

Covid-19 Response Plan

This plan was updated in January 2022 in response to the DES COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of Primary and Special Schools.

Procedures and guidelines in this plan are relevant to all staff, pupils and visitors to the school.

Symptoms of Covid-19:

Although some people with no signs or symptoms can be infectious, people are generally most infectious for others when they have symptoms and signs of the infection.

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

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus) are:

- [fever \(high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above\)](#) - including having chills
- dry cough
- fatigue (tiredness)

COVID-19 symptoms can be like symptoms of [cold](#), [flu](#) or [hay fever](#).

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE [Website](#).

Close contacts:

If you are a close contact of a person that tests positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus), there's a chance that you may have COVID-19 too. Follow the advice on this page to lower the risk of spreading the virus.

You are a **household close contact** if you:

- live or sleep in the same home as a person who has tested positive
- use a kitchen or bathroom in shared accommodation with a person who has tested positive
- are a sexual partner of a person who has tested positive

You are a Non-household close contact if:

- You and someone who has had a positive test result have been within 2 metres of each other for more than 15 minutes in total in 1 day.

When someone tests positive for COVID-19, their close contacts include people they were in close contact with in the:

- 48-hour period before they developed symptoms
- 24-hour period before their test, if they did not have symptoms

It does not include people they saw briefly and did not touch. For example, talking to someone for a few minutes more than 2 metres apart.

When you have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you will get a text from the HSE to let you know that you are a close contact.

What to do if you are a close contact

For all close contacts 13 and older, follow the advice on this page that matches your situation.

[Close contacts living with or caring for someone who cannot isolate should also follow different advice.](#)

PCR test results

Follow this advice if you get a:

- [positive PCR test result](#)
- [negative PCR test result](#)
- [indeterminate PCR test result](#)

If you live with someone who is restricting their movements

If you live with someone who is restricting their movements, you do not need to restrict your movements.

If you are caring for someone who cannot self-isolate

It may not be possible for some people with COVID-19 to self-isolate. For example, a child, an older person or someone with a disability.

You and everyone else they live with need to take extra care to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. You may need to restrict your movements too.

Children under 13 years old

Children under the age of 13 are generally only identified as a household close contact.

If they are in contact with someone who has COVID 19 in a non-household setting, they do not need to restrict their movements or get a test unless they are told to by the HSE or they have symptoms of COVID-19.

They can attend school, childcare and other activities as normal.

They may be offered [free antigen tests](#) if there:

- is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in their pod
- are 2 or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in their group or class in different pods within a 7-day period

If your child has symptoms of COVID-19 they need to:

- [stay at home and be kept away from other people](#)
- get tested - [find out what type of test they should do](#)
- [wear a medical, respirator or well-fitted face mask](#) around other people, depending on their age

Reminders for staff and parents:

1. Staff and pupils who develop symptoms at school should bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly.
2. Staff, parents and pupils should cooperate with any public health personnel and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.
3. Staff, parents and pupils should undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.
4. Staff, parents and pupils should be aware of the general advice they should follow outside of the educational setting to lower the risk that they become infected with Covid-19.
5. Staff should be alert for any signs of illness that suggests that they, a pupil or a colleague may have Covid-19 on arrival for school and throughout the day.
6. Everyone entering or exiting the school building should perform hand hygiene (by washing hands or using a hand sanitiser).
7. Everyone entering or exiting vehicles should perform hand hygiene (by washing hands or using a hand sanitiser).

PPE:

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.

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 will apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

It is not recommended that our pupils wear PPE.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing 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.

Frequency of Hand Hygiene:

As noted in the Public Health Advice “Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a sanitiser (when hands look clean)”.

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.

Staff will support hand hygiene practices to pupils who need assistance.

Enhanced cleaning schedule:

In addition to the usual school cleaning schedule, there will be on-site cleaning throughout the day to clean commonly shared areas eg staffroom, toilets, children's tables, printers etc. The focus will be on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, keypads etc.

This enhanced cleaning schedule will work around children's yard breaks.

Ventilation:

Windows in classrooms are opened before 8 am each morning. Where possible, teachers will leave the classroom door ajar and keep windows open (yard noise and cold weather may preclude this).

Windows and doors 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 the school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use.

The above practical measures will be supplemented and enhanced by the use of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) monitors.

Hepa filters have been installed in all classrooms, offices and SET rooms.

Office/Reception:

Parents will not be permitted to enter the school without an appointment.

If a boy forgets his lunch a parent should inform the office of this by phone and arrangements will be made.

Principal's office:

Any informal meetings should take place on opposite sides of room, wearing masks.

Informal meetings should take no longer than 15 minutes.

The area will be cleaned afterwards.

Isolation for people who develop symptoms or signs of Covid-19 in the educational setting:

1. The isolation area is in the foyer.
2. A mask should be provided for the person presenting with symptoms.
3. Staff members who accompany a symptomatic pupil to the designated isolation area should wear a face covering or mask and keep at least 2m away from the symptomatic person (and also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times).
4. Staff should 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.
5. Staff will facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor.
6. If the person is well enough to go home, staff will 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.
7. If the symptomatic person is too unwell to go home or advice is required, staff should contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
8. The isolation area and work areas involved will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.

Daily routines:

Morning assembly:

School gates are opened at 8.30am.

Boys are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school in order to reduce parking/congregation outside the school during this interim phase or at any stage.

Parents are not permitted to enter school. Staff engagement should be requested through the school and will be provided by telephone or email.

Brothers/boys sharing lifts or walking to school together may enter school together.

Both main gate (infant classes) and gate adjacent to pond (1st and 2nd classes) are open every morning.

One parent/guardian should drop boys at their nearest school gate on Seafield Road and move off quickly to avoid congestion.

SBS boys should not enter via JBS gate.

Boys should walk to their respective classes from yard. Staff will be on hand to supervise boys making their way from the gate to their classrooms.

Boys should sanitize hands before entering the school building. (Supervising staff will monitor this and ensure there is no congestion at sanitizers).

Class teachers remain in classrooms from 8.30am to receive boys.

Pods:

Boys in our school setting may sit and work in close proximity to a small group known as a pod. The office will have lists of boys in each pod for contact tracing purposes if necessary.

On arriving at school, each boy goes straight to his pod and must remain in the same pod for the duration of the school day.

Teachers will ensure a minimum distance of 1m between pods and 1m from teacher's table. (2m if possible)

Coats go into a box under each pod.

Working in classrooms:

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

Teachers will avoid activities that involve movement/interaction between pods.

Access to other areas of the school:

Apart from yard breaks, boys will be in their pods in classrooms for the school day.

Toilets:

Doors to ensuite toilets should be left open at all times. Teachers will ensure a maximum of 1 boy in toilet unless 2 boys are from the same pod.

Toilets for R14 – boys will use the toilets on the corridor to the hall.

R15- boys use toilets at top of main corridor.

Parents should ensure their son has a change of clothing (underpants, trousers and socks) in the event of a toileting accident or wetting.

Lunches:

Boys must wash/sanitise hands before eating.

Pod tables are sanitized before and after eating.

No sharing of lunches (as per usual).

Parents must ensure that boys are able to open and close lunch boxes, drinks bottles and that they can manage to unwrap all lunch items eg peel oranges, bananas, open frubes etc to ensure they are the only ones handling their food.

Milk will be discontinued.

No food should be brought to yard.

Boys must wash/sanitise hands after eating and before going to yard.

Yard:

Boys should be able to put on and zip up their own coats. Ditto jumpers.

Year groups will share break times.

No toys or materials to be used in yard.

Polydrons as reward for 'line of the week' will always have a minimum of 72 hours quarantine between use by classes.

Water fountain not in use.

Yard toilets: Staff will encourage boys to go to the toilet before breaks. Access through other bubbles is an issue so yard toilets may be used by the boys only in emergency situations.

Wet day breaks:

Boys must remain in their pods. Supervision by same roster as yard.

Separate communal activities (eg lego) may be used for each pod.

Anaphylaxis emergency:

Any staff member (regardless of class bubble) may administer medication or Anapen/Epipen should the need arise.

Homework:

The Seesaw app will be used for posting homework and for communicating with parents where necessary. Please check in on a regular basis.

Guided reading:

When guided readers are sent home, we ask that parents and boys are particularly mindful of the need to keep these in pouches provided when not in use.

Dismissal:

This will be staggered by year groups to prevent congestion. A one-way system will be in operation.

One collector per boy enters through old blue gates, goes through hall and out top corridor door into yard. Boys are in usual collection areas. Collector makes contact with teacher as usual (from a distance of 2m) and moves off quickly through main gate.

If there is a delay in collecting a boy, the boy must remain with his class teacher.

Collection times:

1.10 Senior Infants

1.20 Junior Infants

2.10 2nd Class

2.20 1st Class

Where possible creches/collectors with groups of children should be encouraged to avoid bringing large groups with them into yard- they should set up a minding arrangement outside the school.

Communication with staff:

If there is an issue that a parent or teacher needs to discuss, this should not be addressed in the yard, but contact by phone/email should be made later in the afternoon.

Contingency plan for closure:

The Seesaw learning platform will be used for distance learning in the event of a class or school closure due to a Covid-19 outbreak.