

**Covid-19 School Response Plan**  
**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S.**  
**Cootehall**  
**Boyle**  
**F52TV26**  
**Roll No. 19720P**

All schools need to have a Covid-19 Response Plan in place in order to reopen safely in the new school year.

This document has been prepared on the basis of current public health advice and will continue to be updated throughout the summer as further public advice is received.

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
1. St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No.19720P) COVID-19 Policy.....	4
2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School.....	5
3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW).....	6
4. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative .....	6
5. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment.....	7
6. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus.....	7
7. Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19 .....	13
8 A-Z of School Practices and Procedures.....	16
9. Control Measures .....	20
10. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 .....	23
11. Staff Duties .....	24
12. Covid related absence management.....	24
13. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme .....	24
14 Appendices.....	25

## Introduction

This *Covid-19 Response Plan* is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll NO 19720P)

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

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

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

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

This document aims to provide details of:

1. **COVID-19 School Policy**
2. **Planning and Preparing for Return to School**
  - a. **School Building**
  - b. **Signage**
3. **Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**
4. **Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative(s)**
5. **Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**
6. **General advice to prevent the spread of the virus**
  - a. **Wash your Hands Frequently**
  - b. **Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitiser**
  - c. **Avoid Touching your Eyes, Nose and Mouth**
  - d. **Physical Distancing**
  - e. **Practice Respiratory Hygiene**
  - f. **Do**
  - g. **Do Not**
  - h. **People at Very High Risk (Extremely Vulnerable)**
7. **Managing the Risk of Spread of Covid-19**
8. **Control Measures**
  - a. **Return to Work Form**
  - b. **Induction Training**
  - c. **Induction Training – On-line Video**
  - d. **Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
  - e. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - f. **Wearing of Gloves**
  - g. **Cleaning**
  - h. **Access to the School Building / Contact Log**
  - i. **First Aid / Emergency Procedure**
9. **Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**
10. **Staff Duties**
11. **Covid related absence management**
12. **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

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

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

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

## 1. St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No.19720P) COVID-19 Policy

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

### SEE APPENDIX 1

#### COVID 19 Policy Statement

**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)** 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 and Skills
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and pupils engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Skills
- 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 and Skills 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:

**Catherine Martin**

Deputy lead Worker Representative:

**Pauline Dwyer**

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

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

Principal

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

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

Chairperson

## 2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

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

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

### a. School Buildings

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

- the water system has been flushed at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease.
- the school equipment and mechanical ventilation has been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again; (S.B. has been engaged to service school boiler)
- the bin collections and other essential services have resumed

### b. Signage

Schools has displayed signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene both inside and outside the school building (exterior wall and school playground fence).

Schools will display recommended posters in prominent areas such as office, external doors, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms, GP, and toilets.



The following is a link to the dedicated area of the Health Protection and Surveillance Centre (HPSC) website where there are a number of posters, including those appropriate for primary school pupils, located. Irish versions are also available here

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/posters/>

### 3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff will complete a **Return to Work (School) [RTW(s)]** form, which is available from the Principal. **SEE APPENDIX 2**

The RTW form will be completed **at least 3 days** prior to any proposed date of return to the workplace.

On receipt of the completed form the Principal will provide: details of the **Induction Training** (August 28<sup>th</sup>) for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

Staff will use Croke Park hours to complete this training together on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

### 4. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and the School Leadership. (See Appendix 4)

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

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

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

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

Name(s) of Lead Worker representative:	Contact details
Catherine Martin Pauline Dwyer	071-9667264 cootehallns@gmail.com

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

## 5. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. The school has completed a Risk Assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings. **(SEE APPENDIX 3)**

The school has reviewed their emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents, and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the COVID-19 School Response Plan.

The school will continue to review their existing risk assessments to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan.

Any changes to the school's current emergency procedures and risk assessments will be documented.

## 6. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus

As a school community we must do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our 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 the Covid-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents, and visitors, as far as possible, within the school environment. These control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing 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 procedures and health and safety requirements.

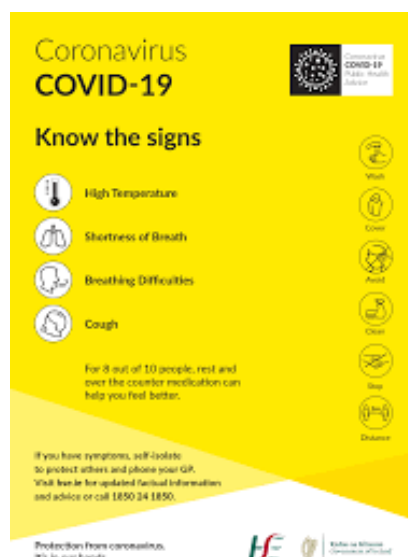
We will abide by the following Public Health Advice (Page 7 Roadmap for Full Return to Schools)

**"No person (child, teacher or parent) should attend the school if unwell or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with COVID-19"**

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

They are:

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



This will be achieved through the following measures:

### 6.1 Promoting awareness:

- All members of our school community will actively promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms.
- Signage informing members of the school community of the symptoms of Covid-19 and the need for social distancing are displayed on outside of school building, on playground fence and at access gates.
- All members of the school community will embed in pupils the need for appropriate respiratory hygiene and hand hygiene.
- Parents, pupils, and staff will adhere to all procedures.

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

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

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools. St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

### 6.2 Attendance at school:

No person (child, teacher, or parent) should attend the school if unwell or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should immediately phone their doctor and follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.

- Staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school must promptly bring this fact to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, as appropriate.
- Staff and pupils must know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school as detailed in Section 8 of the DES Guidelines.
- Everyone entering the school building must perform hand hygiene using hand sanitiser provided at each entrance.
- If pupils are sick, they **MUST Consult the HSE Advice for Parents (Appendix 8)** before deciding if they are able to present for school.

However, children will also continue to display symptoms of many other circulating respiratory viruses. It is known that young children often have a persistent cold. **A child with a blocked or runny nose, but no fever can attend school but if they require paracetamol or ibuprofen, they must stay at home for 48 hours and parents or**



guardians should contact the GP to assess whether a test is required. In the case of diarrhoea all symptoms need to have been resolved for 48 hours prior to return to school.

- Visits to the school by all persons other than staff and pupils will be by appointment only. Appointments must be arranged in advance through the school office, by phone on 071-9667264 or by e mail at [cootehallns@gmail.com](mailto:cootehallns@gmail.com) or by filling out the online form on our school website [cootehallns.com](http://cootehallns.com).
- Each visitor entering the school will be required to complete a Contract Tracing Log irrespective of the duration of the visit.
- Parents must drop and collect pupils from the designated entrances and not enter the school grounds.
- The only exception to this:

- On Tuesday September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Junior Infant starting time will be 10a.m. in order to allow parents accompany pupils to school if they so wish.
- In the case of pupils with additional educational needs to an extent that the school advise the pupil be accompanied, ONE parent/designated person can accompany pupils in these instances for assembly and dismissal. Parents/designated persons MUST practice physical distancing of 2m.

- Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between staff and all visitors to the school.
- Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between all adults when on school grounds.
- Adults accompanying pupils to school as detailed above and visitors with pre-arranged appointment MUST wear suitable face coverings.

### 6.3 Physical Distancing

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19.

Physical distancing will be usefully applied in our school allowing for some flexibility when needed. It will be applied in a practical way that recognises that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing in our school will look different across the various ages and stages of learning.

It is 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 will maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m.

They will also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down. Staff will wear suitable face coverings while at work.

All adult visitors to the school, as scheduled by appointment, MUST maintain a 2m distance from school staff and wear suitable face coverings.

Our school community is committed to the two principles of physical distancing, namely, increasing separation and decreasing interaction, as a means of minimising the risk of the introduction of Covid-19 to our school.

#### 6.3.1 A Increasing Separation

To maintain physical distancing the school has reconfigured class spaces to maximise physical distancing by removing unnecessary furniture to create space. It has utilised and reconfigured spaces in the school in order to maximise physical distancing. The teacher's desk is at least 1m away from pupil desks.

In order to minimise contact between pupils, insofar as possible, the school will operate based on 6 Areas for movement through the school and break times. The Areas are as follows.

**Area 1: Staffroom, Office, GP Hall, Kitchen****Area 2: Junior Infants (Ms. Brennan)****Area 3: Senior Infants & First Class (Ms. Conroy/Ms Brennan)****Area 4: First and Second Class (Mr. Conboy)****Area 5: Third and Fourth Class (Ms. Tansey)****Area 6: Fifth and Sixth Class (Mr. Duffy)**

Areas will be separated by doors and access to and regress for staff and pupils from each area will be via a designated door as detailed below. Movement of pupils between areas will be minimalised and restricted to movement between a maximum of 2 Areas.

**At break time students will play with students from their own classroom only in designated areas of the school yard.**

School Areas	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6
<b>Class</b>	Staffroom Office GP Hall Kitchen	Jun Inf	Sen Inf & 1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>No. of Pupils</b>	0	20	28	27	33	26
<b>No. of Staff</b>	3	1 & 1 Shared SET (A.G)	1 & 1 Shared SET (C.M.)	1 & 1 Shared SET (C.M.)	1 & 1 Shared SET (A.G)	1 & 1 Shared SET (A.G)
<b>No. of SNA's</b>	0	Shared SNA (P.D.)	Shared SNA (P.D.)	1 (J.T.)	Shared SNA (P.D.)	Shared SNA (P.D.)
<b>Entry/Exit via</b>	Main Entrance/ Junior Infants Door	Junior Infants Door	Sen Inf./1 <sup>st</sup> Doors	1st/2nd Door	Door 3rd/4th	Door 5th/6th

**6.3.2 Decreasing interaction**

The extent to which decreasing interaction is possible in a primary or special 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 primary and special schools, a distance of 1m should be maintained between desks or between individual pupils. It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors. Therefore, achieving this recommendation in the first four years of primary or special schools, is not a pre-requisite to reopening a primary or special school for all pupils.

Desks and work areas will be allocated consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces which are shared. We will try to reduce the risk of infection by structuring 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.

**In 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class the students will be divided into Pods, where there will be 1m distance between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and also 1m between individuals in the pod.**

**In 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class it is not possible to have 1m between individuals due to class size and room size so the class will be divided into Pods and these will be at least 1m distance.**

**In the Junior rooms we will divide the classes into Pods and separate each Pod by 1m.**

This will 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.

**The aim of the system within the school is that class grouping mix only with students in their own classroom 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 reasonably practical in the specific classroom context and will be influenced by access students need to extra support and student wellbeing.

Sharing educational material between Pods will be minimised where possible.

Staff members who move from class bubble to class bubble will be limited as much as possible.

Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it will be organized to the greatest degree possible to minimize congregation at the shared resource.

## Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school

### School Arrival and Dismissal

**In our school we have 81 families.**

**Students will be arriving to school from the Breakfast club run by Ardcarne Community Childcare Group, School Bus, Car and Bicycle/Walk.**

**At the end of the school day students will be leaving by School Bus, Car and Bicycle/Walk and may also be availing of the after school services run by Ardcarne Community Childcare Group.**

**The school staff will supervise assembly and dismissal times to help in the smooth running of this staggered arrival and dismissal times.**

**To ensure a smooth transition the following parking arrangements will be in place.**



**In order to allow parents see their children going to school on their first day Junior Infants will start at 10a.m. on Tuesday September 1<sup>st</sup> only.**

For Junior Infant Students from September 1<sup>st</sup> to Friday September 11<sup>th</sup> their school day will end at 12.30p.m. After this they will revert to the normal infant finishing time of 2.10p.m.

This means in order to minimise possible interactions we will introduce a staggered school arrival and dismissal time in ten minute intervals at the start. (For Junior Infants and Senior Infants their dismissal time will be as normal at 2.10 unless they avail of after school services from 2.10 to 3.10, then their times are as below)

	<b>Families A-G</b>	<b>Families H- Q</b>	<b>Families R-Z</b>
<b>Arrival Time</b>	<b>9.10</b>	<b>9.20</b>	<b>9.30</b>
<b>Dismissal Time</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>3.30</b>

- When pupils are dropped at their designated time, they must proceed unaccompanied through the open main gate (apart from exceptions listed in 6.2 above) directly to their classroom.
- Pupils WILL NOT be permitted to congregate/play in the school yard on arrival/dismissal.
- Parents MUST ENSURE that appropriate arrangements are put in place for assembly and dismissal of pupils.

#### **Parental responsibilities on assembly/dismissal:**

No person (child, teacher, or parent) should attend the school if unwell or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should immediately phone their doctor and follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.

- Parents must arrive on time for dropping off and collecting their child.
- Only parents or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 14 days where advised are allowed to drop off and collect children.
- Any parent who is in a high risk category should not drop off or collect children in order to protect themselves.
- Parents must not congregate in groups.

- Parents who are permitted on school grounds (Junior Infants on 1<sup>st</sup> day and pupils with additional needs) must ensure their child remains at their side at all times and that their child does not interact with other children.
- Parents who are permitted on school grounds (Junior Infants on 1<sup>st</sup> Day and pupils with additional needs) must wear suitable face coverings
- A drop and go/collect and go policy will be in place. Under no circumstances are parents to congregate on or outside school grounds.
- At arrival and departure times of children, social distancing is to be maintained by children and parents.

## 7. Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19

### a. *Wash your Hands Frequently*

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19.

Posters are displayed at each hand washing station throughout the school showing effective hand washing technique.

We will follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

Pupils and staff MUST 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.

For further advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link will be helpful:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

### b. *Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers*

All members of our school community MUST practise and actively promote effective hand hygiene at home and at school. Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of a hand sanitisers (when hands are clean).

- Staff and pupils must understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.
- Hand sanitisers are installed, with appropriate signage, at each outside entrance door, in each classroom and at appropriate locations throughout the school.
- All persons entering the school building must perform hand hygiene using hand sanitiser provided.

**Frequency of Hand Hygiene: Pupils and staff MUST 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.

**c. Physical Distancing**

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

Physical distancing will be usefully applied in our school allowing for some flexibility when needed. It will be applied in a practical way that recognises that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing in our school will look different across the various ages and stages of learning.

It is 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 will 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. Staff will wear suitable face coverings while at work.

All adult visitors to the school, as scheduled by appointment, MUST maintain a 2m distance from school staff and wear suitable face coverings.

In 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class the students will be divided into Pods, where there will be 1m distance between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and also 1m between individuals in the pod.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class it is not possible to have 1m between individuals due to class size and room size so the class will be divided into Pods and these will be at least 1m distance.

In the Junior rooms we will divide the classes into Pods and separate each Pod by 1m.

All classrooms will have a separate designated area outside during breaktime.

At breaktime all classrooms will have a separate area in the school yard to play each day. These areas will be rotated on a regular basis. When in their designated outside area students will be allowed to play with any students from their **classroom** only.

When returning to class at the end of breaktime each classroom will use a separate designated entrance to enter their classroom.

### Toilet facilities

All classrooms will have a designated toilet block. In each toilet block there will be designated boys and girls toilet. The Board of Management have arranged the instalment of an extra hand washing basin, soap dispenser and paper hand towel dispenser in each of the toilet blocks

**Note: Guidance on the physical distancing requirements will be informed by public health advice for schools and will be updated, as necessary.**

#### *d. Practice respiratory hygiene*

##### Respiratory Hygiene

All members of our school community **MUST** practise and actively promote good respiratory hygiene at home and at school as this will help protect people around us from viruses such as flu and Covid-19.

Good respiratory hygiene entails:

- 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.
- Bins will be emptied at regular intervals.

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

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

#### *e. Avoid Touching Eyes, Nose and Mouth*

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

#### *f. Do*

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

#### *g. Do Not*

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

#### ***h. People at Very High Risk (Extremely Vulnerable):***

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

- 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
- severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and you are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Staff who are in this group should self-declare on the Return to Work form if they believe that they are at very high risk. Details of the leave arrangements that will apply will be on Circular 45/2020 and 49/2020.

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

#### **Students inability to attend school due to Covid-19**

- Pupils who are unable to attend school on medical grounds, due to Covid-19, must provide the school with a letter/report from their GP/Consultant stating that they cannot attend on health grounds.
- In the absence of medical certification of non-attendance, the school is obliged by law to implement the terms of The Education Welfare Act as normal.

## **8 A-Z of School Practices and Procedures**

### **8.1 Books etc.**

- Parents must ensure that all books/writing equipment are sanitised using alcohol wipes before being placed in the child's schoolbag.
- Parents must ensure that all of the child's equipment/books/copies are labelled with the child's name as equipment/books cannot and will not be shared.
- We are asking parents to ensure your child has a pencil case for home use and another one for school use. The pencil case used at home will not be brought to school and the pencil case used in school will not be brought home.



- For the start of the school year all books will remain in school.
- We ask that any schoolbooks that are being returned from the last school year be put in a separate bag. These will then be put in quarantine/storage for the recommended period of time and sanitised.

## **8.2 Clothing**

- Ensure your child can/teach your child to open/close their own coat and tie their own shoes.
- Shoes with Velcro should be used where pupils are unable to tie their own.
- Please label all your child's belongings.

## **8.3 Face Coverings**

- Staff members will wear face coverings, similar to those worn in shops or on public transport, when a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.
- There is no requirement for pupils to wear face coverings as of this time.
- All adult visitors to school grounds MUST WEAR suitable face coverings.

## **8.4 Handshaking/Hugging**

- While we will all be delighted to see each other again, hand shaking, and hugging will not be allowed.

## **8.5 Home/School Communication**

- For the start of the school year communication between home and school will be by e mail, text, Aladdin and through our school website.
- Face to face meetings will only be used in exceptional circumstances.

## **8.6 Homework:**

- Homework will not be assigned until later in September; however, we would strongly encourage each pupil to read as extensively as possible during this time.

## **8.7 Hygiene and Cleaning**

- Hand sanitisers are installed, with appropriate signage, at each outside entrance door, in each classroom and at appropriate locations throughout the school.
- Emulsifying soap is available in all toilets and classrooms.
- Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.
- In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be thoroughly cleaned once per day.
- 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.
- Waste will be collected regularly from offices and other areas within the school.
- Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

### 8.8 ICT

- A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common devices. Devices must be cleaned after use and before they are returned for charging.

### 8.9 Lunches

- Parents must ensure that all lunch boxes/water bottles are sanitised before being placed in the child's schoolbag.
- Parents MUST ensure that pupils have sufficient lunch/drink coming to school each morning as we will not be in a position to accept and distribute lunches during the school day.
- Please remind your children not to share their food or drinks with other children.
- **Please make sure your child is self-sufficient i.e. they can open/peel any lunch/drink you pack for them. Please pay particular attention to any drinks that require a straw.**
- Please make sure they have enough drinks to last them throughout the day as we will not be in a position to refill drinks bottles. Children will eat their lunches at their desks. No food will be allowed onto the yard.
- All leftovers/waste must be stored in each pupil's lunchbox and must be disposed of at home.

### 8.10 Office

- We request that parents use e payments as much as possible to minimise the amount of cash that needs to be handled. Details will follow on these arrangements.
- Attendance at school office is by pre-arranged appointment only.
- Pupils will not have access to offices.
- As far as possible, staff members should minimise their entry to the office area

### 8.11 Photocopying.

- Any staff member who uses the photocopier must clean it down after use with the wipes provided.

### 8.12 Physical Education and P.E. Equipment

- Physical Education lessons will take place outside when the weather allows. Teachers will organise lessons that require very little if any equipment. Staff members and pupils will be encouraged to take additional breaks outside during the school day. While these breaks are taking place all windows in the classroom should be opened to allow for ventilation. All PE equipment if used will be sanitised after use.

### 8.13 Punctuality

- It is essential that parents/pupils adhere strictly to the times allocated for assembly and dismissal. Parents of pupils who present late for school must contact the school office by phone to arrange entry to the school. Pupils remain the responsibility of the parents/guardians until they have arranged access to the school.

### 8.14 Returning from abroad

- Children who have travelled from countries not on the Green List must not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period which commences on the date of return to Ireland.

### 8.15 Staffroom

- All staff members must maintain a physical distance of 2 metres when they are not engaged in teaching e.g. when they are using the staff room and arriving to work.
- Staff meetings for the most part will be held remotely or in small groups if deemed necessary.
- Staff members should bring their own cups, bottles, cutlery, etc. to school and avoid sharing utensils in the staffroom as far as possible.
- Staff members should bring any waste/leftovers home.

### 8.16 Substitute Teachers and SNAs

- The sequence for covering all teacher absences will be in accordance with DES circular 0049/2020. A copy of the Covid-19 Return to School Policy will be provided to each substitute teacher/SNA.

Substitutes will be required to complete a Return to the Workplace form before they enter a classroom and will be asked to confirm that they have engaged in the online Induction training.

### 8.17 Teaching and Learning

- As a school, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.
- Each child will be in a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure you that staff will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2020/2021 school year.
- **The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum guidelines for schools, as we work with all the children during the return to school. Initially there will be a focus on Language, Numeracy, SPHE and PE. As advised by the National Educational Psychological Services we will need to "Slow down to catch up".**

### 8.18 Team Teaching/Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants

- Staff members (particularly Support Teachers and SNAs) may rotate between areas/classes but this will be limited to movement between a maximum of three areas. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.
- In keeping with our Special Education policy, support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal.
- The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work as far as possible, within the confines of a bubble (class)
- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
- The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean by the SET in between different pupils or small groups attending.

### 8.19 Uniforms

- *There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms or tracksuits should be washed every day, and this is not practical for most families. However, children's uniforms must be clean and washed regularly as a child may have coughed or sneezed into their sleeve as per coughing protocols.*
- **As a school we strongly advise that children should wear their school uniforms only for school related activities. Uniforms or tracksuits should be taken off straight after the child arrives home from school for the day. They should not be worn in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.**

### 8.20 Ventilation

- To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible, and will be opened while children are taking breaks in the playground.

### 8.21 Visiting Teachers/Coaches

- The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular will eventually be explored. However, it is not recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time. For the foreseeable future all of these activities are suspended.

### 8.22 Wellbeing of the School Community

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff.

These are promoting:

- ***A sense of safety***
- ***A sense of calm***
- ***A sense of belonging and connectedness to school***
- ***A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy***
- ***A sense of hope***

Our usual practice is to provide support to pupils based on the Continuum of Support. This is a tiered system that provides Whole School and Classroom Support for all pupils, additional School Support for some pupils, and School Support plus extra targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

- The Stay Safe programme will be taught in all classes in the first term of the school year.
- Increased emphasis will be placed in all classes on SPHE / PE and outdoor activities.

## 9. Control Measures

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

These control measures are outlined in this document.

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

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

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

The following control measures have been put in place:

**a. Return to Work Form**

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

**b. Induction Training**

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

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

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

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

**c. Induction Training for Return to School**

Staff will complete all necessary Induction Training for Return to School that is being provided by the Department of Education

**d. Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

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

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

Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations within the school and are available in each classroom.

**e. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

**It is now recommended that teachers will wear face coverings, similar to those worn in shops or on public transport, when a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.**

However, for a limited number of staff, further PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

Such include roles where:

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

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. This will be updated in line with advice from the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre)

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

**f. Wearing of Gloves:**

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

**g. Cleaning**

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school have been made. **(See Appendix 5)**

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

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

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

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

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

**h. Access to the school building /contact log**

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

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

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors, and visitors at the workplace.

A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities will be maintained. The school will maintain a log of staff and students contacts. **SEE APPENDIX 6**

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

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in **St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)**

In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999

Contact the principal or nearest first aider giving details of location (**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S., Cootehall, F52TV26**) and type of medical incident.

## 10. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

No person (child, teacher, or parent) should attend the school if unwell or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should immediately phone their doctor and follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.

The following outlines how **St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)** will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of work. **(See Appendix 7)**

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 was considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases put in place. The designated isolation area should be behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils.

Designated isolation areas are as follows (1) **Sensory Room**, (2) **GP Hall Annex** (3) **Polytunnel** (4) **Staff/SET Room**

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in **St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)** the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- The pupil will be accompanied to the isolation area. A distance of 2 metres will be maintained. The person accompanying the child must wear a face covering.
- If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by telephone. Parents must make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, it will be considered a serious breach of Health and Safety.
- Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal and go to the isolation area.
- A face covering will be provided to the staff member/child who is symptomatic.
- The staff member or child who is symptomatic should avoid touching people, surfaces, and objects.
- If the staff member/child is well enough to go home, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.
- Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.
- If the staff member/child is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.
- 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 will be followed. (See Appendix 10)

## 11. Staff Duties

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. In order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the School Covid-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play
- 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 and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid-19
- Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
- If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work
- Must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to Covid-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace
- 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
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

## 12. Covid related absence management

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with DES. (See Circular 0049/2020 & Circular 54/2020)

## 13. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme (Freephone Helpline 1800 411 057)

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

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

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

**This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

*Cian Duffy,*

**Principal.**

*Cora Regan,*

**On behalf of the Board of Management.**



## 14. Appendices List

Appendix 1	<b>Covid Policy Statement</b>
Appendix 2	<b>Return to Work Form</b>
Appendix 3	<b>Risk Assessment</b>
Appendix 4	<b>Lead Worker Representative</b>
Appendix 5	<b>Cleaning Schedule</b>
Appendix 6	<b>Contact Log</b>
Appendix 7	<b>Dealing with a case of Covid 19</b>
Appendix 8	<b>Covid -19 Advice for Parents from HSE</b>
Appendix 9	<b>Back to School Advice from DES</b>
Appendix 10	<b>Schools Pathway for Covid-19 – the Public Health Approach</b>

**Appendix 1 – Covid –19 Policy Statement****St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S.****Cootehall,****F52TV26****Roll No. 19720P****071-9667264****[www.cootehallns.com](http://www.cootehallns.com)****COVID-19 Policy Statement**

**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)** is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

**We will:**

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct handwashing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative 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: *Cian Duffy*,  
Principal.

*Cora Regan*,  
On behalf of the Board of Management.

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Appendix 2 – Return to Work Form****St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S.****Cootehall,****F52TV26****Roll No. 19720P****071-9667264****www.cootehallns.com****Pre-Return to School Questionnaire COVID-19**

This questionnaire must be completed by staff at least 3 days in advance of returning to work. If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to school.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_**Name of Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test.**

Please note: The organisation is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4- Lead Worker Representative

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

The role of the worker representative is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to.

### Checklist -Lead Worker Representative

1. Have you agreed with your school to act as a Lead worker representative for your school?	
2. Have you been provided with information and training in relation to the role of lead worker representative? (Training provided by D.E.S.).	
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?	
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?	
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)	
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?	

<b>Record Book Needed</b>	
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?	
<b>Checklist – Suspected Case</b>	
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?	

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

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

**Appendix 5 – Cleaning Schedule****St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P) Cleaning Programme**

<i>General Environment Cleaning Programme</i>		
<i>Area/Item</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Frequency/Comments</i>
<b>Teacher's /SNAs Table &amp; Chair</b> <b>Teacher's /SNAs Workstation</b> <b>Computer and IWB</b>	Clean with anti-bacterial sprays and wipes	Daily by teacher/SNA and immediately if soiled i.e. if soiled with blood or body fluids.
<b>In Classroom:</b> <b>Tables &amp; Chairs</b> <b>Door &amp; Window handles</b> <b>Window sills</b> <b>Light switches and sockets</b> <b>Sinks, Paper hand towel dispenser &amp; Soap Dispenser</b>	Clean with anti-bacterial sprays and wipes	Daily by cleaner and immediately by another staff member if soiled i.e. if soiled with blood or body fluids.
<b>In G.P. Hall/ SET Room</b> <b>Tables &amp; Chairs</b> <b>Door &amp; Window handles</b> <b>Window sills</b> <b>Light switches and sockets</b> <b>Benches</b> <b>SET Equipment</b>	Clean with anti-bacterial sprays and wipes	SET workstations and Equipment cleaned after every use SET/SNA Daily by cleaner and immediately by another staff member if soiled i.e. if soiled with blood or body fluids.
<b>In Entrance areas</b> <b>Door &amp; handles</b> <b>Light switches and sockets</b> <b>Radiators</b>	Clean with anti-bacterial sprays and wipes	Daily by cleaner and immediately by another staff member if soiled i.e. if soiled with blood or body fluids.

<p><b>In Staffroom:</b></p> <p><b>Phone</b></p> <p><b>Tables &amp; Chairs</b></p> <p><b>Door &amp; Window handles</b></p> <p><b>Press handles</b></p> <p><b>Window sills</b></p> <p><b>Light switches and sockets</b></p> <p><b>Sink, Paper hand towel dispenser &amp; Soap Dispenser</b></p> <p><b>1. kitchen appliances</b></p> <p><b>Cups/Plates/Cutlery</b></p>	<p>Clean with anti-bacterial sprays, wipes or water and general purpose detergent</p> <p>Wash in the dishwasher</p>	<p>After each use of the staffroom. Staff member to clean all equipment used after themselves and cleaner end of school day</p>
<p><b>In Office</b></p> <p><b>Tables &amp; Chairs</b></p> <p><b>Door &amp; Window handles</b></p> <p><b>Press handles</b></p> <p><b>Window sills</b></p> <p><b>Light switches and sockets</b></p> <p><b>Computer, Screen, Hard Drive and Printer</b></p>	<p>Clean with anti-bacterial sprays, wipes</p>	<p>Daily by secretary/Principal after use and immediately by another staff member if soiled i.e. if soiled with blood or body fluids.</p>
<p><b>In Kitchen</b></p> <p><b>Door &amp; Window handles</b></p> <p><b>Press handles</b></p> <p><b>Light switches and sockets</b></p> <p><b>Sink, Paper hand towel dispenser &amp; Soap Dispenser</b></p> <p><b>kitchen appliances</b></p> <p><b>Cups/Plates/Cutlery</b></p>	<p>Clean with anti-bacterial sprays, wipes or water and general purpose detergent</p> <p>Wash in the dishwasher</p>	<p>After each use of the staffroom. Staff member to clean all equipment used after themselves and cleaner end of school day</p>

<b>Washable floor covering</b>	<p>Sweep</p> <p>Vacuum clean to remove dirt when children are not present.</p> <p>Wash with detergent, water and clean utensils</p>	<p>Daily sweeping</p> <p>Vacuumed and washed daily by cleaner and immediately by another staff member if soiled e.g. spillage</p>
<b>Carpets</b>	<p>Vacuum</p> <p>Clean with an approved carpet cleaning method</p>	<p>Daily by cleaner</p> <p>Clean carpets only when staff will not be present to ensure the carpet is dry before next use</p> <p>Clean carpets at least every term with an approved carpet cleaner or immediately when soiled.</p>
<b>Walls</b>	<p>Clean with warm water and general purpose detergent.</p> <p>If soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfect</p>	<p>Routine cleaning by cleaner not required except in areas of frequent hand contact, such as lower wall/door frames in areas occupied by infants</p>
<b>Waste bins</b>	<p>Empty</p> <p>Clean with general purpose detergent and warm water</p>	<p>Daily by cleaner</p> <p>Weekly and immediately if soiled by cleaner</p>
<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4. <b>Mops and cleaning cloths</b></p>	<p>Mop heads should be washed in warm water and detergent, rinsed and air dried</p> <p>Reusable cloths must be laundered daily on a hot wash cycle (at least 60°C) in a washing machine</p>	<p>After use</p> <p>After daily use</p>



## Toilet Area Cleaning Program

<i>Area/Item</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Frequency / Comments</i>
<i>Wash hand basins, taps, soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers</i>	<b><i>Clean with detergent and warm water.</i></b>	Daily by cleaner and immediately if soiled. <b><i>If soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfect, rinse and dry.</i></b>
<i>Both sides of toilet seat, toilet handles, door knobs or cubicle handles.</i>	Clean with detergent and warm water.	<b><i>Daily by cleaner and immediately if soiled.</i></b> <b><i>If soiled with blood or body fluids, following cleaning, disinfect, rinse and dry.</i></b>
<i>Toilet bowls</i>	<b><i>Use toilet cleaner as per manufacturer's instructions.</i></b>	<b><i>At least daily by cleaner and immediately if soiled.</i></b>

## Toy Cleaning Program

<i>Item</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Frequency / Comments</i>
<b>Soft toys – if shared.</b>	Machine washed in a hot cycle according to manufacturers instructions.	Daily by teacher If soiled, take out of use immediately.
<b>Hard toys/items that might be put into the mouth or have been in contact with saliva or other body fluids.</b>	Clean with warm water and detergent, rinsed and dried thoroughly. Alternatively, they may be washed in a dishwasher.	After each child's use.
<b>Other hard toys e.g. dolls house, climbing frame.</b>	Clean with warm water and detergent, rinsed and dried thoroughly.	Weekly . Take out of use immediately if soiled.
<b>Cushions</b>	Machine wash to manufacturers instructions	Weekly. Take out of use immediately if soiled and machine wash.
<b>Dress-up clothes</b>	Machine wash to manufacturers instructions	Weekly/Monthly according to usage or more frequently if required.

## St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)

### Classroom Cleaning Checklist

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

	<div style="text-align: center;"> <b>Classroom</b>  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 1<sup>st</sup></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <b>Sen Inf &amp; 1<sup>st</sup> , Junior Infants</b> </div> </div>
Area/Item to be cleaned	Tick when completed
Tables	
Chairs	
Door Handles	
Window handles	
Window sills	
Light switches	
sockets	
Sinks,	
Paper hand towel dispenser	
Soap Dispenser	
Carpet	
Tiled Area	
Walls	
Bins	
Other	

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

**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)****Staff room Cleaning Checklist****Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Staffroom</b>
<b>Area/Item to be cleaned</b>	<b>Tick when completed</b>
<b>Tables</b>	
<b>Chairs</b>	
<b>Door Handles</b>	
<b>Window handles</b>	
<b>Window sills</b>	
<b>Light switches</b>	
<b>sockets</b>	
<b>Sink,</b>	
<b>Paper hand towel dispenser</b>	
<b>Soap Dispenser</b>	
<b>Carpet</b>	
<b>Worktops</b>	
<b>Kitchen Appliances</b>	
<b>Dishwasher Turned on</b>	
<b>Walls</b>	
<b>Bins</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

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

## St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)

### GP Hall Cleaning Checklist

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

	GP Hall
Area/Item to be cleaned	Tick when completed
Tables	
Chairs	
Door Handles	
Window handles	
Window sills	
Light switches	
sockets	
Floor	
Hand Sanitiser Dispenser	
Walls	
Bins	
Other	

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

## St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)

### Entrance Hall Cleaning Checklist

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

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Front</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Entrance Hall</div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">Senior Students</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">Sen Inf &amp; 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;">Junior Infants</div>
<b>Area/Item to be cleaned</b>	<b>Tick when completed</b>
Door Handles	
Light switches	
sockets	
Radiator	
Floor	
Mat	
Walls	
Hand Sanatiser Dispensors	
Other	

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

**St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)****Kitchen Cleaning Checklist****Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Kitchen</b>
<b>Area/Item to be cleaned</b>	<b>Tick when completed</b>
<b>Door Handles</b>	
<b>Window handles</b>	
<b>Window sills</b>	
<b>Light switches</b>	
<b>sockets</b>	
<b>Sink,</b>	
<b>Paper hand towel dispenser</b>	
<b>Soap Dispenser</b>	
<b>Floor</b>	
<b>Worktops</b>	
<b>Kitchen Appliances</b>	
<b>Dishwasher Turned on</b>	
<b>Bins</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

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

## St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)

### Toilet Cleaning Checklist

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

	<div style="text-align: center;"> <b>Toilet</b>  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 1<sup>st</sup></div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <b>Sen Inf &amp; 1<sup>st</sup> , Junior Infants</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <b>Staff</b> </div> </div>
Area/Item to be cleaned	Tick when completed
Wash hand basins	
taps	
Toilet bowls	
Both sides of toilet seat	
toilet handles	
Toilet Roll Dispensers (and refill)	
Door handles	
Cubicle Handles	
Light switches	
Paper hand towel dispensers (and refill)	
Soap Dispensers (and refill)	
Floor	
Walls	
Bins	
Other	

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

## Appendix 6 Contact Tracing Log Book

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>St. Michael's &amp; St. Patrick's N.S.</b>		<b>School Contact Person</b>	<b>Cian Duffy</b>
<b>Address of School</b>	<b>Cootehall, Boyle, Co. Roscommon, F52 TV26</b>		<b>For Queries only: Phone No</b>	<b>071-9667264</b>
			<b>Email for</b>	<b>cootehallns@gmail.com</b>
<b>Name of Visitor</b>				Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Date of Visit</b>	__/__/__ /____	<b>Time</b>	<b>Entry to school</b> _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Exit from School</b> _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Visitor Status</b>	Contractor <input type="checkbox"/>	Parent <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please complete: _____	
<b>Contact details of visitor</b>	Company Name (if applicable)			
	Address			
	Contact No.		Email Address	
	Reason for Visit			
<b>Who the visitor met (separate line required for each person the visitor met)</b>				
<b>Name of Person visited</b>				<b>Length of time spent with each person in the school</b>



## Appendix 7 - Dealing with a suspected case of Covid -19

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.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in **St. Michael's & St. Patrick's N.S. (Roll No. 19720P)** the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- The pupil will be accompanied to the isolation area. A distance of 2 metres will be maintained. The person accompanying the child must wear a face covering.
- If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by telephone. Parents must make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, it will be considered a serious breach of Health and Safety.
- Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal and go to the isolation area.
- A face covering will be provided to the staff member/child who is symptomatic.
- The staff member or child who is symptomatic should avoid touching people, surfaces, and objects.
- If the staff member/child is well enough to go home, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.
- Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.
- If the staff member/child is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.
- 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 will be followed.

## 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? <i>(it is intended that this will be dealt with as part of the Department's online training)</i>	
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?	
24. Have the cleaners been trained in dealing with contaminated areas and supplied with the appropriate PPE? <i>(It is intended to provide online training for cleaning staff. Appropriate PPE will be available to schools through the national procurement process which schools can access before reopening).</i>	

# COVID-19

## Advice for parents



Coronavirus  
**COVID-19**  
Public Health  
Advice

### Symptoms to look out for and when to contact your GP

Schools are back and the winter season is ahead of us. Every year, schoolchildren get colds, flu and other infections. This time, coronavirus (COVID-19) is with us.

Here is a guide on what symptoms to look out for and what to do if your child is unwell.

### When to keep your child at home and phone your GP

Do not send your child to school or childcare if any of the following is true.

Your child has:

- a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- any other common symptoms of coronavirus such as a new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, or shortness of breath
- been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus
- been living with someone who is unwell and may have coronavirus

You will need to:

1. Isolate your child. This means keeping them at home and completely avoiding contact with other people, as much as possible. Your child should only leave your home to have a test or to see your GP.
2. Phone your GP. They will advise you if your child needs a coronavirus test.
3. Everyone that your child lives with should also restrict their movements, at least until your child gets a diagnosis from their GP or a coronavirus test result. This means not going to school, childcare or work.
4. Treat your child at home for their symptoms.

### When it's okay to send your child to school or childcare

It's usually okay to send your child to school or childcare if they:

- only have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze
- do not have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more (as long as their temperature has not been lowered by taking any form of paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- do not have a cough
- have not been in close contact with anyone who has coronavirus
- do not live with anyone who is unwell and may have coronavirus
- have been told by a GP that their illness is caused by something else, that is not coronavirus. Your GP will tell you when they can return to school or childcare
- have got a negative ('not detected') coronavirus test result and have not had symptoms for 48 hours

Most of the time, you do not need to phone your GP if a runny nose or sneezing are your child's only symptoms. Talk to your pharmacist instead.

## Preventing the spread of illness

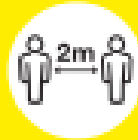
Help children to understand and to follow this advice:



Wash their hands regularly



Use tissues or elbows to cover their coughs and sneezes



Keep their distance from people who are sneezing or coughing



Don't share toys



Don't share food at lunch or other times

## More information

Go to [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://hse.ie/coronavirus) for more information. This includes advice on the following:

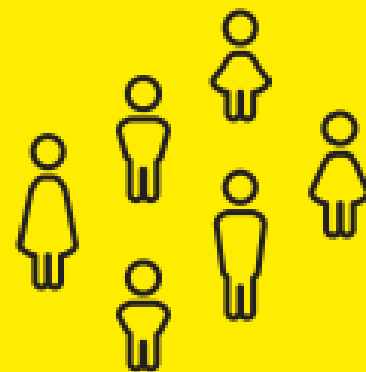
- protecting your child from coronavirus
- if your child has symptoms of coronavirus
- getting urgent medical advice if your child is very unwell
- children with underlying health conditions
- explaining coronavirus to your child
- how your child should wash their hands
- caring for a child isolating and self-isolation
- treating coronavirus symptoms at home
- bringing your child to a test centre and test results

## Flu vaccine

This year, all children aged 2 to 12 years will be offered the children's nasal flu vaccine free of charge. See [hse.ie/flu](https://hse.ie/flu)

## For updates visit

[www.gov.ie/health-covid-19](https://www.gov.ie/health-covid-19)  
[www.hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie)



Published: August 2020

Ireland's public health advice is guided by WHO and ECDC advice



Riadas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## Advice during COVID-19:

# Back to school Advice for parents



Everyone has been working very hard to ensure a safe reopening of schools for staff, students and their families.

Most students will be looking forward to going back to school and will feel happy and excited. Some may feel a little anxious about returning. That's a normal response at a time of change. Most will settle back in soon once they get used to the new rules and routines.

Remind them of the positive aspects of returning  
- like re-connecting with friends and re-engaging with school activities.



### New rules and routines to follow to keep everyone safe:



➤ **Good handwashing and hygiene practice** - important for all students. Make sure your child knows to use a tissue to cover coughs or sneezes or to cough or sneeze into their elbow.

➤ **In senior primary classes and at post-primary** - physical distancing procedures will need to be followed by all.





➤ **Primary school** - younger children may not be required to practice physical distancing, but they may be organised into pods. There may also be new rules about drop off and pick up.

➤ **Staff in all schools, and post-primary students, should wear a face covering** where a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.





**An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna**  
Department of  
Education and Skills



## Advice during COVID-19:

# Back to school Advice for parents



### New rules and routines to follow to keep everyone safe:

- Encourage your child to **walk or cycle to school** if possible and safe to do so.



- **School transport** – students will have an assigned seat and post-primary students will be required to wear a face covering when waiting for and when on-board the bus.

- **Schools will communicate directly with families** about reopening. **Talk together** at home about what to expect when going back to school.



- Having **healthy routines** in place will help with the adjustment of returning to school. Encourage your child to **gradually return to a school term bedtime routine**.

- **Help your child to eat healthily, take exercise and reconnect with friends.**



- Students who have Covid-19 symptoms, including a fever, a cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties, or loss or change to their sense of smell or taste should not attend school. **Please follow guidance on HSE.ie on self-isolation and phone your doctor.** Make sure students know that if they feel unwell in school they should tell their teacher straight away.

- **Teachers understand that it hasn't been easy for young people to study at home during school closures.**



**Remember, we all have a role to play in getting everyone back to school safely.**

For more see [gov.ie/backtoschool](https://gov.ie/backtoschool)





**An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna**  
Department of  
Education and Skills

27 August 2020

Dear Principal,

School reopening is now underway following months of intensive planning and effort by school management and staff. The Department of Education has been working with education partners and wider stakeholders to support the system to meet the challenges of reopening and keeping schools open during this very difficult time. The Department has the responsibility to ensure that school reopening has been informed at all times by the latest public health advice and essential to that has been the engagement and communication with the Department of Health and the HSE. As you are aware, the guidance issuing from this Department as part of the Roadmap for Reopening has been underpinned by the recommendations of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre and the Chief Medical Officer.

We all want to keep the school system open and operating as fully as possible as we continue to live with the Covid-19 pandemic. The Department of Health and the HSE has been working to develop a Schools pathway document for Covid-19, setting out the Public Health approach to managing isolated confirmed cases of Covid-19 within the school community, and also the principles that will underpin the management of outbreaks or potential outbreaks and the aligned testing strategy within an educational facility. Their document, which will be published later today is attached here for your information.

Please note the following key points:

- The response to confirmed cases or outbreaks of Covid-19 in the community or in a school is the responsibility of and will be led and managed by **Public Health HSE**. All decisions as to appropriate actions following a confirmed case or outbreak will be made by their teams in the context of a full Public Health Risk Assessment procedure according to the principles set out in the document attached. Any actions to be taken by the school will be communicated directly by Public Health HSE. School management will be informed as and when such actions such as exclusion of children or staff; partial or full closure, are deemed necessary on public health grounds. If the school is not so informed, it has **not been deemed necessary** by Public Health.
- It is inevitable that with confirmed cases of Covid-19 circulating within the community, there will be suspect or confirmed cases amongst pupils and staff attending, or working within, educational facilities.
- However, children will also continue to display symptoms of many other circulating respiratory viruses. It is known that young children often have a persistent cold. **A child with a blocked or runny nose, but no fever can attend school but if they require paracetamol or ibuprofen, they must stay at home for 48 hours** and parents or guardians should contact the GP to assess whether a test is required.
- If a child displays symptoms which **may** be consistent with Covid-19, the school should contact their parent or guardian and ask them to collect their child as soon as possible. The child should be cared for appropriately by a staff member whilst they are waiting to

go home. The isolation space should be cleaned and contact surfaces disinfected when vacated. The staff member who has cared for the child with symptoms during this time does not need to go home unless subsequently advised to by Public Health HSE.

- At this stage, **no further action** by the school is required.
- In particular, schools are asked to note that they should **not** inform other parents or staff members that a pupil or staff member has gone home due to their symptoms. Other pupils or staff do **not** need to be removed from class, including siblings or other household members.
- When the GP of the child or staff member has assessed the symptoms to be consistent with Covid-19 infection, e.g. fever OR a new cough, shortness of breath, deterioration of existing respiratory condition OR symptoms of aguesia or dysgeusia (essentially loss of or changes to the sense of taste) and the person is referred for a test, at this point the person becomes a suspected Covid 19 case and household members including siblings should be withdrawn from school by their parent or guardian.
- Where no evidence of Covid-19 is detected by the test, the child or staff member should remain at home only until he or she is clinically well enough to return to school (unless specifically requested by HSE to do otherwise). **In particular, all diarrhoea symptoms need to have been resolved for 48 hours prior to return to school.** Household members can return to school immediately following the receipt by the parent or guardian or staff member of a "not detected" result.
- When a case has been confirmed, the Medical Officer of Health and teams will liaise directly with the school and inform them of the confirmed case as necessary and will undertake a Public Health Risk Assessment to inform any further actions and recommendations.
- Core to this assessment will be the likelihood of onward transmission from the confirmed case and will be informed by an urgent discussion with the school to establish any appropriate isolation for identified staff or pupils. Every school setting is unique and therefore the risks will be unique too, for example they will vary according to whether they are e.g. Special educational needs settings, primary or secondary or boarding schools and other factors specific to each school. This may include the effectiveness of the implementation of recommended HPSC risk mitigation measures and a range of other considerations.
- The definition of close contacts within a school will be variable and determined by a risk assessment that will take account of individual factors within each school or class. **It will not be automatically assumed that a whole class will be deemed as close contacts.** Close contacts will be directly notified by the HSE and advised to restrict their movements and present for testing on day zero and day seven. Close contacts will restrict their movements for 14 days even in the event that Covid 19 is not detected in both of these tests.
- **There is no blanket policy to test entire classes or years.** The testing strategy will be aligned to the Public Health Risk Assessment which may recommend widespread swabbing within a class or school under HSE mass testing procedures.
- In the event of an outbreak, Public Health will determine between a range of possible interventions, from exclusion and testing of a small group or pod of pupils up to and including closure of an affected facility.

- All schools are required to have a summary of key information to assist Public Health in their Public Health Risk Assessment ready to be provided on request.

Regards,

Deirdre Shanley

**Deirdre Shanley**

*Rúnaí Cúnta/ Assistant  
Secretary*

**An Roinn Oideachais agus  
Scileanna**

Department of Education and  
Skills

*All schools should prepare a summary outlining the following information to be ready for immediate provision to the public health authorities to support the management of Covid-19.*

- A brief description of the school (type, numbers of staff and students and special features).
- A list of staff and students with appropriate contact telephone numbers.
- A broad description of classrooms.
- An outline of the staff and students movements around the school, between lessons and breaks.
- An up to date list of “pods” and “bubbles”.

**Reopening School Section**

T 057 932 4461

reopeningschools@education.gov.ie