

Kilshanny NS Covid-19 Response Plan

Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make every effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – children, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.
- Assuming it is in keeping with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills, it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week and for a full school day. This plan has been formulated to achieve that aim.
- It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the co-operation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread.

As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented.

Teaching and Learning

As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th – June 30th 2020 and from January 6th to March 1st/15th 2021 and from June 25th 2021 to August 30th 2021. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.

Each child will be a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure you that staff will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2020/2021 school year.

The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum guidelines for us, and we ask you to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during the return to school.

Wellbeing of the School Community

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

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

As part of School Self Evaluation, we will be focussing on Well-Being and Mindfulness for the school year 2021/2022.

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

- The school will 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 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
- Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser.
- Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

1. Frequency of Hand Hygiene

- Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene: -On arrival at school; -Before eating or drinking; -After using the toilet; -After playing outdoors; -When their hands are physically dirty; -When they cough or sneeze.
- Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school e.g. at each entrance, in each classroom
- Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.

2. Lead Worker Representative

- A Lead Worker Representative Ms McCaw (Ms Nicola Hynes) and a Deputy Lead worker Representative Ms Hassett (Ms Orla Whelan) have been appointed.

3. Signage

Signage will be placed in prominent positions around the school to highlight the symptoms of Covid-19 & advice on good hand hygiene & etiquette

4. Staff Training & Return to Work Protocol

- Staff will review the training materials provided by the Department of Education & all staff will do the online induction training. 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.*
- All staff will be provided with the Return to Work (RTW) form and it will be given to the Principal 3 days in advance of staff returning to work. This form will be filed in the Covid-19 folder. Staff will be informed not to come to school if they are showing any symptoms of Covid-19.

Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Schools should request staff (verbally or in writing) to confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

Number of questions increased from 5 to 7. Additional questions:

Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?

In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19?

Other 5 are slightly reworded

5. Risk Assessment

- The school's health and safety risk assessment will be updated to take into account the specific requirements around Covid-19

Infection Prevention Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

- ***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 not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:***
 - ***If they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19***
 - ***If they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus***
 - ***If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.***
 - ***Advise staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;***

Hand Hygiene

- ***There is a requirement for access to hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands, for example playing outside or certain sporting activities as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands***
- ***Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame***

Physical Distancing

Ventilation – new section

- ***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.***
- ***CO2 Monitors are in every classroom to assist the school with effective ventilation management.***

6. PPE

It is recommended that primary school teachers and staff wear face coverings where a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. Primary school children will not be required to wear face coverings unless the child needs to be isolated. Staff who are attending to particular care needs or who are administering first aid will wear appropriate PPE including gloves and face masks.

Use of PPE in Schools

Medical Grade Masks Schools must provide medical grade masks in the EN16483 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.

7. Communication

- The Principal, Lead worker representative & Deputy Lead worker representative will check the Dept. of Education website regularly 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;
- Updated information will be communicated in a timely manner to staff, pupils, parents and others as required by direct communication or via email. A national information campaign to support parents and pupils will happen in advance of schools reopening on issues such as COVID-19 awareness and to help minimise the risk of introduction and spread of the virus in schools.

8. Access Control

Important :

The school is now strictly limiting access to the school building to staff, pupils and essential personnel/visitors only (eg. plumbers, Inspectors etc).

If a parent needs to communicate with a teacher this should be via a note in daily journal or phone message. It is important that parents do not try to have meetings with members of staff in the playground or car park at drop-off and collection times. Meetings between parents and teachers can only take place by prior arrangement.

- The school will maintain records of all contacts to the school. Anyone who needs to enter the school for essential reasons are being asked to make an appointment and must fill in the detailed contact tracing log at reception.
- If a parent needs to drop off a forgotten lunch they must leave it (labelled) on the windowsill outside. A member of staff will check this area.

9. Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

Responding to a suspected or confirmed Covid-19 case

If a child becomes unwell at school and presents with symptoms associated with Covid-19, we will follow the procedure set out below. This involves bringing the child to a designated area within the school. This area is called an “isolation area” and every school is required to have such an area identified to deal with a potential case of Covid-19. We will contact the parent and ask the parent to collect you child as soon as possible.

If the child has siblings in the school, they do not have to be removed from the school at this point.

The parent is required to contact their GP to discuss concerns and we would ask that the parent keeps the school updated on the advice given by the GP.

The next steps will depend on the advice given by the GP.

If the child is referred for a test, all other members of the household that attend the school should remain at home.

If the child is confirmed positive for Covid-19, the HSE will begin the process of contact tracing. This will most likely mean that the school will be contacted to assess the Public Health Risk. **From this point onwards, the process will be led by the Public Health HSE.**

The school will not take any action in relation to exclusion, part closure or full closure, unless the Public Health HSE determine that the action is required.

If any action of this nature is required, the HSE will liaise with the school to provide clear guidance to the school community.

If the school has not been contacted by the Public Health HSE in relation to a confirmed case in the school community, then contact with the school has not been deemed necessary.

It is a distressing time for families who are dealing with a suspected or confirmed case and all pupils and their families are entitled to confidentiality.

We will continue to implement the measures set out in the school's Covid-19 Response Plan to provide a safe learning environment for our pupils and a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff.

10. Cleaning

The school setting will be cleaned at least once per day. Additional cleaning will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, , table tops, chair handles, sink and toilet facilities. 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.

11. Staff Duties

- ***Not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:***
 - ***if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus***
 - ***If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.***
- ***Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school***
- ***Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health***
- ***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.***

12. Employee Assistance Service EAS

The Employee Assistance Service is currently available to all school staff and provides advice on issues, including wellbeing. Short-term counselling may be appropriate. Employers benefit from support to deal with workplace health and wellbeing issues. Information available at the following link

<https://www.education.ie/en/Education-Staff/Services/Employee-Assistance-Service/employee-assistance-service.html>

Checklist for School Management

Staff

- Have you requested confirmation that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following periods of closure such as school holidays.
- Have you advised staff and pupils not to return to or attend school if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.
- Have you advised staff and pupils not to return or attend school if they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel
- Have you advised staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;

Hand / Respiratory Hygiene

- Have you told staff and pupils when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:
 - When entering and exiting vehicles
 - When entering and exiting school buildings

Physical Distancing

- Have you advised staff of the Department's guidance to achieve good ventilation

Checklist for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

John Mahon will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

Checklist for cleaning

Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, taps and light switches.

Daily cleaning & Sanitising Schedule(Important: Surfaces must be cleaned before sanitising)

Please Sign & tick on completion each day (2 hours per day) Week starting: _____

Hours: _____

Area/Item to be cleaned	Days of the week						
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Front Lobby - Clean & Sanitise							
Internal & External door handles							
Table with visitors' books if visitor entered							
Staff Room - Clean & Sanitise							
Door handles (presses/fridge)							
Window handles							
Counter tops							
Sink (and taps)							
Table							
Kettle							
Microwave							
Toaster							
Sandwich Maker							
Rooms: Mr Mahons Miss Whelans Miss Hynes Clean & Sanitise							
All door handles							
All chair handles							
Window handles							
Coat hooks							
Sinks							
All table tops							
Toilet Areas							
Toilet Areas - Clean & Sanitise							
All toilets & sinks in school building							
Toilet Floors							
Corridor - Clean & Sanitise							
All door handles							
Secretary's Office - Clean & Sanitise							
Counter Tops							
Door, windows & cabinet handles							
Refill paper towels, soap, sanitizer and toilet roll							
Empty all bins daily							
All other floors apart from toilet floors to be hoovered/washed weekly.							
Time In:							
Time Out:							
Signature:							

Return to Work Form

This form must be completed by staff in advance of returning to work.

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

Name: _____

Name of School: _____

Name of Principal: _____ Date: _____

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

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

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

Signed: _____



Return to Educational Facility Parental Declaration Form

Child's Name:	Manager's Name:
Parents/Guardian's Name:	
Name of Setting:	
This form is to be used when children are returning to the setting after any absence.	
Declaration: I have no reason to believe that my child has infectious disease and I have followed all medical and public health guidance with respect to exclusion of my child from educational facilities.	
Signed _____	
Date: _____	

New Procedures for safe reopening of the School

1. Class Bubbles & Pods

- 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 guidance from the Dept. 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 will be kept as small as is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context.
- To the greatest extent possible, pupils and teaching staff will be in the same Class Bubbles although this will not be possible at all times.
- Within each class bubble from J.I. to 6th, the children will be further divided into pods, with a minimum distance of 1 metre being maintained between pods. Where possible, but only where possible, the 1 metre distance between children within each pod may be kept.
- All classrooms will have windows open throughout the day to improve ventilation and minimise risk.
- Doors will open at 9am each morning to admit children to allow for social distancing to occur on entry/to avoid congregation in the yard. Children upon entering school will go immediately to their classroom & sit in their seats. Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) should be discouraged.

2. School drop off/collection –see *separate attached procedures*.

End of School Day

The following arrangements will apply at the end of the school day

- J.I., 2nd & 3rd the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom separately, in order to minimise contact at **2.45pm**.
- 4th – 6th Class - the class teacher will allow each pod to leave the classroom at **2.50pm** separately, in order to minimise contact

Parents are asked to maintain social distance while waiting and not delay at the wall/gate area once their child/children reach them.

3. Collection of Children during the School Day

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply

- Prior notification by note/phone message must be received.
- When the adult arrives at the school, they should either phone the office or knock on the door,
- The child will be brought from their class to the adult at the door by a member of staff

5. School Playground.

- Parent should not enter the school yard.
- At break-times the Senior Room bubble will play in Lower Yard. Junior Room Bubble in higher Yard
- Senior Room Bubble will go down to the Lower Yard via the side door and will go out before the Junior Room bubble leave their room.
- On the bell the Senior Room bubble will wait in passage way between yards until the Junior Room bubble (in pods) have gone back into the school building .

6. Personal Equipment

- All children should bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc. to school in their own pencil case. This pencil case and all contents **must be left** in school. The pencil case and everything in the pencil case **must be labelled** with the child's name.
- Under **no** circumstances should children share pencils, erasers, glue-sticks etc.
- No unnecessary gadgets, small toys, cards etc. should be brought into school.
- Lunch boxes and drink bottles must be washed thoroughly with warm water and detergent at home after each school day. All packaging, fruit skins, cartons etc. must be brought home in the lunch box. Please refrain from giving children any containers, drinks, fruit and yoghurts that the child can't manage themselves. Only give Frubes and similar slim yoghurt drinks if children can open them easily with their fingers.
- Under **no** circumstances should children share food or drinks. Unidentified/unclaimed drinks bottles will be discarded.
- The school always advised the labelling of uniform and coats. The current situation dictates that it is now imperative that all items of clothing are clearly labelled with the child's name..
- The Department of Education guidelines advise against young children having independent use of alcohol sanitiser.
- Baskets must now be used by all pupils in **J.I.--Sixth classes** to store books, copies, pencil case etc.in order to facilitate ease of cleaning of desktops at the end of the schoolday.
- All pupils should be able to manage their own lunch boxes, coat buttons, zips, shoes etc. If pupils can't tie their own laces velcro strapped shoes are recommended.

8. Shared Equipment

Sharing educational material between Pods will be minimised where possible. However, by necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including equipment used for structured activities and play in the Junior room. Cleaning of all shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

9. Curriculum.

- Due to the very nature of some Curriculum areas certain activities within those areas will have to be curtailed.eg. P.E. (□ take place outside only-in the 'Bubble's allocated area, □ no equipment, □ limited contact), Art (□ no sharing of art supplies & resources □ no collaborative work), Music (□ no tin-whistle playing – Term 1 □ song singing will be limited.)
- As the teacher has to try to maintain 1m/2m distancing, self-correction will be happening very frequently.

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 :

Important : Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

Please note: It has always been the policy of the school to send pupils home who were too unwell to stay in school. However pupils will now be sent home if displaying even *mild symptoms* associated with Covid-19.

- If a pupil displays any symptom of Covid-19 while in the building, the staff will deal with it in a child friendly manner, assuring the child that everything will be fine. The following are the procedures that will be implemented: □ Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately on the numbers provided. □ If the secretary cannot contact the parent/guardian, then the backup person listed by the parent will be contacted. (Please ensure the details you provided us with are up to date and if you have changed numbers/back up contact let Lourda know.)
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by a member of staff (teacher: Ms Hynes/Ms McCaw). The staff member will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic child at all times. A mask may be provided for the child presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.
- An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home. The school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist them by calling their GP if needed.
- The child presenting with symptoms should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided.
- Parents will be advised to inform their GP by phone of their symptoms.
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick child is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved. Should a second child become ill in the same day, the same isolation unit will not be used prior to cleaning. The teacher will organize to have the child isolated within another area, keeping a 2metre distance from all other pupils and from the teacher. A mask will be provided while awaiting pick up by parents.
- The following will be available in the isolation area(s).
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Disinfectant/wipes
 - Gloves/Masks
 - Waste Bags
 - Bins

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.

Children who should not attend school

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school –

- Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad from outside the Green Zoned countries and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days
- Children who are generally unwell.

Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, suggested activities to support the child's learning at home will be shared with parents by the class teacher (and the support teacher where relevant).

Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class

If the school is notified that a person in your child's class has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19

- The parents of all children in the class will be notified
- Public health advice will be sought and followed

Staff Measures

1. Physical Distancing

A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, maintain as much as distance as is possible and guidance on face coverings will be observed.

Staff meetings should be held in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing. Implement no hand shaking policy. Staff can rotate between areas/classes but this should be minimized where possible. We recognise 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. Face coverings will need to worn in any setting where one or two metre distance cannot be kept.

Staff members will have their own utensils (labelled) and will avoid sharing utensils in the staffroom as far as possible.

2. Teacher Absence and Substitution

In the event that teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class. If a substitute teacher is not available, it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes. In such circumstances, it may be necessary for a member of the Special Education team to supervise the class on that day. This will avoid the necessity for class groups to remain at home if their teacher becomes ill and a substitute cannot be found.

3. Visiting Teachers/Others

- **Requests for work experience for TY students & Teaching Practice** TY Students and Student Teaching Practice is permitted. The TY Student and Student Teacher can only engage with the 1 class bubble.
- **Visiting coaches** may visit the school (in the interest of health and wellbeing and given that this activity shall take place outdoors) and they shall be given clear guidelines about social distancing/sharing equipment and children will remain in their own bubbles for such activities.

4. Member of Staff with Covid-19 Symptoms.

Important : Members of staff should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

Members of staff will be given permission to leave immediately if they are well enough to do so. If they are not, then a next of kin will be contacted & the individual must wait in the isolation room. When they are being collected they will be told they must self-isolate and contact the GP.

5. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

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'.

A free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and staff members are encouraged to make use of the service when the need arises.

This Plan is a live document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from the Department of Education & Skills and the Public Health Authority.

This plan was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of BOM