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# **Covid-19 School Response Plan**

## **St. Patrick's Boys' National School**

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**1. Introduction**

The Minister for Education has published "*The Roadmap for the Full Return to School*" on the 27<sup>th</sup> July. It sets out what the operation of schools will look like and the range of supports which will be available in a COVID-19 context.

It has been developed in line with public health advice issued by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and in compliance with the "Return to Work Safely Protocols" developed by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Health with guidance documents provided by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). Each workplace is required to have a COVID-19 Response Plan. In addition to being places of learning, schools are also places of work. This document sets out the information that primary schools need to implement a School COVID-19 Response Plan, including a COVID-19 policy, lead worker representative and process to deal with a suspected case of COVID-19.

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

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken in primary and special schools to minimise the risk of the introduction of infection into schools while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. The documentation and templates in this booklet are supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe reopening of schools and educational facilities. [That report is available here.](#)

One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning. This document identifies the steps schools can take to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself.

The Department has worked intensively with the education partners to develop consistent plans, advice, protocols and guidance for schools, including the School COVID-19 Response plan. There is a suite of documentation available to support schools to reopen safely and fully including guidance on learning, school programmes and wellbeing for the 2020/21 school year. There is also information on funding, staffing and resources to schools to support COVID-19 measures.

Schools are advised to familiarise themselves with these documents. All of the documents will be available at [gov.ie/backtoschool](https://www.gov.ie/backtoschool)

In addition the Department has a communication plan for school reopening which focuses on ensuring that schools, school communities and all stakeholders will have the relevant information to support the reopening and continued operation of schools. There is a particular focus on supporting parents and students through the appropriate use of media channels, through schools themselves and on [gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie)

## **2. What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?**

A Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM)/Education Training Board (ETB) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

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 plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

It is important that the resumption of school-based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department. Doing so minimises the risk to pupils, staff and others. The response plan supports the sustainable reopening of school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the pupils in the school. The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice as appropriate for primary and special schools.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM/ETB, staff, pupils and parents.

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

This is a living document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from [www.Gov.ie](https://www.Gov.ie), [www.dbei.ie](https://www.dbei.ie), [www.hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie), [www.hpsc.ie](https://www.hpsc.ie), [www.hsa.ie](https://www.hsa.ie); [www.education.ie](https://www.education.ie) or agreements with education partners as appropriate for primary and special schools.

### 3. COVID-19 Policy Statement

A COVID-19 policy statement outlines the commitment of the school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the chairperson and principal of the BOM/ETB and brought to the attention of the staff, pupils, parents and others. Schools must have a COVID-19 policy in place prior to the reopening of schools for the 2020/21 school year. Our School COVID-19 Policy Statement can be found at **Appendix 1**.

### 4. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education.

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

Before re-opening our school for the 2020/2021 school year we will have processes in place to review the following:

- Arrangements to keep up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates;
- Arrangements to pass on this information in a timely manner to staff, pupils, parents and others as required;
- Ensured that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education (**details at Section 4.1**);
- Provided staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form (**details at Section 4.2**);
- Identified a Lead Worker representative(s) (**details at Section 4.3**);
- Displayed posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 (**details at Section 4.4**);
- Made the necessary changes to the school or classroom layout if necessary to support the redesign of classrooms to support physical distancing (**details at Section 4.5**);
- Removed unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment;
- Updated the health and safety risk assessment (**details at Section 4.6**);
- Made necessary arrangements to limit access to the school to necessary

- visitors and maintain records of contacts to the school (*details at 4.7*);
- Reviewed the school buildings to check the following:
    - Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
    - Has school equipment and mechanical ventilation been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
    - Have bin collections and other essential services resumed.

There are checklists in place to assist the school on the details of what is needed for these arrangements in the Appendices of this plan.

#### **4.1 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 will be updated 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 Lead Worker Representative, Assistant Lead Worker Representative, A member of the In School Management Team or Principal, who is supported in this role by the BOM

A national information campaign to support parents and pupils has been communicated to parents in advance of school's reopening. It is regarding issues such as COVID-19 awareness and to help minimise the risk of introduction and spread of the virus in schools.

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

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which will be distributed and collected by the principal. A copy is attached also at **Appendix 2**.

A RTW form should be completed and returned **3 days** before returning to work. Staff should email this form to [info@stpatsbns.ie](mailto:info@stpatsbns.ie).

The principal will also provide details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at **very high risk**. This will be updated in line with public health advice. Staff members defined as being at **very high risk** should inform the principal.

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

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

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

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, which will be in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, will be updated by the Department of Education

following consultation with management bodies and unions and a circular will issue to all schools.

### **4.3 Lead Worker Representative**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Role of the Lead Worker Representative**

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;



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- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

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

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

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

<b><i>Name(s) of lead worker representative:</i></b>	<b><i>Contact details:</i></b>
Ms. Rachel Brennan (Lead Worker Rep)	Available in Office
Ms. Liz Gorman (Asst Lead Worker Rep)	Available in Office

All staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and

that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

Full details of the arrangements which will apply for the LWR in primary and special schools is set out at **Appendix 3**.

#### **4.4 Signage Display**

Schools will be required to display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

The Department will provide printed posters to schools, with age appropriate key health messages - hand washing, sneeze and cough etiquette etc.

The school will then arrange to display the posters in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets.

**Note: Signage is under development by the Department. This will be made available to all schools and staff in advance of school reopening.**

**[The signage, once it becomes available, will be found here.](#)**

Shared signage for the school campus has been sourced.

Internal signage for classrooms, corridors, toilets and common areas has been sourced.

#### **4.5 Making Changes to School Layout**

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Further information on how physical distancing can be used in the school environment is found at **Section 5.4** below including a link to the suite of illustrative primary classroom layouts (including special classes).

The school has reconfigured classrooms and other areas as necessary to support physical distancing in line with the guidance in advance of school reopening.

Classroom size does not facilitate 1m social distancing between all pupils. Therefore, a pod system will be utilised within classes. Classes with the largest numbers have been allocated to the largest classroom spaces.

Each 'pod' will have at least 1 metre of separation from neighbouring pods and at least 1 metre of separation from the teacher's desk.

Ideally, each pod should have between 4-6 pupils, with each pupil afforded half a table space.

Pods will be arranged by the classroom teacher before the start of the school year and this information will be relayed to parents before we return to school.

Teachers will use their own professional opinions along with knowledge of the children's abilities and personalities to arrange the pods while trying to keep a good balance of mixed ability at each pod.

Teachers not taking on their own class from last year will consult with the previous class teacher for insight on the children in the class to help with pod arrangement. Ideally pods will be changed and rearranged only on a termly basis.

Pupils' books and copies must not be stored in close contact with books/copies belonging to other pupils.

Each pupil should have an individual file.

To minimise the travel of books between school and home the setting of homework online will be prioritised.

Books not going home will be stored in classroom cubby holes at the end of the day to allow for effective cleaning of the deskspaces.

On a Friday books will be left on tables to allow for effective cleaning of the cubby holes.

Coats will be hung at individual coat racks in a pod by pod basis. Any hats/gloves/scarves will be stored in pupils' own bags until needed.

#### **4.6 Health and Safety Risk Assessment**

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is attached at **Appendix 4**.

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

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

#### **First Aid/Emergency Procedure**

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure shall continue to apply in schools. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, schools should call for an ambulance

or the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is attached at **Appendix 4** and has been added to the school's Health & Safety Risk Assessment.

A whole campus approach to Fire Safety has been reviewed and normal fire evacuation procedures will apply.

#### **4.7 Access to School and Contact Log**

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

Arrangements for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the principal. The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools and centres for education to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities should be maintained. The school should maintain a log of staff and pupil contacts. A sample contact log is available at **Appendix 5**.

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found here:

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-work-safely-protocol>

Schools are reminded that all school records and data must be maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts. The responsibility for compliance with the legislation rests with each school (or ETB) in their role as data controller.

#### **Arrangements for School Day**

Staggered school start and finish times will be in place from the start of the school year.

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The following classes will start school between 8.45 am - 9.00 am - 1st Class (Ms McVerry & Ms O'Connor) , 2nd Class (Ms Brennan), 2nd/3rd Class (Ms McCann), 3rd Class (Ms Leppard), 3rd/4th Class (Mr Gallagher) and 5th Class (Ms Donohoe)

These classes will finish school at 2.30pm.

The following classes will start school between 9.00 am - 9.15 am - Junior Infants (Ms Corr & Ms O'Brien), Senior Infants (Ms Galvin & Ms Sweeney), 4th Class (Mr Geoghegan), 5th Class (Ms Flanagan) and 6th Class (Mr Leen & Mr Manning)

Junior and Senior Infant classes will finish school at 1.40pm

The rest of the above group will finish school at 2.40pm.

Please note that Junior Infant classes are on a separate timetable for the first two weeks and this has been communicated to parents.

All staff of the school will need to be on site by 8.40 am. The front gates will be locked at this time and will be opened only to be used as an entrance or exit during pupil arrival and departure times. All classroom teachers will need to be in their classrooms to welcome pupils as they arrive at their allotted time.

Entry to the school campus will be through the vehicle gate at the front of the school and through the first Rahillion gate at the back of the school.

Exit from the school will be through the pedestrian gate at the front of the school and through the second Rahillion gate at the back of the school.

A path has been created to link the existing pathway at the second Rahillion gate to the existing pathway that surrounds the boys' school.

An exit route from the back of the boys' school, across the back yard, down by the side of the girls' school and out the front pedestrian gate has been created.

#### How classes will enter the school building?

4th Class, (Ms Flanagan's 5<sup>th</sup> class only) and 6th Classes will access the building from the side entrance of the new classrooms and will exit from the same doors at the end of the day.

1st and 2nd Class will access the building from the entrance beside the bike storage area and will exit from the same doors at the end of the day.

2nd/3rd Class, 3rd Class, 3rd/4th Class and 5th Class (Ms Donohoe only) will access the building through the front lobby door and will exit from the same doors at the end of the day.

Junior & Senior Infants will access the building through the front lobby door and will exit from the same doors at the end of the day.

As previously mentioned a staggered start and end time for Junior Infants for 2 weeks is the existing practice in the school. This will continue. Parents will be allowed to enter the school building for these 2 weeks provided they wear a face covering and give their names and contact details to a staff member for contact tracing purposes.

All other parents will only be allowed access to the building with the prior permission of the Principal.

Walking/cycling to school will be strongly encouraged. Children from 2<sup>nd</sup> class up would be expected to leave their parents at the school gate and walk to their class unaccompanied. Staff members will be on hand to ensure children reach their classroom.

Parents wishing to communicate with teachers regarding classroom queries or queries about their son's learning should contact teacher directly using teacher's school email.. All other queries should still be directed through the office at [info@stpatsbns.ie](mailto:info@stpatsbns.ie).

Staff who wish to communicate with parents should do so either by telephone or email as appropriate. Any face to face meetings between parents and staff **MUST** be arranged through the office and with prior approval from The Principal. A log must be kept for contact tracing purposes.

Good social distancing should be practiced by parents while waiting for children, and their exit from school grounds should be swift and without delay

Ideally parents of children from 2nd Class upwards should select a collection point off the school grounds and meet their child there.

Parents of children in 1<sup>st</sup> class should collect their children as normal from the front yard. Parents of Junior and Senior infants should collect their children from the main doors of the school as normal.

### **During the School Day**

Any visitors will announce their presence to the office at the front pedestrian gate or the first Rahillion gate to the office. Upon entry they will make their way to the front entrance of the school. Here they will again speak to the office via the intercom system. If it is not necessary for them to enter the school, they will not gain entry.

If pupils need to be collected early the above arrangements will be in place and the child will be brought to the person collecting them outside the front door. Please email the office at least a half an hour in advance of collection.

A post box will be attached near the front entrance for the delivery of smaller items of post.

Other deliveries will be dropped outside the front entrance in as much as is possible. Larger deliveries that need to be brought into the school will be left in the lobby and contact details for the delivery person will be taken for contact tracing purposes.

Visitors who have an approved appointment must wear a face covering and provide contact details for contact tracing purposes.

## **5 Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

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

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an 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 health and safety requirements.

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

### ***How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into Schools:***

Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms (***details at Section 5.1***);

- Advise staff and pupils that have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;
- Advise staff and pupils not to attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a contact for person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;
- Advise staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly;
- Ensure that staff and pupils know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (***details at Section 8***);
- Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contact point;
- No face to face meetings between staff and parents are to take place without prior knowledge and approval of the Principal.
- Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.
- All visitors that gain entry to the school building will be required to wear a face covering and to provide contact details for contact tracing purposes.

#### **5.1 Know the Symptoms of 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.

#### **5.2 Respiratory Hygiene**

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you



cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.

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

### **5.3 Hand Hygiene**

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

The school will promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the school on how to wash hands. Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

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

Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins needs to be managed so as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.

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

Hand sanitiser dispensers can be deployed more readily at exit and entry points of schools and classrooms and care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risks of falls.

Warm water is preferable to hot or cold water for hand washing but if the plumbing system only supplies cold water, a soap that emulsifies easily in cold water should be used. In some classrooms we will be using cold water with a soap that emulsifies easily.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities should be provided in all toilets, kitchens and any food preparation areas.

Hand washing facilities should be maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels should be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them.

Hot air dryers are an acceptable alternative for hand drying but must be regularly maintained. There is no evidence that hand dryers are associated with increased risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing should be placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities and can be laminated or placed in a plastic sleeve.

Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean).

Evidence of effectiveness is best for alcohol based hand rubs but non-alcohol based hand rubs can be used too.

When hand rubs/gels are being used in school care should be taken to ensure that pupils do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic.

Young children should not have independent use of containers of alcohol gel.

### **Frequency of Hand Hygiene**

Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school; Pupils will also be encouraged to wash their hands before leaving home.
- Before eating or drinking; Washing hands
- After using the toilet; Washing hands
- After playing outdoors; Washing hands
- When their hands are physically dirty; Washing hands
- When they cough or sneeze. Washing hands if they have sneezed or coughed into their hands.

The Department will provide funding for the costs associated with hand sanitising and PPE requirements in schools.

Hand sanitisers will be located at all entry points to the school building, at the office, at the photocopier space, at the entry to the staff room and inside all classrooms mounted near the door. Extra sanitisers for each pod in each classroom will be kept at a central collection point in each classroom and will be distributed by the staff when necessary.

Pupils will sanitise hands at entry to the school building, and on exiting any room in the building.

Pupils will wash their hands on reentry to the school building after yard time just before eating.

The above hand washing and sanitisation will be supervised to protect both pupils and staff.

All class teachers will escort their class to and from the yard.

On the first ring of the bell/whistle on yard, all classes will freeze. On the second bell/whistle all classes will separate into their pods. Class Teachers will then direct the pods in their class to enter the school building in an efficient and socially distanced manner. Pods will move straight to their seats upon entering the classroom. Teachers will then direct each pod to wash their hands, 3 boys can wash their hands in each classroom at any one time. After washing, each pod will return to their desks and can commence eating their lunch.

The existing roller towels have been replaced with paper towel dispensers throughout the school and additional waste disposal bins have been purchased for each towel dispenser.

The towel dispensers will be checked and replenished throughout the school day. External doors to yard will be closed during yard time. "Glimmer men" (for closing doors) previously used under Green Schools initiatives to undertake this job will be replaced by staff to minimise touch points for pupils.

Ventilation in classrooms will be left to the discretion of staff with an effort to maximise ventilation while being cognizant of the warmth and wellbeing of the children.

As winter approaches children will be encouraged to wear base layers to keep themselves warm.

Please note that children will be going out to play in yard in all weather conditions providing it is safe to do so. Raincoats and appropriate clothing is essential.

#### **5.4 Physical Distancing**

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

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

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

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

- Increasing separation
- Decreasing interaction

### ***Increasing separation***

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

To maintain physical distancing in the classroom, we have:

- Reconfigured class spaces to maximise physical distancing
- Utilised and reconfigured all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing
- Allocated the largest classroom spaces to the classes with the largest pupil sizes

To support primary schools and special schools in the implementation of physical distancing in the classroom, the Department has developed a suite of illustrative classroom layouts of potential options (including arrangements for special classes) which are in accordance with the public health advice, and assumes

- Room is clear of any unnecessary furniture/shelves etc. on the walls
- A variety of classroom sizes.

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

- The school has a mix of classroom sizes of both 60m squared and 70m squared. Teacher discretion can be used to layout their own classrooms to configure the layout of their own classrooms while ensuring a distance of at least 1m between pods and at least 1m, and preferably 2m, between pupil desks and teachers' desks.

### ***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. Teachers of Infant to 2nd Classes should follow best practice to increase social distancing between pods in so far as it is possible.

Where possible work stations should be allocated consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces which are shared.

Individual rooms will be assigned to most Special Education Teachers (SET) with 2 SET teachers sharing a larger space.

In as much as is possible SET members will be familiar with 1 other SET member's caseload in the event that SET is needed for substitution cover in mainstream classes.

SET focus this year will be on withdrawal. Apart from Infant class support in the early weeks, general in-class support will not occur for at least the first term of the school year.

High-achiever withdrawal will likely not occur for at least the first term of the school year to maintain the integrity of the bubbles and pods.

Individual withdrawal will occur and will take priority after possible substitution requirements.

Withdrawal of small numbers (2 maximum) of pupils from class bubbles for Numeracy/Literacy will occur but pupils from multiple class bubbles cannot be withdrawn at the same time.

The risk of infection may be reduced 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.

If the class is divided into Pods, there should be at least (1m distance) between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible. 1m distance between pods within the Class Bubble is possible but not between individuals in the pod if we are to achieve full attendance.

Generally speaking the objective is to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles (and Pods within those Class Bubbles) as much as possible, rather than to avoid all contact between Pods, as the latter will not always be possible.

The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until departure at the end of the school day. The Pods within those Class Bubbles is an additional measure to limit the extent of close contact within the Class Bubble.

Pod sizes should be kept as small as is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context. (ideally 4-6 pupils per pod)

To the greatest extent possible, pupils and teaching staff should consistently be in the same Class Bubbles although this will not be possible at all times.

Different Class Bubbles should where possible have separate breaks and meal times or separate areas at break or meal times (or this could be different class years i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> class, 3<sup>rd</sup> class etc.). Class bubbles will have their own clearly marked area of yard space and the bubbles will not mix ideally.

Each class bubble will have meal times within their own classrooms.

Sharing educational material between Pods should be avoided/minimised where possible. Any shared books (Windows on the World, Sum Detective, Read at Home, Treasury) can be divided by class teachers at the same class level at the start of the year. Books that have been used by the class bubble must be quarantined for 72 hours before passing onto another class bubble.

Staff members who move from class bubble to class bubble should be limited as much as possible. SET teachers will be assigned to 2 class levels based on the amount of need in each class. These 2 class allocations will likely not be at the same class level due to the differing levels of need within the school.

Staff will be expected to ensure social distancing from each other at all times. Staff will be required to use face coverings when social distancing is not possible.

The photocopier will be located at the current library hallway. Staff will be required to sanitise hands before and after use. Paper for photocopying will be stored beside the photocopier. Only 1 staff member at a time can access the photocopier.

***Additional measures to decrease interaction include:***

Limit interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas.

Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) should be discouraged.

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

Staff and pupils should avoid sharing of personal items.

Encourage pupils to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth).

Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device should be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged.

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

***School drop off/collection***

Arrangements for dropping off/collecting pupils should be arranged to encourage physical distancing of 2m where possible.

Walking/cycling to school should be encouraged as much as possible.

Arrangements should be made to maintain a distance of 2m between parents and guardians and between parents and guardians and school staff.

Aim of any arrangements is to avoid congregation of people at the school gates where physical distancing may not be respected.

Staggered drop off/pick up times should be considered where practical and feasible.

If schools have additional access points, consideration may be given to whether they can be used to reduce congestion.

Consideration may be given to where pupils congregate as they arrive at school. This could include heading straight to their small group designated learning space/classroom. Pupils will proceed straight to their classrooms. Class teachers will be in place in classrooms prior to the pupils' arrival to welcome them and ensure social distancing. SET teachers will provide support on a timetabled basis to direct pupils to the correct entrances, ensure hand sanitisation on entering the building, take any contact details of adults entering the building and ensure any adult entering the school building is wearing a face covering.

### **Staff**

A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as the staff room and arriving to work.

If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much as distance as is possible and guidance on face covering should be observed.

Face coverings must be worn when moving throughout the school and in communal areas where 2m distance cannot be maintained - e.g. toilets.

Physical distancing should be observed between staff members within the staff room through the use of staggered breaks etc.

The staff room will be laid out to allow for social distancing with 4 stations for food preparation/heating. All staff are required to bring their own food, cutlery and crockery and safely store it for washing at home.

Staff breaks will take place as follows:

**Teacher Breaks:** A main break will take place at either 10.45am to 11.15am or at 11.55am to 12.25pm in line with the childrens' yardtime. This break will be in the staff room. If a teacher is undertaking yard supervision on a specific day they will swap their break time to the other time.

An additional break time of 10 minutes can be organised at a regional level throughout the school while allowing for class supervision. This break will be taken in the corridor outside classrooms.

**SNA Breaks:** A main break for all SNA staff will take place from 11.20am to 11.50am. This break will be in the staff room.

An additional break time of 10 minutes can be organised at a regional level throughout the school and in consultation with class teachers. This break will be taken in the corridor outside classrooms.



Office Staff will take their break either at the first or second teacher breaks.

Staff meetings should be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing. Staff meetings can take place in the hall to ensure social distancing.

Implement no hand shaking policy.

Minimise gathering of school staff at the beginning or end of the school day.

Staff can rotate between areas/classes but this should be minimized where possible.

### ***Corridors and Stairwells***

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

### ***Yard/Supervision***

The risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

Adjust play time/outdoor activities to minimise crowding at the entrance and exits.

It is not possible to maintain physical distancing when pupils in primary or special schools play together outdoors, but in so far as practical it is helpful to keep to consistent groups.

Stagger break times and outdoor access.

The yards on the campus will be shared between the girls' school and the boys' school.

The breaks for the boys' school will be from 10.45am to 11.15am and from 11.55am to 12.25pm.

The breaks for the girls' school will be from 11.20am to 11.50am and from 12.30pm to 1pm.

It is agreed between the 2 schools that these yard times will be swapped in February.

The yards will be divided into quadrants to allow for each class bubble to maintain social distance from other bubbles. A maximum of 4 classes will be on yard at any one breaktime.

Teachers will escort their class bubble out to yard and will collect them from yard.

The grass area behind the boys' school will be available for PE and general outdoor access. This will be shared with the girls' school and a timetable will apply.

Children should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities. Hands must be washed on return to class after yard. This will be supervised by class teachers and will occur on a pod by pod basis.

Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

### **5.6 Use of PPE in Schools**

PPE will not be required to be worn within schools according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. This might include roles such as:

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

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

### **Masks**

Cloth face coverings are not suitable for children under the age of 13 and anyone who:

- Has trouble breathing;
- Is unconscious or incapacitated;
- Is unable to remove it without help;
- Has special needs to who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering.

For staff, face coverings should not be required if physical distancing is possible and practiced appropriately. Wearing a face covering will conceal facial expression and make communication difficult.

The use of a visor as an alternative may be considered where there is a concern regarding prolonged close contact and exposure to fluid/respiratory droplets.

[Advice on how to properly use face coverings can be found here.](#)

All staff should use a face covering in communal areas and in classrooms. The exception to this would be a class teacher who is addressing the class on a whole class basis at a point in the room that is at least 2m away from pupils.

### **Gloves**

The use of disposable gloves in the school by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for intimate care settings. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves. Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene. Gloves will be provided for first aid and intimate care. Hands must be washed before and after wearing gloves and gloves must be properly disposed of.

## **6 Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities**

The Department will work with stakeholders to provide more detailed advice on certain schools activities in advance of school reopening.

### *Choir/Music Performance*

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

The use of tin whistles will be suspended for at least the first term of the school year. Our music programme, Dabbledoo have adjusted the content of their programme to allow for the continued teaching of music.

The use of singing in the classroom is encouraged under the Curriculum Guidelines issued in August. It is envisaged that singing songs and reciting poetry will be an important part of Language lessons and that these activities will take place in pods.

### *Sport Activities*

Schools should refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07253-return-to-sport-protocols/>

### *Shared Equipment*

#### Toys

All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis for example weekly. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs. A system for cleaning toys with a disinfection misting machine is being sourced. It is hoped that this will minimise the time taken to clean and reduce the burden of this on individual class teachers.

In addition, all pupils will be required to sanitise their hands before and after playing with toys.

Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.

When purchasing toys choose ones that are easy to clean and disinfect (when necessary).

If cloth or soft toys are used they should be machine washable.

Jigsaws, puzzles and toys that young pupils to those with special educational needs may be inclined to put into their mouths should be capable of being washed and disinfected.

All play equipment should be checked for signs of damage for example breaks or cracks. If they cannot be repaired or cleaned they should be discarded.

Clean toys and equipment should be stored in a clean container or clean cupboard. The manufacturer's instructions should always be followed.

At this time soft modelling materials and play dough where used should be for individual use only.

#### Cleaning Procedure for Toys

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

where a case of COVID-19 has been identified.

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

Art - Where possible pupils should be encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies.

Electronics - Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between use and consideration could be given to the use of wipeable covers for electronics to facilitate cleaning.

The Linx tablets do not allow for wipeable covers for the keyboards. The tablets should be sprayed with Sanitising mist before and after use.

Musical Equipment/Instruments - To the greatest extent possible, instruments should not be shared between pupils and if sharing is required, the instruments should be cleaned between uses.

Library Policy - Where practical pupils should have their own books. Textbooks that are shared should be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Pupils should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Library books will not be shared between pods without 72 hour quarantine.

Children will be strongly encouraged to have their own reading book in school to minimise classroom library use.

Parents should ensure that each child must choose own book to read and that parents would read it with them every night at child's own pace.

A list of generic comprehension questions could be sent via email to parents so that they can work on comprehension skills at home. Children will keep a list of books read throughout the year to show self progression.

A No Homework policy will apply for the first month of return to school to help with developing childrens' wellbeing and reintroducing them to the school environment.

Thereafter, a No written Homework policy will apply until the end of the first term whereupon a review will take place.

Teachers will use digital platforms (Seesaw, Google Classroom) to set this non-written homework.

Shared Sports Equipment - Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

## **7 Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools**

The Department of Education will provide additional funding to schools to support the enhanced cleaning required to minimise the risks of COVID-19. Details of the funding supports will be provided to schools by way of circular and will be updated as required. The funding will be provided in advance of reopening.

The specific advice in relation to school cleaning is set out in the HPSC advice and will be covered in the induction training. This advice sets out the cleaning regime required to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected cases of COVID-19. Schools are asked to carefully read and understand the cleaning advice and to apply that to all areas of the school as appropriate.

Schools are reminded to take particular care of the hygiene arrangements for hand washing and toilet facilities.

In summary, each school setting should be cleaned at **least once per day**. Additional cleaning if available should be focused on frequently touched surfaces - door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

Two cleaners will be employed in the school between the hours of 10.30am and 1.00pm daily. These cleaners will be responsible for regular sanitization touchpoints, toilets and classroom desks.

These cleaners will commence duty as soon as Garda Vetting is in place.

This is in addition to the regular cleaning hours after the school day.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area.

Cleaning supplies are provided to staff. All supplies should be locked in the drawer when staff are not in the room.

SET teachers will sanitise surfaces in their individual spaces between children attending.

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

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

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

All staff must supply their own cutlery, plate, cup etc. All items must be removed from the staffroom in a sealable container and washed at home.

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

The room should be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.

Once the room is vacated the room should not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.

Disinfection only works on things that are clean. When disinfection is required it is always as well as cleaning.

Person assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household gloves and a plastic apron.

Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine based product (household bleach).

Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.

Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.

If a pupil or staff diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a canteen, play area or if they used the toilet or bathroom facilities, then the areas should be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant (as outlined in the HPSC interim health advice) as soon as is practically possible.

This cleaning will be completed by the cleaners or school staff.

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

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

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

Our isolation area, which we will call our sick bay, is the old staff room.

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

If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If the pupil has a sister in Scoil Phadraig Cailini we will contact the girls' school and parents will be asked to take all of their children home. The Board of Management of St. Patrick's Boys' National School has agreed that if a pupil has been taken home with symptoms of Covid 19, the parents of that pupil should contact his GP and the pupil should remain out of school for 14 days unless he has a negative Covid 19 test and he is symptom free. If a child tests positive for Covid 19, parents/guardians should follow all advice from GP and HSE.

The person will be isolated and a procedure will be put in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times;

The isolation route from each classroom will be the fastest route to the isolation room.

An available SNA will accompany the child to the isolation room, informing the office on the way of the suspected case. The child will be provided with a face mask by the class teacher, if they are willing and able to wear one.

The SNA will escort the child to the isolation room and ensure that they are comfortable. The SNA can choose to remain outside the door of the isolation room with the door open or can wait inside with the child until an isolation room supervisor takes over the supervision.

Suspected adult cases will immediately isolate themselves and leave the building. All teachers will ensure adequate supervision is in place before leaving a class. All staff will inform the office or senior staff members or Lead/Assistant Lead Worker Representatives of their suspected symptoms and decision to leave the building. This should be accomplished in a way that reduces contact with any other person in the building.

The isolation area does not have to be a room but if it is not a room it should be 2m away from others in the room;

The 1st isolation room will be the old staff room which will hold a maximum of 4 pupils.

The 2nd and subsequent isolation rooms will be the SET rooms which will be filled as needed and will hold a maximum of 2 pupils.



Following this, pupils will isolate in classrooms, at least 2 metres away from other pupils.

Following this, and weather dependent, children will isolate outside the school building.

Supervision of the isolation areas will be necessary. All staff are asked to volunteer for this supervision. If any member of staff is not able to do so they should inform the principal.

Remember that the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room;

If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;

Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms if one is available. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises; Pupils will be provided with a face mask if they are willing and to wear one.

Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;

Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided;

If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used. Staff members can drive themselves home if feeling well enough.

If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;

Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;

Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved - (*details at Section 7*).

The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

## **9 Special Educational Needs**

### **Additional considerations for those with Special Educational Needs**

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

Similarly staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or symptoms of respiratory illness.

SET teachers will collect all SEN children and withdrawal groups from class and return them to class. This will help to minimise contact between students on corridors

#### *Hand hygiene*

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

#### *Equipment*

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

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

- Equipment used to deliver care should be visibly clean;
- Care equipment should be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. Cleaning is generally achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water.
- Equipment that is used on different children must be cleaned and, if required, disinfected immediately after use and before use by another child

- e.g. toileting aids;
- If equipment is soiled with body fluids:
  - First clean thoroughly with detergent and water;
  - Then disinfect by wiping with a freshly prepared solution of disinfectant;
  - Rinse with water and dry.

## **10 Staff Duties**

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play. In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the School COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- Must inform the principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Not return to 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.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

## **11 COVID-19 related Absence Management**

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

Circular 0049/2020 contains details on Special leave with pay for suspected Covid-19 cases, Covid 19 diagnosis and recommended self-isolation.

## **12 Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective self-care. Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team. An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum.Life under the logo of '*Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile*'.

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

Staff will be reminded of these supports at the start of the school year and at regular intervals throughout the school year. Additional supports (see below) will also be brought to staff attention.

[https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Workplace\\_Stress/](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Workplace_Stress/).

<https://www.workpositive.ie>

<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/together/?referrer=/together/>

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.

Signed: *Mary Brooks, Chairperson Board of Management.*

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **COVID-19 Policy Statement**

St. Patrick's Boys' National School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

Covid 19 School Response Plan  
St. Patrick's Boys' National School

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- 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 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(s) Rachel Brennan and Liz Gorman.

*Signed: Mary Brooks, Chairperson Board of Management.*

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Appendix 2**

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

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

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

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

Name of School: St. Patrick's BNS

Name of Principal: Brian Horan Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions	YES	NO
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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? If yes, please liaise with Principal re return to work and follow the agreed DES arrangements for very high risk groups		

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

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



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

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Lead Worker Representative - Primary and Special Schools**

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

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

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

This document should be read in conjunction with:

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

## **1. Collaborative Approach**

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

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

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

## **2. Role of the Lead Worker Representative**

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of

employees in relation to COVID-19;

- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

### **3. What can a Lead Worker Representative Do?**

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

- Cleaning protocols and their implementation
- Physical Distancing
- Implementation of one-way systems in the school to ensure social distancing including when entering and exiting the school

- Hand Hygiene facilities including their location and whether they are stocked and maintained
- Hand sanitising
- Staff awareness around hand hygiene in the school
- Respiratory hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- At Risk Groups
- Visitors/Contractors

#### **4. Lead Worker Representative**

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

#### **5. Deputy Lead Worker Representative/ Assistant Lead Worker Representative**

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

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

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

-  
-

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

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

should be selected from the non-teaching staff where feasible and vice versa.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **8. Procedure for dealing with issues that arise**

Where an issue of concern is identified by the LWR (or is notified to the LWR by a staff member), the LWR should bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the Principal. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

If agreement cannot be reached, the LWR may notify the Board of Management (Chairperson of the BoM in the first instance)/ Education and Training Board head office of the issue. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the BoM/ETB head office. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

## **Glossary of Terms**

- **COVID-19 Response Plan:** plan designed to support the staff and BOM/ ETB in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. The plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. COVID-19 Response Plans for Primary and Special Schools are available on the Department's website.



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<u>COVID-19</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Illness</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>School Covid19 Response Plan in place in line with Department of Education guidance and the Return to Work Safely Protocol and public health advice</u>	<u>Examples of Action</u>  <u>Follow public health HSE re hygiene and etiquette</u>  <u>Complete School CO Statement</u>  <u>Return to Work For reviewed</u>  <u>Induction Training</u>  <u>Contact log in place</u>  <u>Complete checklists</u> <u>School Management</u> <u>How to deal with a</u> <u>Other school speci</u>

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

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## Appendix 5

### Contact Tracing Log

<b>Name of School</b>		<b>School Contact Person</b>									
<b>Address of School</b>		<b>For queries only: Phone No:</b>									
		<b>Email:</b>									
<b>Name of Visitor:</b>			<b>Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>								
<b>Date of visit</b>	___/___/___	<b>Time</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>Entry to school</b></td> <td style="width: 50%;"><b>Exit from school</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>am <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>am <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>pm <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>pm <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Entry to school</b>	<b>Exit from school</b>	_____	_____	am <input type="checkbox"/>	am <input type="checkbox"/>	pm <input type="checkbox"/>	pm <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Entry to school</b>	<b>Exit from school</b>										
_____	_____										
am <input type="checkbox"/>	am <input type="checkbox"/>										
pm <input type="checkbox"/>	pm <input type="checkbox"/>										



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<b>Visitor Status</b>	Contractor	Parent/Guardian	Other 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 visitor met)</b>			
<b>Name of person visited</b>	<b>Length of time with each person in the school</b>		

## Appendix 6

### Checklist for School Management

#### Composite Checklist for Schools

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

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

#### Planning and Systems

1. Is there a system in place to keep up to date with the latest

advice from Government and Department of Education, to ensure that advice is made available in a timely manner to staff and pupils and to adjust your plans and procedures in line with that advice?

Yes

- Have you prepared a school COVID-19 response plan and made it available to staff and pupils? **Department guidance and templates provided**

Yes, it has been approved by the Board of Management and disseminated to staff and pupils and parents.

- Have you a system in place to provide staff and pupils with information and guidance on the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and what is expected of them?

Communication for staff will take place via Gmail and staff meetings. A powerpoint presentation for the pupils for the first day of school has been developed.

- Have you displayed the COVID-19 posters in suitable locations highlighting the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes

- Have you told staff of the purpose of the COVID-19 contact log?

Yes

- Have you a COVID-19 contact log in place to support HSE tracing efforts if required? (**Contact log template attached**).

Yes

- Have you informed staff on the measures and provided a system for them to raise issues or concerns and to have them responded to?

Yes

- Have you reviewed and updated risk assessments in line with DES advice to take account of any controls to help prevent the spread of COVID-19? (**Risk template attached**)

Yes

- Have you updated emergency plans, if necessary to take account of the COVID-19 response plan?

Yes

## Staff

- Have you made available to each staff member a COVID-19 return-to-work form to be completed and returned 3 days before they return to the workplace? (*Template attached*)

Yes

- Are you aware of staff members who are at very high risk under the HSE guidance on people most at risk (HSE guidance on people most at-risk) and advised them of the DES agreed arrangements for management of those staff?

Yes

- Have you advised staff and pupils they must stay at home if sick or if they have any symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes

- Have you told staff and pupils what to do and what to expect if they start to develop symptoms of COVID-19 in school, including where the isolation area is?

Yes

- Have you advised staff of the availability of the supports of the occupational health and wellbeing programme through Spectrum Life?

Yes

- Has a lead worker representative been identified (in line with the process agreed with the DES and education partners) and detailed at Section 4.3 of this plan to help advise staff and to monitor compliance with COVID-19 control measures in the school and taken measures to

ensure all staff know who the representative is?

Yes

## Training and Induction

- Have you advised staff to view the Department of Education's training materials which are available online?

Yes,

- Have you taken the necessary steps to update your school induction / familiarisation training to include any additional information relating to COVID-19 for your school?

Yes, for new staff members / substitutes will need to be updated

- Have first aiders, if available, been given updated training on infection prevention and control re: hand hygiene and use of PPE as appropriate? *(It is intended that training will be provided as part of the Department's online training programme).*

Yes

## Buildings / Equipment

- If you have mechanical ventilation does it need cleaning or maintenance before the school reopens?

N/A

- Does your water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionnaire's Disease?

Yes

- Have you visually checked, or had someone check, all equipment in the school for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again?

Yes

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

Yes

## Control Measures in place

### Hand / respiratory hygiene

- Have you accessed supplies of hand sanitisers and any necessary PPE equipment in line with the interim HPSC health guidance relating to the reopening of schools, from the national framework provided by the Department? (RFI published and framework available from early August).

Yes

- Are there hand washing/hand sanitising stations in place to accommodate staff, pupils and visitors adhering to hand hygiene measures in accordance with Department guidance?

Yes

- Have arrangements been made for staff and pupils to have regular access to hand-washing/hand sanitising facilities as appropriate?

Yes

- Are hand sanitisers easily available and accessible for all staff, pupils and visitors - e.g. in each classroom and at entry and exit points to school buildings?

Yes

- Have you made arrangements to ensure hand hygiene facilities are regularly checked and well-stocked?

Yes

- Does the alcohol-based hand sanitiser have at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the active ingredient?

Yes

- Have you informed staff about the importance of hand washing?

Yes.

- Have you arranged for staff to view how to wash their hands (with soap and water for at least 20 seconds) and dry them correctly through the use of the HSE video resource?

Yes

- Have you shown staff and pupils how to use hand sanitiser correctly and where hand-sanitising stations are located?

Yes

- Have you displayed posters on how to wash hands correctly in appropriate locations?

Yes

- Have you told staff and pupils when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:
  - before and after eating and preparing food
  - after coughing or sneezing
  - after using the toilet
  - where hands are dirty
  - before and after wearing gloves
  - before and after being on public transport
  - before leaving home
  - when arriving/leaving the school /other sites
  - after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
  - if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms

Yes for staff

All pupils will watch and discuss a Powerpoint presentation on their first day back to school detailing new school systems and expectations of them.

In addition, posters will be on display in all rooms reminding pupils of times to wash and sanitise their hands.

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

Yes

#### Physical Distancing:

- Have you identified all available school space to be used to maximise physical distancing?

Yes

- Have you reviewed the templates provided by the Department of Education which show options for revised layout of school rooms to meet physical distancing requirements?

Yes

- Have you arranged to revise the layout of the rooms and furniture as per the Department guidelines if necessary?

Yes

- Have you arranged in each room that the teacher's desk should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks?

Yes

- Have you arranged in each room that pupils would be at least 1m away from each other?

Yes.

- Have you allocated work stations consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces that are shared?

Yes

- Have you structured pupils and their teachers into Class Bubbles (i.e. a class grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible) and discrete groups or "Pods" within those class bubbles to the extent that this is practical?

Yes

- If you have divided a class into Pods, have you arranged at least 1m distance between individual Pods within the class bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible?

Yes

- Have you taken steps to limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles (and Pods within those class bubbles) as much as possible?

Yes

- Have you arranged Pod sizes to be as small as it is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context?

Yes

- Have you arranged to the greatest extent possible for pupils and teaching staff to be consistently in the same Class Bubbles acknowledging that this will not be possible at all times?

Yes

- Have you arranged where possible that different class bubbles to have separate breaks and meal times or separate areas at break or meal times?

Yes

- Have you made arrangements to limit interaction on arrival and departure from school and in other shared areas?



Yes

- Have you encouraged walking or cycling to school as much as possible?

Yes

- Have you made arrangements, in so far as practicable, to open additional access points to school to reduce congestion?

Yes

- Can you provide a one way system for entering and exiting the school, where practical?

Yes

- Have you arranged for staff meetings to be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing?

Yes

- Have you a system to regularly remind staff and pupils to maintain physical distancing?

Yes

- Have you advised staff not to shake hands and to avoid any physical contact?

Yes

## Visitors to Schools

- Have you identified the activities that involve interacting with essential visitors to the school, made arrangements to minimise the number of such visitors and put in place measures to prevent physical contact, as far as possible?

• Yes

- Are there arrangements in place to inform essential visitors to the school of the measures to help prevent the spread of infection?

- **Yes**

- Have you a system in place for all visitors who do need to come to the school to make appointment, arrange to contact a central point and to record their visit using the contact tracing log?

- **Yes**

## **Appendix 7**

### **Checklist for 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.

#### **Isolation Area**

- Have you identified a place that can be used as an isolation area, preferably with a door that can close?

Yes.

- 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.

Yes.

- Is the isolation area accessible, including to staff and pupils with disabilities?

Yes.

- Is the route to the isolation area accessible?

Yes

- Have you a contingency plan for dealing with more than one suspected case of COVID-19?

Yes

- Are the following available in the isolation area(s)?

- Tissues
- Hand sanitiser
- Disinfectant/wipes
- Gloves/Masks
- Waste Bags
- Bins

Yes

### Isolating a Person

- Are procedures in place to accompany the infected person to the isolation area, along the isolation route with physical distancing from them?

Yes

- Are staff familiar with this procedure?

Yes

- Have others been advised to maintain a distance of at least 2m from the affected person at all times? *(it is intended that this will be dealt with as part of the Department's online training)*

Yes

- Is there a disposable mask to wear for the affected person while in the common area and when exiting the building?

Yes

### **Arranging for the affected person to leave the school**

#### **(All the following will apply)**

- Staff - have you established by asking them if the staff members feel well enough to travel home?
- 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.
- The affected person should be advised to avoid touching other people, surfaces and objects.
- 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.
- Has transport home or to an assessment centre been arranged if the affected person has been directed to go there by their GP?
- Has the affected person been advised not to go to their GP's surgery or any pharmacy or hospital?
- Has the affected person been advised they must not use public transport?
- Has the affected person been advised to continue wearing the face mask until they reach home?

### **Follow up**

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

### **Cleaning**

- Have you taken the isolation area out-of-use until cleaned and disinfected?
- Have you made arrangements to clean and disinfect any classroom space where the staff or pupils were located?
- Have you arranged for cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area and any other areas involved, as soon as practical after the affected person has left the building?
- Have the cleaners been trained in dealing with contaminated areas and supplied with the appropriate PPE? *(It is intended to provide online training for cleaning staff. Appropriate PPE will be available to schools through the national procurement process which schools can access before reopening).*

### **Appendix 8 Checklist Lead Worker Representative**

#### **(The following can be confirmed)**

- Have you agreed with your school to act as a Lead worker representative for your school? *(Process for agreeing on lead worker representative/s in schools to be agreed centrally and implemented locally).*
- Have you been provided with information and training in relation to the role of lead worker representative? *(Training for this role is currently being explored with the HSA).*
- Are you keeping up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
- Are you aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?
- Do you know how the virus is spread?
- Do you know how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?

- Have you watched and do you understand the online Induction Training provided by the Department of Education before returning to school?
- Are you helping in keeping your fellow workers up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
- Have you completed the COVID-19 return-to-work form and given it to your school? (*Department template Return-to-Work form available*)
- Are you aware of the control measures your school has put in place to minimise the risk of you and others being exposed to COVID-19? (*Checklist for School Management available*)
- 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*
- Have you a means of regular communication with the person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan?
- Are you co-operating with your school to make sure these control measures are maintained?
- Have you familiarised yourself with the cleaning requirements needed to help prevent cross contamination? (*Checklist for Cleaning and Disinfection available*)
- Have you been asked to walk around and check that the control measures are in place and are being maintained?
- 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?
- Are you keeping a record of any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects and what action was taken to remedy the issue?
- Are you familiar with what to do in the event of someone developing the symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?
- Are you co-operating with your school in identifying an isolation area and a safe route to that area? (*Checklist for dealing with suspected case of COVID-19 available*)

- Are you helping in the management of someone developing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?
- Once the affected person has left the school, are you helping in assessing what follow-up action is needed?
- Are you helping in maintaining the contact log?
- Have you been made aware of any changes to the emergency plans or first aid procedures for your school?
- Are you making yourself available to fellow staff to listen to any COVID-19 control concerns or suggestions they may have?
- Are you raising those control concerns or suggestions with your school and feeding back the response to the worker who raised the issue?
- Are you aware of the availability of the Spectrum Life Wellbeing Together Programme?

## **Appendix 9**

### **Checklist for Cleaning**

**(This has been agreed with our Cleaning Company)**

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



aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before and after wearing gloves?

- Have you a system in place for the disposal of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a rubbish bag? *Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person suspected of having COVID-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection.*
- Have you ensured there is a system in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use?
- Have you ensured there is a system in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use?