

Covid-19 Response Plan for the safe and
sustainable reopening of
Wexford Educate Together
National School.
Updated 2021/22

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1. Covid-19 Policy Statement

Wexford Educate Together National School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation

of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education and Skills
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and pupils engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Skills
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education and Skills advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s)

Mary Breen / Anne Howe

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)

Date: _____

2. Introduction

Our Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) 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. In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, pupils and parents. The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify the same.

3. Plans and Preparation

The school will proceed to safely facilitate school based teaching and learning and provide a safe workplace for staff. Management will keep up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans and Department of Education updates and will pass on this information in a timely manner to staff, pupils, parents and others as required;

Induction Training

All new members of 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 their duties, they should immediately seek guidance from the Principal, who is supported in this role by the BOM.

Procedure for Returning to Work

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available online or from the principal.

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Schools should request staff to confirm that the details in the Return to Work Form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

The principal will also provide details of the **Induction Training** for completion by new staff and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

Details of the working arrangements that apply to the very high risk school staff, is in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, and is detailed in the relevant Department of Education circulars available on the Department's website.

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 schools. The process for appointment of the lead worker representative in schools has been agreed centrally between the Department of Education and the education partners.

Responsibility for the development, updating 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 pupils. Adherence to the Work Safely 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.

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 implementing infection prevention control measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the 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.

Name(s) of lead worker representative:	Contact details:
Mary Breen	secretary@wexfordetns.ie
Anne Howe	053 9184573

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 infection prevention control measures.

Signage

The school will have signage for:

- Safe entering and exiting.
- Social Distancing where required
- Hand Washing and cough etiquette.
- COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

<https://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Announcements/information-for-schools-preschools-and-third-level-institutions-on-the-coronavirus.html#1>

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

Changes to School Layout:

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key infection prevention control measures to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19. The school will reconfigure classrooms and other areas as necessary to support physical distancing in line with the guidance.

Health and Safety Risk Assessment

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

Wexford Educate Together have conducted a risk assessment which will be kept under review as a living document. This will be ratified and reviewed in Board Meetings.

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.

Access To School & Contact Log

- Access to the school will be restricted for visitors and visitors will need prior approval from the principal.
- Visitors are asked to call the office on their arrival and the secretary or another member of staff will advise them when it is ok to enter the building.
- Any visitor entering the school building will be expected to wear a mask.
- Visitor sign in/sign out log will be filled out for and maintained in the school,
- WETNS will maintain a log of pupil and personnel details and contact information - responsibility of secretary.

4. Infection Prevention 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; pupil-pupil, teacher-teacher and teacher- pupil 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.

The best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a workplace or any setting is to practice physical distancing, adopt proper hand hygiene, follow respiratory etiquette and increase ventilation.

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

- 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 to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a test
- Advise staff and pupils, to follow the HSE advice if they are a close contact of a suspected/ confirmed case of Covid-19.
- If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff and pupils are advised to consult and follow latest Government advices in relation to foreign travel.

- 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
- Advise staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;
- 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;
- Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

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

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

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

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

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

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE [Website](#). If you **do not** have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a [COVID-19 walk-in test centre](#).

COVID-19 Tracker App

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

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

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

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

5.2) Respiratory Hygiene

WETNS will promote respiratory hygiene through signage and teaching and learning - 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

Pupils and staff perform hand hygiene:

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

Measures WETNS have taken to improve hand hygiene:

- Hand washing facilities are in every class-room, staffroom, and toilets.
- Hand Sanitizing units are at the entrance of every classroom and all entry points around the building.
- Pump bottle sanitisers used by pods in classrooms.
- Teachers promote hand hygiene lessons regularly in the classroom. Set of lessons to be composed around hygiene and shared with the teachers
- Staff and pupils understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.
- Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins to be managed, to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.
- 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. Children should not have independent use of containers of alcohol gel.

Wexford Educate Together has made the following safety changes to our building:

- Stop/drop procedures in car park in mornings and afternoons.
- Dual entry and exit route for pupils
- POD system in all classes
- Hand Sanitizing units around the building
- Signage
- Zoned Yard

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.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will be implemented, however management note that allowing for some flexibility when needed will be essential for the running of the school as per guidelines. It will be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

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:

- Room layout
- Declutter rooms.

Decreasing Interaction:

- Classes are bubbles, and at WETNS, the aim is that where possible bubbles will not interact with each other during the school day.
- Bubbles will be structured into pods, with 1 meter between pods and
- Pods to be kept as small as possible.
- Avoiding all contact between pods will not always be possible, but it will be limited and will therefore limit the risk of passing infection.
- Staff will where possible be in the same bubble during the day and SET's and SNA's will aim to work with the minimum amount of classrooms during the day.
- Resource sharing to be kept to a minimum.
- Yard time will be zoned and phased.

Ventilation

The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice ‘*Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools*’ The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

The Department has also published guidance regarding on how these practical steps measures can be supplemented and enhanced by the use of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) monitors. The CO₂ monitors will be used in classrooms as an indication of suitable ventilation. If poor ventilation continues to exist in a particular room/area, air cleaners may be considered as an additional measure in conjunction with other methods of ventilation that are available.

Use of PPE

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

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

The updated advice from the HPSC to the Department of Education has recommended that face coverings should be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils. The Department has accepted this recommendation. Accordingly, it is now a requirement for face coverings to be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils. (Please see note re medical grade masks on page 23)

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

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

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

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

Face Coverings/Masks

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

Cloth face coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face coverings coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact.

In childcare and educational settings, the implementation of mandatory face-covering usage is challenging, as it is known that children will have a lower tolerance and ability to use the face covering properly, and use of face-coverings by teachers and staff caring for very young children may cause undue stress to the children.

It is not recommended that children attending primary school wear face-coverings.

It is now a requirement for face coverings to be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils.

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

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

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

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

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

Information should be provided on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6ZqdpLfSqw>

Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.

Face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.

Schools should consider having additional disposable face coverings available for staff in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day.

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

Medical Grade Masks

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

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

Cleaning Regimes:

In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school will be thoroughly cleaned at least once per day. Particular attentions will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs, arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

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

Hygiene and Cleaning in Wexford Educate Together National School.

- Cleaning schedule and checklists provided to all cleaning staff.
- Cleaning equipment provided to all staff to clean their own immediate working area.
- Staff to clean items brought to work, and not leave items in communal areas.
- Community avoid sharing items - cups, plates, cutlery etc.
- Cleaning after a suspected case of Covid in all areas affected and in COVID isolation areas.
- High contact areas – photocopier / phones etc – Anti-bacterial wipes
- Desks to be wiped or cleaned during the day where necessary
- All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area.
- Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.
- Rotas and checklists are provided to Cleaners

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

- The room to be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.
- Once the room is vacated it will not be reused until thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.
- The isolation areas will be cleaned immediately once the pupil / staff member has left.

Cleaning Procedure for Toys / shared materials

- Toys and shared materials will be cleaned between use of pupils
- Some hard plastic toys will be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher or using a steamer / steriliser.
- Toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up can 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.
- Sensory equipment should be cleaned between use of pupils.
- Ipads / ICT equipment will be wiped in between use by pupils or staff.

5. The School Day

Admitting and Dismissing Students

Over the past year the school reopening plan has been a great success due to the cooperation of all involved. Now that pupils, staff and parents are familiar with the new procedures the next step is to restore as much of the school day as possible while still maintaining the health and safety of pupils and staff.

Morning Arrangements

To reduce the amount of traffic entering the school car park, parents are strongly encouraged to:

- walk, cycle or scoot to school.
- Use park and walk where above is not possible
- Only drive into the school car park if absolutely necessary

As most pupils, staff and parents are familiar with the routines we feel a full return of all classes will be achievable on Tuesday 31st August. There will be separate arrangements made for Junior Infants on the first day. These will be communicated with parents separately.

During the initial reopening of the school, we will continue to have an extended drop off time of 8.50am-9.10am, this will allow parents flexibility and also help ease congestion in the carpark during the initial reopening. We do however aim to reduce this time and hope that by the end of September 2021, all pupils will be in their classrooms before 9.00am. A traffic survey will be carried out along with a risk assessment to ensure this can be done safely.

School gates will remain closed until 8.50am. There will be additional supervision in the carpark once the gates open to support pupils arriving at school. Parents will use the drop and go facility at the school gate and should **not** park the car and walk to the gate. Parents must ensure that the children are ready to vacate the car and have all belongings to hand i.e. not stopping to put a coat on or remove items from the boot of the car. **No parent will be allowed entry to the school yard to avoid the congregation of parents. (HSE advice).**

The children will be greeted at the gate by staff where they will walk straight to their classroom where the class teacher is present. The 3 lane entry process will continue, one for classes who enter via the main door, one for classes that enter at the back of the school and pupils in the portacabin. The walkways have been marked in the school yard. The aim will be to keep pupils of different classes apart as much as possible.

During the Extended Arrival Time (8.50 – 9.10am)

During this time class teachers will have a specific agenda to focus on with pupils: There will be a focus on SPHE and pupil well-being during this time. Helping pupils settle back into school and eliminating anxiety will also be a priority for all classes. Morning activities may include:

- Calm time – listening to calm music
- Pod playtime activities
- Mindfulness activities - drawing or reading etc.
- Recapping on health and safety procedures – hand sanitising, social distancing requirements.

Green Route	Red Route	Portacabin
(children entering at back of building and straight into the external entrance into classrooms)	(children who enter via the main door)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior Infants / Senior Infants • Second Class • Fifth Class <p>Bikes and scooters to be placed around the back of the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Class • Fourth Class • Sixth Class <p>Bikes and scooters to be placed around the back of school</p>	<p>Senior Infants / First Class</p> <p>Bikes and scooters to be placed around the back of school</p>

Junior Infants First Day

The children will be asked to arrive in their pods at staggered times on the first day. Parents will be allowed to enter the classroom with their children on the first day, settle the child and leave promptly before the arrival of the next pod. Parents will enter through the main door and exit via the classroom door. Parents will be required to wear face coverings. Parents will be contacted separately to inform them of their child's Pod and arrival time.

Pod	Arrival Time	Departure Time
Pod A	8.50 am	9.00 am
Pod B	9.00 am	9.10 am
Pod C	9.10 am	9.20 am
Pod D	9.20 am	9.30 am

Home time / Collection Procedures

Collection time poses many challenges for staff and parents due to the nature of our school and the limited space both in the yard and in the carpark. The school will continue to stagger the collection time to ensure the safety of pupils when being dispersed at the end of the day. We have trialled many different options regarding the most effective way to achieve this and have found that allowing the older pupils to leave first is the safest way to manage the congestion at the gate during this busy time. We would again ask parents to adhere to the collection times and walk into the carpark where possible to collect pupils. If entering the carpark, parents are asked not to park the car and to use the stop and drop facility set up by the school. A maximum of two classes will exit the school at one time. The gate will remain locked until the specified collection times.

Each class will line up at the collection point with their class teacher at the specified time. These procedures will remain consistent during **all weather types**, so it is vital that pupils have a rain coat with a hood.

There will be two clearly marked collection points at the gate. Red Pick Up – the small gate. Green Pick Up – the big gate (this will be opened to disperse pupils at home time). Additional supervision from staff will be present to support pupils and parents with the collection procedures.

Time	Green Route	Red Route
1.30 pm.	Junior Infants	Senior Infants
2.20pm	5 th Class	6 th Class
2.25 pm	4 th Class	3 rd Class
2.30pm	1 st Class	2 nd Class

Siblings from First class to sixth class may be collected at the same time (**time of the oldest sibling**) to minimise traffic in the carpark and to make things more practical for parents. There will be a list of children belonging to the same families compiled and teachers / SNA's will be assisting with the dispersal of pupils at home time.

A permission form will be sent out via Aladdin for parents to allow their children to leave the school grounds unaccompanied. Younger siblings will be allowed to leave with older siblings with parental consent.

Unfortunately, it will **not be possible for parents/guardians to come onto the school grounds before or after school**. To minimise the risks, and to help us to maintain social distancing parents are asked not to approach staff during drop off and collection and to contact the office via telephone where required.

Rainbows Childcare / After School Facility

The school has liaised with Rainbow Childcare facility regarding the collection of children from the school. Rainbows will be sending a member of staff to the school for each of the staggered pickups. The class teacher will bring the children to the gate as per plan and release the children to the Rainbow employee. The Rainbow employee is then responsible for the children at this point.

This system will apply rain, hail or shine so please make sure that your child comes to school prepared for the weather!

Early collection / Late drop off:

Please arrive at the school at your designated time to help with the flow of traffic in the car park. If you need to drop off/ collect your child outside of these times please ring the office on your arrival and a member of staff will escort your child to and from the front gate.

Changes to Classroom and School Layout and to School Routines

The DES guidelines recognise that a common-sense approach is needed in our Primary schools. To that end, every effort will be made to limit interaction within classrooms, to limit contact between class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities.

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class Bubble is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as 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 the children go home at the end of the school day.

- Classes are referred to as bubbles and groups within the class are referred to as pods.
- We have set up all of our systems to keep bubbles separated from one another as much as possible during the school day.
- While in the classroom, the children will stay within their pod, and will be kept at a minimum distance of 1m from other pods where possible. There is an acknowledgement that maintaining pods may not be possible in all scenarios.
- Once the pods have been established the children will need to remain in the same pods for contact tracing requirements. Any change to the pods must be reported to the principal to update the key information document.
- Children should have all of their stationery supplies in a pencil case and are not to share with other children. Please reinforce this with your child.
- Yard and field has been divided into zones for each pod.
- Movement of adults in the school and between bubbles will be kept to a minimum during the school day.
- Classes have been cleared of clutter and any unnecessary furniture to improve our ability to social distance.

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.

Break Times

The DES guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

The school yard and field will be used at break times. The school already had in place staggered break times and this will continue. Junior - Second Class play time and 3rd- 6th playtime. The school yard and field has been divided into four clear spaces, one for each class bubble. A map has been devised to allocate each class bubble a zoned area within the yard and field.

On wet days the children will be supervised in their classes as before

Toileting during Break Times

Children should all be encouraged to use the toilet before going outside, if a pupil needs to use the toilet during break time they will have to use their allocated class toilet. One SNA from each yard time will be responsible for accompanying pupils to the toilet where required.

First Aid

Staff members will continue to administer first aid where required. The staff member must wear a face covering when in close proximity of pupils. Minor injuries will be dealt with on the yard or field by the designated teacher / SNA on duty. If a pupil needs to be brought inside due to a more serious injury then they will be brought to the staffroom and the class teacher/another member of staff called to assist. One SNA on duty will be responsible for bringing the first aid kit out to the yard.

Special Education Teachers/Special Needs Assistants/ Team Teaching

Staff members (particularly Special Education Teachers and SNAs) can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work as far as possible, within the confines of a bubble.

- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
- As children from different pods will be using the SET room, it will have to be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending. Time will have to be allowed for the cleaning.
- As children from different pods will be using the sensory room, this also will have to be wiped clean between pupils.

For children with Special Education 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. Where symptoms are present, children should not attend school.

CODE OF Behaviour

Due to Covid-19 restrictions the following changes will be put in place when managing behaviour in the classroom.

1. Non-verbal cue (Silently wait, eye contact, proximity to child)	Remain the same
2. Verbal reasoning (using positive language)	Remain the same
3. Move to a table on his/ her own in the classroom	Move to an area within the classroom 1 meter from other pods.

If a pupil is a risk to themselves or others then they may be removed from the classroom and the parents called to collect them.

Shared Equipment:

- Each pod of pupils will have their own box under the table to store their books and stationary.
- Children from 1st to 6th class will keep books and copies in individual containers under their desks.
- Stationery to be stored in pencil cases in pod boxes and will remain in school.
- Art – Where possible pupils should be encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies.
- Electronics – Shared electronic devices to be cleaned between use and consideration could be given to the use of wipeable covers for electronics to facilitate cleaning.
- Musical Equipment/Instruments – To the greatest extent possible, instruments should not be shared between pupils and if sharing is required, the instruments will be cleaned between uses.
- 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. Books may be given to pods and left for a period of 72 hours before redistributing to others.
- Shared Sports Equipment – Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

Communication between home and school.

Communication between the school and parents will be done via Aladdin or telephone call where possible. Teachers will use the Aladdin system to communicate with parents in their class. If a meeting is deemed absolutely necessary then it should be arranged outside school hours. The staff member and parents should both wear a facial covering and keep a distance of 2 meters during the meeting.

Homework

The school will aim to resume homework routines this September and also continue to make use of the Seesaw app that was used during remote learning. Class teachers will communicate the homework routines with parents in early September.

The use of the school building outside school hours

The school recognises that the school building may be used outside of school hours for various reasons. This may be due to:

- Meetings with staff – if a staff members need to meet then a 2 meter distance should be maintained. Facial coverings should be worn where required.
- Meetings with outside agencies / parents - if a meeting is deemed necessary then adults should keep a distance of 2 meters and facial coverings should be worn by all in attendance. Areas should be wiped after use. Contact tracing log must be signed at the front door.

- Staff children – staff children must remain in their parent’s classroom before and after school and should sit at the parents desk.
- After school clubs - It will be the responsibility of the person(s) running the ECA to keep a record of the pupil pods that have been set up. A document outlining the pods and contact details and other relevant information should be given to the principal to include in the school’s Key Information Document.

Visitors during School Hours

From time to time there may be planned visitors to the school during school hours, these could be outside agencies who work with pupils / staff. Any visitor must have prior approval and must adhere to the schools procedures and protocols. They will be required to sign the contact tracing log at the entrance of the school and must wear a facial covering. Any area used by the visitor to the school should be also wiped down after use.

6. Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

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

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

Isolation Area 1 – Principal Office

Isolation Area 2 – Sensory Room

Isolation Area 3 – Hallway – outside secretary office.

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

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately;
- Isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times;
- The isolation area does not have to be a room but if it is not a room it should be 2m away from others in the room;
- If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m, a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;
- Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;

- Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;
- Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided;
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used;
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

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

7. 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.

Staff Routines

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 updated guidance on face covering should be observed. Physical distancing should be observed between staff members within the staff room through the use of staggered breaks etc. Staff meetings should be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical 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.

Staff Break Time

- A limited amount of staff will be able to enter the staffroom at one time. Wipes / sanitiser will be provided for high contact areas like the kettle / microwave etc.
- Staggered break times will be arranged to reduce the amount of staff on break at one time.
- Staff may eat their lunch in their own rooms or in an allocated empty classroom. Any area used should be wiped down after use.

Covid Related Absence Management

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

Employee Assistance & Well Being

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 individual staff members 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*'.

The EAS is a self-referral service where employees have access to 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. The service is also available via SMS, WhatsApp, e-mail, live chat and call back request. All points of contact for the service are qualified, accredited and experienced mental health professionals.

Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home).

The EAS also provides advice and support to managers and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace.

A bespoke wellbeing portal and app is available which offers access to podcasts, blogs, live chats and videos on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition. E-Learning programmes across mental health, sleep and a range of wellbeing topics are 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. Spectrum.Life also provides a series of webinars and presentations to promote wellbeing in schools.

Return to Work Form

This Return to Work Form must be completed by school staff in advance of returning to the workplace. If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to the workplace.

Name: _____ Name of School: _____

Name of Principal: _____

	Questions	YES	NO
1.	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature (38 degrees C or above), difficulty breathing, loss or change in your sense of smell or taste now or in the past 14 days?		
2.	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3.	Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?		
4.	In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19?		
5.	Have you been advised to self-isolate at this time?		
6.	Have you been advised to restrict your movements at this time?		
7.	Have you been categorised as 'Very High Risk' or 'High Risk' by the Occupational Health Service (OHS)		

Please provide details below of any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the above, which may need to be considered to allow your safe return to work e.g. returning from travel abroad.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

* If your situation changes after you complete and submit this Return to Work Form, please inform your employer.

** Further information on people at very high risk (extremely vulnerable) or high risk from COVID-19 can be found at link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>.

*** Details of current arrangements for travel overseas can be found set out at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/77952-government-advice-on-international-travel/>

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

Lead Worker Representative – Primary and Special Schools

The Work Safely Protocol is designed to support employers and workers to put infection control 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 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 infection prevention 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 pupils. Adherence to the Work Safely 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.

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 Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to infection prevention control 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. Does a LWR have any legal responsibilities?

No. A Lead Worker Representative does not have any duties in relation to COVID-19 other than those that apply to employees generally. In other words, the LWR is not responsible for the control measures within an organisation, which remains the employer's responsibility.

5. Lead Worker Representative

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

6. 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

7. 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.

8. 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;
- 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.

9. 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 infection prevention control 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 Work Safely Protocol, Department of Education and public health guidance to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. COVID-19 Response Plans for Primary and Special Schools are available on the Department’s website.
- **Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF):** the forum for high level dialogue between Government, Trade Union and Employer representatives on matters of strategic national importance - involves the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Government & Employers.
- **Work Safely Protocol:** national protocol designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- **Safety Representative:** Section 25 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 sets out the selection and role of the Safety Representative in the workplace. The rights of the Safety Representative are set out in legislation. (Note: A Safety Representative has rights and not duties under the 2005 Act). This role is separate to the LWR under COVID-19.

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?
2. Have you prepared a school COVID-19 response plan and made it available to staff and pupils? **Department guidance and templates provided**
3. 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?
4. Have you displayed the COVID-19 posters in suitable locations highlighting the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?
5. Have you told staff of the purpose of the COVID-19 contact log?
6. Have you a COVID-19 contact log in place to support HSE tracing efforts if required? (**Contact log template attached**).
7. Have you informed staff on the measures and provided a system for them to raise issues or concerns and to have them responded to?
8. 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**)
9. Have you updated emergency plans, if necessary to take account of the COVID-19 response plan?

Staff

10. Have you made available to each staff member a COVID-19 return-to-work form to be completed and returned before they return to the workplace? (**Template attached**)
11. Have you request confirmation that the details in the Return to Work Form remain unchanged following periods of closure such as school holidays.
12. 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 DE agreed arrangements for management of those staff?
13. Have you advised staff and pupils they must stay at home if sick or if they have any [symptoms of COVID-19](#)?
14. Have you advised staff and pupils to follow public health advice if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.
15. Have you advised staff and pupils consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
16. 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?

17. Have you advised staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;
18. Have you advised staff of the availability of the supports of the occupational health and wellbeing programme through Spectrum Life?
19. Has a lead worker representative been identified (in line with the process agreed with the DE and education partners) and detailed at Section 4.3 of this plan to help advise staff and to monitor compliance with COVID-19 control measures in the school and taken measures to ensure all staff know who the representative is?

Training and Induction

20. Have you advised new staff to view the Department of Education's training materials which are available online?
21. 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?
22. Have first aiders, if available, been given updated training on infection prevention and control re: hand hygiene and use of PPE as appropriate?

Buildings / Equipment

23. If you have mechanical ventilation does it need cleaning or maintenance before the school reopens after periods of closure?
24. Does your water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionnaire's Disease?
25. Have you visually checked, or had someone check, all equipment in the school for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again?
26. Have you arranged for the school, including all equipment, desks, benches, doors and frequent touched surfaces points, to be cleaned once a day

Infection Prevention Control Measures in place

Hand / respiratory hygiene

27. Have you accessed supplies of hand sanitisers and any necessary PPE equipment in line with the interim HPSC health guidance from the national framework provided by the Department?
28. 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?
29. Have arrangements been made for staff and pupils to have regular access to hand-washing/hand sanitising facilities as appropriate?
30. 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?
31. Have you made arrangements to ensure hand hygiene facilities are regularly checked and well-stocked?
32. Does the alcohol-based hand sanitiser have at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the active ingredient?
33. Have you informed staff about the importance of hand washing?

34. Have you arranged for new 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?
35. Have you shown new staff and pupils how to use hand sanitiser correctly and where hand-sanitising stations are located?
36. Have you [displayed posters](#) on how to wash hands correctly in appropriate locations?
37. 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
 - when entering and exiting vehicles
 - after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
 - if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms
38. 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

Physical Distancing:

39. Have you identified all available school space to be used to maximise physical distancing?
40. 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?
41. Have you arranged to revise the layout of the rooms and furniture as per the Department guidelines if necessary?
42. Have you arranged in each room that the teacher's desk should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks?
43. Have you arranged in each room that pupils would be at least 1m away from each other?
44. Have you allocated work stations consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces that are shared?
45. 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?
46. 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?
47. 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?
48. Have you arranged Pod sizes to be as small as it is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context?

49. 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?
50. Have you arranged where possible that different class bubbles to have separate breaks and meal times or separate areas at break or meal times?
51. Have you made arrangements to limit interaction on arrival and departure from school and in other shared areas?
52. Have you encouraged walking or cycling to school as much as possible?
53. Have you made arrangements, in so far as practicable, to open additional access points to school to reduce congestion?
54. Can you provide a one system for entering and exiting the school, where practical?
55. Have you arranged for staff meetings to be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing?
56. Have you a system to regularly remind staff and pupils to maintain physical distancing?
57. Have you advised staff not to shake hands and to avoid any physical contact?
58. Have you advised staff of the Department's guidance to achieve good ventilation?
59. Have you checked any mechanical ventilation systems to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air is used?

Visitors to Schools

60. 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?
61. Are there arrangements in place to inform essential visitors to the school of the measures to help prevent the spread of infection?
62. 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?

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 nominated as the designated contact person for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

Isolation Area

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

Isolating a Person

7. Are procedures in place to accompany the infected person to the isolation area, along the isolation route with physical distancing from them?
8. Are staff familiar with this procedure?
9. Have others been advised to maintain a distance of at least 2m from the affected person at all times?
10. Is there a disposable mask to wear for the affected person while in the common area and when exiting the building?

Arranging for the affected person to leave the school

11. Staff – have you established by asking them if the staff members feel well enough to travel home?
12. Pupil – have you immediately contacted their parents/guardians and arranged for them to collect their pupil? Under no circumstances can a pupil use public or school transport to travel home if they are a suspected case of COVID-19.
13. The affected person should be advised to avoid touching other people, surfaces and objects.
14. The affected person been advised to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue(s) when they cough or sneeze, and to put the tissue in the bin.
15. Has transport home or to an assessment centre been arranged if the affected person has been directed to go there by their GP?

16. Has the affected person been advised not to go to their GP's surgery or any pharmacy or hospital?
17. Has the affected person been advised they must not use public transport?
18. Has the affected person been advised to continue wearing the face mask until they reach home?

Follow up

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

Cleaning

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

Appendix 8 Checklist Lead Worker Representative

1. Have you agreed with your school to act as a Lead worker representative for your school?
2. Have you been provided with information and training in relation to the role of lead worker representative if you are new to the role?
3. Are you keeping up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
4. Are you aware of the [signs and symptoms of COVID-19](#)?
5. Do you know [how the virus is spread](#)?
6. Do you know how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?
7. Have you watched and do you understand the online Induction Training provided by the Department of Education before returning to school?
8. Are you helping in keeping your fellow workers up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
9. Have you completed the COVID-19 return-to-work form and given it to your school?
(*Department template Return-to-Work form available*)
10. Are you aware of the control measures your school has put in place to minimise the risk of you and others being exposed to COVID-19? (*Checklist for School Management available*)
11. Did your school consult with you when putting control measures in place? *Control measures have been agreed centrally between the Department and education partners. Consultation at school level should take place on any specific local arrangements necessary to implement the protocol*
12. Have you a means of regular communication with the person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan?

13. Are you co-operating with your school to make sure these control measures are maintained?
14. Have you familiarised yourself with the cleaning requirements needed to help prevent cross contamination? (*Checklist for Cleaning and Disinfection available*)
15. Have you been asked to walk around and check that the control measures are in place and are being maintained?
16. Are you reporting immediately to the person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects that you see?
17. Are you keeping a record of any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects and what action was taken to remedy the issue?
18. Are you familiar with what to do in the event of someone developing the symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?
19. Are you co-operating with your school in identifying an isolation area and a safe route to that area? (*Checklist for dealing with suspected case of COVID-19 available*)
20. Are you helping in the management of someone developing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?
21. Once the affected person has left the school, are you helping in assessing what follow-up action is needed?
22. Are you helping in maintaining the contact log?
23. Have you been made aware of any changes to the emergency plans or first aid procedures for your school?
24. Are you making yourself available to fellow staff to listen to any COVID-19 control concerns or suggestions they may have?
25. Are you raising those control concerns or suggestions with your school and feeding back the response to the worker who raised the issue?
26. Are you aware of the availability of the Spectrum Life Wellbeing Together Programme?

Checklist for Cleaning

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

waste, tissues etc. should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection.

- 18.** Have you ensured there is a system in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use?
- 19.** Have you ensured there is a system in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use?