole school basis will be utilised by the LWR and Assistant LWR to carry out their duties in that role.

Where the LWR/ Assistant LWR is an SNA, 10 of the “72 hours” will be utilised by the LWR and Assistant LWR to carry out their duties in that role.

Where the LWR/ Assistant LWR is a Secretary or Caretaker, a re-prioritisation of duties by school management should be carried out to afford the staff member sufficient time to carry out their duties in that role.

8. Procedure for dealing with issues that arise

Where an issue of concern is identified by the LWR (or is notified to the LWR by a staff member), the LWR should bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the Principal. Staff should be informed of the outcome. If agreement cannot be reached, the LWR may notify the Board of Management (Chairperson of the BoM in the first instance)/ Education and Training Board head office of the issue. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the BoM/ETB head office. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

Glossary of Terms

- COVID-19 Response Plan: plan designed to support the staff and BOM/ ETB in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. The plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. COVID-19 Response Plans for Primary and Special Schools are available on the Department’s website.
- Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF): the forum for high level dialogue between Government, Trade Union and Employer representatives on matters of strategic national importance - involves the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Government & Employers.
- Return to Work Protocol: national protocol designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Safety Representative: Section 25 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 sets out the selection and role of the Safety Representative in the workplace. The rights of the Safety

Representative are set out in legislation. (Note: A Safety Representative has rights and not duties under the 2005 Act). This role is separate to the LWR under COVID-19.

Appendix 5

Contact Tracing Log

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Name of School | | | School Contact Person | |
| Address of School | | | For Queries only: | |
| | | | Phone No | |
| | | | Email | |
| Name of Visitor | | | | Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Date of Visit | ___ / ___ / _____ | Time | Entry to school _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/> | Exit from School _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visitor Status | Contractor <input type="checkbox"/> | Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> | Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please complete: _____ | |
| Contact details of visitor | Company Name (if applicable) | | | |
| | Address | | | |
| | Contact No. | | Email Address | |
| | Reason for Visit | | | |
| Who the visitor met (separate line required for each person the visitor met) | | | | |
| Name of Person visited | | | | Length of time spent with each person in the school |
| | | | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

Appendix 6 Checklist for School Management

Composite Checklist for Schools

This checklist supports planning and preparation, control measures and induction needed to support a safe return to school for pupils, staff, parents and others.

For completion by the agreed person with overall responsibility of managing the implementation of the COVID-19 Response plan in line with the supports as agreed with Department of Education.

Planning and Systems

- Is there a system in place to keep up to date with the latest advice from Government and Department of Education, to ensure that advice is made available in a timely manner to staff and pupils and to adjust your plans and procedures in line with that advice?
- Have you prepared a school COVID-19 response plan and made it available to staff and pupils? Department guidance and templates provided
- Have you a system in place to provide staff and pupils with information and guidance on the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and what is expected of them?
- Have you displayed the COVID-19 posters in suitable locations highlighting the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?
- Have you told staff of the purpose of the COVID-19 contact log?
- Have you a COVID-19 contact log in place to support HSE tracing efforts if required? (Contact log template attached).
- Have you informed staff on the measures and provided a system for them to raise issues or concerns and to have them responded to?
- Have you reviewed and updated risk assessments in line with DES advice to take account of any controls to help prevent the spread of COVID-19? (Risk template attached)
- Have you updated emergency plans, if necessary to take account of the COVID-19 response plan?

Staff (Updated March 2021)

- Have you requested confirmation that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following periods of closure such as school holidays.
 - Have you advised staff and pupils not to return to or attend school if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.

- Have you advised staff and pupils not to return or attend school 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

- Have you advised 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;

- Are you aware of staff members who are at very high risk under the HSE guidance on people most at risk (HSE guidance on people most at-risk) and advised them of the DES agreed arrangements for management of those staff?
- Have you advised staff and pupils they must stay at home if sick or if they have any symptoms of COVID-19?
- Have you told staff and pupils what to do and what to expect if they start to develop symptoms of COVID-19 in school, including where the isolation area is?
- Have you advised staff of the availability of the supports of the occupational health and wellbeing programme through Spectrum Life?
- Has a lead worker representative been identified (in line with the process agreed with the DES and education partners) and detailed at Section 4.3 of this plan to help advise staff and to monitor compliance with COVID-19 control measures in the school and taken measures to ensure all staff know who the representative is?

Training and Induction

- Have you advised staff to view the Department of Education’s training materials which are available online?
- Have you taken the necessary steps to update your school induction / familiarisation training to include any additional information relating to COVID-19 for your school?
- Have first aiders, if available, been given updated training on infection prevention and control re: hand hygiene and use of PPE as appropriate? (It is intended that training will be provided as part of the Department’s online training programme).

Buildings / Equipment

- If you have mechanical ventilation does it need cleaning or maintenance before the school reopens?
- Does your water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionnaire’s Disease?
- Have you visually checked, or had someone check, all equipment in the school for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again?

- Have you arranged for the school, including all equipment, desks, benches, doors and frequent touched surfaces points, to be cleaned before reopening?

Control Measures in place

Hand / respiratory hygiene

- Have you accessed supplies of hand sanitisers and any necessary PPE equipment in line with the interim HPSC health guidance relating to the reopening of schools, from the national framework provided by the Department? (RFI published and framework available from early August).
- Are there hand washing/hand sanitising stations in place to accommodate staff, pupils and visitors adhering to hand hygiene measures in accordance with Department guidance?
- Have arrangements been made for staff and pupils to have regular access to hand-washing/hand sanitising facilities as appropriate?
- Are hand sanitisers easily available and accessible for all staff, pupils and visitors – e.g. in each classroom and at entry and exit points to school buildings?
- Have you made arrangements to ensure hand hygiene facilities are regularly checked and well-stocked?
- Does the alcohol-based hand sanitiser have at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the active ingredient?
- Have you informed staff about the importance of hand washing?
- Have you arranged for staff to view how to wash their hands (with soap and water for at least 20 seconds) and dry them correctly through the use of the HSE video resource?
- Have you shown staff and pupils how to use hand sanitiser correctly and where hand-sanitising stations are located?
- Have you displayed posters on how to wash hands correctly in appropriate locations?
- Have you told staff and pupils when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:
 - before and after eating and preparing food
 - after coughing or sneezing
 - after using the toilet
 - where hands are dirty
 - before and after wearing gloves
 - before and after being on public transport
 - before leaving home
 - when arriving/leaving the school /other sites
 - after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
 - if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms

- Has you told staff and pupils of the importance of good respiratory measures to limit the spread of the virus?
 - avoid touching the face, eyes, nose and mouth
 - cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue
 - dispose of tissues in a covered bin

Physical Distancing:

- Have you identified all available school space to be used to maximise physical distancing?
- Have you reviewed the templates provided by the Department of Education which show options for revised layout of school rooms to meet physical distancing requirements?
- Have you arranged to revise the layout of the rooms and furniture as per the Department guidelines if necessary?
- Have you arranged in each room that the teacher’s desk should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks?
- Have you arranged in each room that pupils would be at least 1m away from each other?
- Have you allocated work stations consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces that are shared?
- Have you structured pupils and their teachers into Class Bubbles (i.e. a class grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible) and discrete groups or “Pods” within those class bubbles to the extent that this is practical?
- If you have divided a class into Pods, have you arranged at least 1m distance between individual Pods within the class bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible?
- Have you taken steps to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles (and Pods within those class bubbles) as much as possible?
- Have you arranged Pod sizes to be as small as it is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context?
- Have you arranged to the greatest extent possible for pupils and teaching staff to be consistently in the same Class Bubbles acknowledging that this will not be possible at all times?
- Have you arranged where possible that different class bubbles to have separate breaks and meal times or separate areas at break or meal times?
- Have you made arrangements to limit interaction on arrival and departure from school and in other shared areas?
- Have you encouraged walking or cycling to school as much as possible?

- Have you made arrangements, in so far as practicable, to open additional access points to school to reduce congestion?
- Can you provide a one system for entering and exiting the school, where practical?
- Have you arranged for staff meetings to be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing?
- Have you a system to regularly remind staff and pupils to maintain physical distancing
- Have you advised staff not to shake hands and to avoid any physical contact?

Visitors to Schools

- Have you identified the activities that involve interacting with essential visitors to the school, made arrangements to minimise the number of such visitors and put in place measures to prevent physical contact, as far as possible?
- Are there arrangements in place to inform essential visitors to the school of the measures to help prevent the spread of infection?
- Have you a system in place for all visitors who do need to come to the school to make appointment, arrange to contact a central point and to record their visit using the contact tracing log?

Hand / Respiratory Hygiene

Have you told staff and pupils when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:

- ✓ When entering and exiting vehicles
- ✓ When entering and exiting school buildings

Physical Distancing

- Have you advised staff of the Department's guidance to achieve good ventilation
- Have you checked any mechanical ventilation systems to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air is used

Appendix 7 Checklist for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

(March 2021 Update) : A nominated member of the school management team (**Mr Noel Lohan/ Mrs Aine Bleahene**) will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

Staff members will be required to manage a suspected case in line with the protocol and training.

A nominated member of the school management team will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

Isolation Area

1. Have you identified a place that can be used as an isolation area, preferably with a door that can close?
2. The isolation area does not have to be a separate room but if it is not a room it should be 2m away from others in the room.
3. Is the isolation area accessible, including to staff and pupils with disabilities?
4. Is the route to the isolation area accessible?
5. Have you a contingency plan for dealing with more than one suspected case of COVID-19?
6. Are the following available in the isolation area(s)?
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Disinfectant/wipes
 - Gloves/Masks
 - Waste Bags
 - Bins

Isolating a Person

7. Are procedures in place to accompany the infected person to the isolation area, along the isolation route with physical distancing from them?
8. Are staff familiar with this procedure?
9. Have others been advised to maintain a distance of at least 2m from the affected person at all times?
(it is intended that this will be dealt with as part of the Department's online training)
10. Is there a disposable mask to wear for the affected person while in the common area and when exiting the building?

Arranging for the affected person to leave the school

11. Staff – have you established by asking them if the staff members feel well enough to travel home?
12. Pupil – have you immediately contacted their parents/guardians and arranged for them to collect their pupil? Under no circumstances can a pupil use public or school transport to travel home if they are a suspected case of COVID-19.
13. The affected person should be advised to avoid touching other people, surfaces and objects.
14. The affected person been advised to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue(s) when they cough or sneeze, and to put the tissue in the bin.
15. Has transport home or to an assessment centre been arranged if the affected person has been directed to go there by their GP?
16. Has the affected person been advised not to go to their GP's surgery or any pharmacy or hospital?

17. Has the affected person been advised they must not use public transport?
18. Has the affected person been advised to continue wearing the face mask until they reach home?

Follow up

19. Have you carried out an assessment of the incident to identify any follow-up actions needed?
20. Are you available to provide advice and assistance if contacted by the HSE?

Cleaning

21. Have you taken the isolation area out-of-use until cleaned and disinfected?
22. Have you made arrangements to clean and disinfect any classroom space where the staff or pupils were located?
23. Have you arranged for cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area and any other areas involved, as soon as practical after the affected person has left the building?

Have the cleaners been trained in dealing with contaminated areas and supplied with the appropriate PPE?

(It is intended to provide online training for cleaning staff. Appropriate PPE is available to schools through the national procurement process).

Appendix 8

Checklist Lead Worker Representative

1. Have you agreed with your school to act as a Lead worker representative for your school? (*Process for agreeing on lead worker representative/s in schools to be agreed centrally and implemented locally*).
2. Have you been provided with information and training in relation to the role of lead worker representative? (*Training for this role is currently being explored with the HSA*).
3. Are you keeping up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
4. Are you aware of the [signs and symptoms of COVID-19](#)?
5. Do you know [how the virus is spread](#)?
6. Do you know how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?
7. Have you watched and do you understand the online Induction Training provided by the Department of Education before returning to school?
8. Are you helping in keeping your fellow workers up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
9. Have you completed the COVID-19 return-to-work form and given it to your school? (*Department template Return-to-Work form available*)
10. Are you aware of the control measures your school has put in place to minimise the risk of you and others being exposed to COVID-19? (*Checklist for School Management available*)
11. Did your school consult with you when putting control measures in place? *Control measures will be agreed centrally between the Department and education partners. Consultation at school level should take place on any specific local arrangements necessary to implement the protocol*
12. Have you a means of regular communication with the person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan?
13. Are you co-operating with your school to make sure these control measures are maintained?
14. Have you familiarised yourself with the cleaning requirements needed to help prevent cross contamination? (*Checklist for Cleaning and Disinfection available*)
15. Have you been asked to walk around and check that the control measures are in place and are being maintained?
16. Are you reporting immediately to the person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects that you see?
17. Are you keeping a record of any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects and what action was taken to remedy the issue?
18. Are you familiar with what to do in the event of someone developing the symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?

- 19.** Are you co-operating with your school in identifying an isolation area and a safe route to that area?
(Checklist for dealing with suspected case of COVID-19 available)
- 20.** Are you helping in the management of someone developing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?
- 21.** Once the affected person has left the school, are you helping in assessing what follow-up action is needed?
- 22.** Are you helping in maintaining the contact log?
- 23.** Have you been made aware of any changes to the emergency plans or first aid procedures for your school?
- 24.** Are you making yourself available to fellow staff to listen to any COVID-19 control concerns or suggestions they may have?
- 25.** Are you raising those control concerns or suggestions with your school and feeding back the response to the worker who raised the issue?
- 26.** Are you aware of the availability of the Spectrum Life Wellbeing Together Programme?

Appendix 9

Checklist for Cleaning

1. Have you a system in place for checking and keeping up to date with the latest public health advice from Government and the Department of Education, to ensure that advice is made available in a timely manner in order to adjust your cleaning procedures in line with that advice?
2. Have you reviewed the HPSC interim health advice for the safe reopening of schools, in particular *Section 5.6 Environmental Hygiene*?
3. Have you explained the need for the enhanced cleaning regime to staff?
4. Are you aware that cleaning is best achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water, clean cloths, mops and the mechanical action of wiping and cleaning, following by rinsing and drying?
5. Have you sufficient cleaning materials in place to support the enhanced cleaning regime?
6. Have you provided training for cleaning staff on the enhanced cleaning regime? (*Department of Education intends to provide online training for cleaning staff*)
7. Have you made arrangements for the regular and safe emptying of bins?
8. Are you familiar with the cleaning options for school settings set out in the interim HPSC health advice for schools for surfaces, toilets, cleaning equipment, PPE and waste management?
9. Are you aware that each school setting should be cleaned once per day?
10. Have you provided cleaning materials to staff so that they can clean their own desk or immediate workspace?
11. Have you advised staff that they are responsible for cleaning personal items that have been brought to work and are likely to be handled at work or during breaks (for example, mobile phone and laptops) and to avoid leaving them down on communal surfaces or they will need to clean the surface after the personal item is removed?
12. Have you advised staff and pupils to avoid sharing items such as cups, bottles, cutlery, and pens?
13. Have you put in place a written cleaning schedule to be made available to cleaning staff including:
 - Items and areas to be cleaned
 - Frequency of cleaning
 - Cleaning materials to be used
 - Equipment to be used and method of operation?
14. Details of how to clean following a suspected case of COVID-19 are at *Section 7 of the Plan above*
15. If disinfection of contaminated surfaces is required, is a system in place to do this following cleaning?
16. If cleaning staff have been instructed to wear gloves when cleaning are they aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before and after wearing gloves?
17. Have you a system in place for the disposal of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a rubbish bag?
Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person

suspected of having COVID-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection.

- 18.** Have you ensured there is a system in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use?
- 19.** Have you ensured there is a system in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use?
- 20.** Have you put in place a written cleaning schedule to be made available to cleaning staff including:
 - Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as vending machines, coffee machines/ Kettles and door handle

Appendix 9: Risk Assessment

Available as a separate document.

Appendix 10: Summary of entrance areas:

| Teacher | Class | Gate Number | Entrance | Beginning time | End of school day |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|
| Ms. Lohan | Junior Infants | Gate D (Church Gate) | 2 | 9:30 am | <i>12:30pm until Wednesday 15th September. 2:10 pm</i> |
| Ms. Carty | Junior Infants | Gate B | 1 | 9:30 am | <i>12:30pm until Wednesday 15th September. 2:10 pm</i> |
| Ms Barrett | Junior Infants | Gate B | 3 | 9:30 am | <i>12:30pm until Wednesday 15th September. 2:10pm</i> |
| Ms. Curtin | Senior Infants | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 12 | 9:30 am | 2:10 pm |
| Ms Connaughton/ Ms Dolan | Senior Infants | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 12 | 9:30 am | 2:10 pm |
| Ms.Coen/ Ms Carey | First Class | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 10 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Ms. Cahalan/ Ms Donoghue | First Class | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 10 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Ms. Gallagher | Second Class | Gate D (Church Gate) | 5 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Ms. Fox | Second Class | Gate D (Church Gate) | 4 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Mrs. Gallagher | Third Class | Gate C (Right of BB Court) | 1 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Miss Power | Third Class | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 10 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Miss Blade | Fourth Class | Gate D (Church Gate) | 11 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Mrs. Coen | Fourth Class | Gate D (Church Gate) | 10 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Ms. Conway/ | Fifth Class | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 7 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Mr. Dolan | Fifth Class | Gate A (Nearest Pitch) | 7 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Mr. Geraghty | Sixth Class | Gate C (Right of BB Court) | 1 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |
| Mr. Ronaldson | Sixth Class | Gate A: (Nearest pitch) | 12 | 9:20 am | 3:00 pm |

Appendix 11: Schedule for classes entering and leaving classrooms

| Door Number | Classes |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | Mr Geraghty (6 th) Mrs. Gallagher (3 rd) Miss Carty (Junior Infants) |
| 2 | Miss Lohan (Junior Infants) |
| 3 | Ms Barrett (Junior Infants) |
| 4 | Ms. Fox (2 nd Class) |
| 5 | Miss Gallagher (2 nd Class) |
| 7 | Ms Conway (5 th Class) Mr Dolan (5 th Class) |
| 10 | Ms. Power (3 rd) Ms. Cahalan /Ms Donoghue (1 st Class) Ms. Carey/ Ms Coen (1 st Class) |
| 11 | Miss Blade (4 th Class) |
| 12 | Mr Ronaldson (6 th Class) Ms. Dolan / Ms. Connaughton (Senior Infants) Ms. Curtin (Senior Infants) |