



## **Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle**

### **Covid 19 Response Plan**

**Reviewed August 2021**

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

## Contents

1. Mission Statement	4
2. Covid 19 Response Plan and the School Ethos	4
3. Rationale for The Covid 19 Response Plan	4
4. What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?	5
5. School COVID-19 Policy Statement	6
6. Reviewing the safe operation of schools	6
6.1 Induction Training (to be completed by new staff	7
6.2 Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)	7
6.3 Lead Worker Representatives	7
6.4 Signage	9
6.5 Making Changes to School Layout	9
6.6 Health and Safety Risk Assessment	9
6.7 Access to School and Contact Log	10
7. Infection Prevention Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in our School	10
7.1 Know the Symptoms of COVID-19	12
7.2 COVID-19 Tracker App	12
7.3 Respiratory Hygiene	13
7.4 Hand Hygiene	13
7.5 Physical Distancing	14
7.6 Ventilation	18
7.7 Use of PPE in Schools	18
8. Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities	21
9. Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools	22
10. Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19	23
11. Staff Duties	25
12 COVID-19 related absence management	25
13. Employee Assistance Service	26
14. Evaluation of Wellbeing	26

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1** Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle COVID-19 School Policy Statement

**Appendix 2** Return to Work Form

**Appendix 3** Lead Worker Representative

**Appendix 4** Risk Assessment

**Appendix 5** School Contact Tracing Log

**Appendix 6** Checklist for School Managers

**Appendix 7** Checklist for Managing a Suspected Case of COVID-19

**Appendix 8** Checklist for Lead Worker Representative

**Appendix 9** Checklist for Cleaning

## 1. Mission Statement

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is an all-boys Catholic voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. Inspired by its founder, Meánscoil Iognáid Rís aims to provide a Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring, Christian community which promotes to the best of its ability, the personal, spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual development of our students.

## 2. Covid 19 Response Plan and the School Ethos

Wellbeing is at the heart of our school ethos. We at Meánscoil Iognáid Rís Drimnagh Castle are committed to responding appropriately to the Covid 19 pandemic to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students.

The Education Act of 1998 requires all schools to promote moral, social, spiritual, and personal development for all students and, to provide health education for them. All of this happens within the context of the five key elements espoused by the ERST Charter which is the solid foundation upon which our teaching and learning is based:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality, and Gospel-based values.
- Promoting partnership in the school community.
- Excelling in teaching and learning.
- Creating a caring school community.
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

## 3. Rationale for the Covid 19 Response Plan

In accordance with the Work Safety Protocol each workplace is required to have a COVID-19 Response Plan. In addition to being a place of learning, Meánscoil Iognáid Rís Drimnagh Castle is also a place of work.

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

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken in Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle to minimise the risk of the introduction of the infection into the school while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. The documentation and templates in this plan are supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection

Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe reopening of schools and educational facilities.

That report is available [here](#)

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

#### 4. What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?

A 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 Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle to meet the Government's '*Work Safely Protocol*', to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

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

In line with the Work Safely Protocol, the key to maintaining a safe school requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, students, and parents.

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, students, 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 the Principal so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.*

## 5. School COVID-19 Policy Statement

Our COVID-19 policy statement outlines the ongoing commitment of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle to implement the plan and help prevent the introduction and spread of the virus. The revised updated policy will be signed and dated by the chairperson and principal of the BOM and brought to the attention of the staff, students, parents, and others. The policy statement can be found at **Appendix 1**.

## 6. Reviewing the safe operation of schools

The BOM aims to facilitate the continuation of school-based teaching and learning and a safe working environment for staff and students. The operation of our school is done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle will continue to:

- Keep up to date with public health advice and Department of Education updates.
- Pass on this information in a timely manner to staff, students, parents, and others as required.
- Ensure that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education. **(Details at Section 6.1)**
- Provide staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form. **(Details at Section 6.2)**
- Identify Lead Worker representatives. **(Details at Section 6.3)**
- Display posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19. **(Details at Section 6.4)**
- Make the necessary changes to the school or classroom layout if necessary to support the redesign of classrooms to support physical distancing. **(Details at Section 6.5)**
- Remove unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment.
- Update the health and safety risk assessment. **(Details at Section 6.6)**
- Make necessary arrangements to limit access to the school to necessary visitors and maintain records of contacts to the school. **(Details at 6.7)**
- Review the school buildings to check the following after any period of closure:
  - Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionnaires' disease?
  - Has school equipment and mechanical ventilation been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again?
  - Have bin collections and other essential services resumed?

Checklists provided by the DES to assist schools on the details of what is needed for these arrangements are in the Appendices of this plan.

## 6.1 Induction Training (to be completed by new staff)

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

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

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

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal who is supported in this role by the BOM.

## 6.2 Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available by email to all staff. (**Appendix 2**)

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle requests 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 staff and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff members' 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.

## 6.3 Lead Worker Representatives

The protocol provides for the appointment of Lead Worker Representatives (LWR) in each workplace. The LWR will work in collaboration with the Principal to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19, monitor adherence

to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the school.

The process for appointment of the Lead Worker Representative in schools has been agreed centrally between the Department of Education and the education partners. Responsibility for the development, updating and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach are key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the 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 he/she should contact one of the Lead Worker Representatives who will engage with the Principal.

### **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 to 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.

<b>Names of lead worker representative:</b>	<b>Contact details:</b>
Ross Bell	r.bell@drimnaghcastle.ie
Karen Cronin	k.cronin@drimnaghcastle.ie

All staff, students, 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.

Full details of the arrangements which apply for the LWR in post primary schools are set out at Appendix 3.

## 6.4 Signage

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle displays signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, demonstrating the correct way to wear a face mask/face covering and supporting good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Posters are displayed in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms, and toilets.

## 6.5 Making Changes to School Layout

Maintaining physical distancing in our school environment is a key infection prevention control measure to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle has reconfigured classrooms and other areas as necessary to support physical distancing in line with the guidance.

## 6.6 Health and Safety Risk Assessment

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

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle reviews its emergency procedures involving fire safety, first aid, accidents, and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks

that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school's existing emergency procedures are documented and incorporated into the school's safety statement.

Our school also reviews its existing risk assessments to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school's current risk assessments are documented and incorporated into the school's safety statement.

### **First Aid/emergency procedure**

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure continues to apply in our school. In an emergency or in the event of a serious incident, our school will call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

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

Access to the school building is in line with agreed school procedures.

Arrangements for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents are restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal. The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit our school to support us as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors, and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities is maintained at reception.

All school records and data are maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts.

## **7. Infection Prevention Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in our School**

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced, it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student - student, teacher - teacher and teacher- student, and all interpersonal interactions with school secretaries, the caretaker, cleaners, catering staff and visitors, (This list is not exhaustive) 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, students, 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, students, 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 our school setting is to practice physical distancing, wear face masks/face coverings correctly, 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 in our school:***

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms. (***Details at Section 7.1***)
- Advise staff and students that have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Advise staff and students to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and to contact their family doctor to arrange a test.
- Advise staff and students, to follow the HSE advice if they are a close contact of a suspected / confirmed case of Covid-19.
- Advise staff and students to consult and follow the latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Advise staff and students that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly.
- Ensure that staff and students know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school. (***Details at Section 10***)
- Advise staff and students to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and to 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 and wear a face mask/face covering.
- Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at reception.
- Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

## 7.1 Know the Symptoms of COVID-19

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms of coronavirus (which includes the DELTA variant).

### **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.
- Fatigue.
- Aches and Pains.

### **Other uncommon symptoms of coronavirus include:**

- Sore throat.
- Headaches.
- Runny or stuffy noses.
- Feeling sick or vomiting.
- Diarrhoea.

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. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), self-isolate (stay in your room) 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. Symptoms may be subject to change, so regular review of the HSE Website is advised. If you **do not** have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a COVID-19 walk-in test centre.

## 7.2 COVID-19 Tracker App

The 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 Google Play store

**The Board of Management and all staff 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.

### 7.3 Respiratory Hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin and sanitise your hands.

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

### 7.4 Hand Hygiene

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

Our school promotes good hygiene and displays posters throughout the schools on how to wash your hands. Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

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

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

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins is managed so as to avoid the congregation of students and staff waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.

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

Hand sanitiser dispensers are deployed at entry and exit points of our school and classrooms, and care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitizer spills to prevent risks of falls.

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

Hand washing facilities are maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels are replenished regularly to encourage everyone to use them.

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

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing are placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities.

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

When hand rubs/gels are being used in our school care is taken to ensure that students do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic. Alcohol-based sanitiser is stored and used appropriately, i.e., away from heat or naked flame.

### **Choosing a Hand Sanitiser**

Hand sanitising gels are biocides and fall under the Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR) –Regulation (EU) 528/2012. The Pesticide Registration and Control Division (PRCD) of the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) is the competent authority for biocides in Ireland. Only biocidal products listed on the DAFM biocide product register are legal to market and use in Ireland. Our school ensures that all sanitisers and disinfectants we have carry a PCS 9xxxx, PCS 1xxxxx, IE/BPA 7xxxx or an EU-000xxx-xx registration number on the label.

Subject to availability our preferred hand sanitiser at Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle is Manodes alcohol hand sanitising liquid which contains 80% alcohol.

### **Frequency of Hand Hygiene**

Students 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.

A drawdown framework which was established for the 2020/21 school year will continue to remain in place for the 2021/22 school year to enable schools to purchase necessary supplies of hand-sanitisers and PPE requirements. The Department will provide funding for the costs associated with the hand sanitising and PPE requirements in schools.

## **7.5 Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing can be usefully applied in a post primary school setting allowing for some flexibility when needed. Here at Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle, physical distancing is applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Care is taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and we

acknowledge that some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at times.

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

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

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

- Increasing separation.
- Decreasing interaction.

### ***Increasing separation***

Given that each school setting is different in terms of (i) location; (ii) physical layout (iii) available space within the school; and (iv) student numbers; schools themselves are best placed to decide on the appropriate reconfigurations / operational changes necessary to maintain physical distancing.

In recognition that a ‘one size fits all’ approach would not be appropriate as schools themselves are best placed to decide on the appropriate configuration for their school, the Department has developed a *Framework to maintain Physical Distancing in the Classroom in Post Primary Schools with a full return of all Students for the 2020/21 School Year*. This remains in place for the 2021/ 2022 School Year. The Framework sets out a suite of available measures that Meánscol Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle implements to the greatest possible extent.

The suite of measures set out in the Framework are:

1. Reconfigure class spaces to maximise physical distancing.
2. Utilising and reconfiguring all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing.
3. Review Timetables.
4. Reconfiguring Classes.
5. Consider Use of Live Streaming within the School.
6. Accessing available spaces within the local community.

A link to the “Framework to maintain Physical Distancing in the Classroom in Post Primary Schools with a full return of all Students for the 2020/21 School Year” is provided [here](#).

You can see a link to illustrated classroom layouts to maintain social distancing [here](#).

### ***Decreasing interaction***

The extent to which decreasing interaction is possible in a post primary school will depend on the school setting and a common-sense approach is required recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between students.

In Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle:

- Physical distancing of 2m where possible or at least 1m should be maintained between desks or between individual students or staff.
- As far as possible and practical, students are assigned to a main class cohort which remain in the classroom for most subjects, with teachers moving between rooms.
- Where possible and practical double classes are planned to minimise movement during the day.
- Where students have an elective subject, they move quickly into the new class and are seated with members of their class cohort, observing as much physical distance as possible.
- Hand washing and/or sanitising is required when moving between classes by teachers and students.
- Physical distancing between the teacher and the class is observed
- Where movement of class groups between rooms is required, interaction with other class groups is minimised by following a one-way system.
- Interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas is limited.
- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) are discouraged.
- Where students need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it is organised to the greatest degree possible to minimise congregation at the shared resource.
- Staff and students should avoid sharing personal items.
- Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device is cleaned regularly, and hand hygiene encouraged.

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

#### ***School drop-off/collection***

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

- Arrangements for dropping off/collecting students should be arranged to maintain physical distancing of 2m where possible.
- Walking/cycling to school is encouraged as much as possible.
- Staggered drop off/pick up is considered where practical and feasible.



- Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle uses multiple access points to reduce congestion. **(Consult graphic below)**

### Entrance & Exit

Year	Door
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Year
2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Coral
5 <sup>th</sup> , TY & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Fox's door

- Students should head straight to their designated learning space/classroom.
- Toilet times are staggered to reduce congestion. **(Consult graphic below)**

### Toilet Breaks

Class & toilet	Class & toilet	Time
2.1, 2.2 upstairs	3.1,3.2 downstairs	10:40
1.1 & 1.2 First Year		10:50
2.3, 2.4 upstairs	3.3,3.4 downstairs	10:50
1.3 & 1.4 First Year	6th yrs. downstairs	11:05
3.5 upstairs	5 <sup>th</sup> Yrs & TY downstairs	11:10

### Staff

- A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as in the staff room and upon arrival to, and departure from work.
- If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much distance as is possible and updated guidance on face covering should be observed.
- Physical distancing is observed between staff members within the staff room through the use of staggered breaks.
- Staff meetings are held remotely, in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing.
- A no hand shaking policy has been implemented.

- Gathering of school staff at the beginning or end of the school day is minimized.
- Staff can rotate between areas/classes, but this is minimised where possible.

### **Canteen**

- Physical distancing is applied in canteen facilities.
- Canteen use is staggered. **(Consult graphic below)**

### **Lunchtimes**

Year	Time
1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup>	12:25 – 1:00
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	1:05 – 1:40

- A queue management system is implemented.
- Students clean their hands before and after entering the canteen area.

### **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.

## **7.6 Ventilation**

Meánscol Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle, complies with the guidance published by the Department, outlining 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 on how these practical steps measures can be supplemented and enhanced by the use of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) monitors. Links to all aforementioned guidance can be accessed [here](#).

## **7.7 Use of PPE in Schools**

Meánscol Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle, is fully compliant with the Department’s “Guidance to Post Primary Schools on PPE consumables and equipment” published on [gov.ie/backtoschool](http://gov.ie/backtoschool) which 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 students. 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 students. Please see note re medical grade masks on page 21.

Workers are 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/covid19\\_coronavirus\\_information\\_and\\_resources/covid-19\\_business\\_supports/business\\_supports/hse-hpsc\\_posters\\_and\\_videos/](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/covid-19_business_supports/business_supports/hse-hpsc_posters_and_videos/)

PPE needs 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.

### **Reception Areas**

Perspex in our reception area is used as it is not possible for staff to maintain a physical distance of 2m from other staff or students.

### **Masks/Face Coverings**

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

Face masks act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face mask coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Face masks 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.

It is therefore a requirement that teachers, staff and students attending Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle wear a face mask when a physical distance of 2m from other staff or students cannot be maintained.

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

All students on any transport scheme are asked to wear a face mask unless there is a good reason not to do so.

Students must bring to school and wear their own masks ensuring that if there is a logo on the mask, it is not offensive.

Face masks should not be worn by any of the following groups:

- 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 mask, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns, or tactile sensitivity.

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

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

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

All teachers and staff should be aware that they should wash or sanitise hands (using a hand sanitiser) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a face mask.

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

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

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle have additional disposable face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up face mask is needed during the day.

Whilst staff may wish to utilise their own face mask on a day-to-day basis, Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle has a stock of additional disposable or multi-use face masks, and 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**

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle provide medical grade masks in the EN14683 category to all SNAs as they need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs.

We acknowledge that wearing a face mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic.

### **Gloves**

The use of disposable gloves in the school by students or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for matters such as cleaning, intimate care settings or when administering first aid. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves.

Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

### **Aprons**

Aprons may also be appropriate in certain circumstances including for intimate care needs or for staff assigned to cleaning an area where a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 was present.

## **8. Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities**

### *Choir/Music Performance*

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

### *Sport Activities*

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle refers to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here.

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

### *Shared Equipment*

Art – Where possible students are encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies.

Electronics – Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between use.

Musical Equipment/Instruments – To the greatest extent possible, instruments should not be shared between students and if sharing is required, the instruments should be thoroughly cleaned/ sanitised.

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

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

## 9. Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools

The specific advice in relation to school cleaning is set out in the HPSC advice and is covered in the induction training. This advice sets out the cleaning regime required to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle has carefully read and understood the cleaning advice and applies that to all areas of the school as appropriate.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle takes particular care of the hygiene arrangements for hand washing and toilet facilities.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle is cleaned at **least once per day**. Additional cleaning if available is focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

When students are moving between classrooms, appropriate cleaning products are provided to enable them to wipe down their desk, chair, and surface before leaving the room.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The rooms should be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.

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

Disinfection only works on things that are clean. When disinfection is required, it is always in addition to cleaning.

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

The environment and furniture should be cleaned using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine-based product (household bleach).

Special attention is paid to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, the tops of desks, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.

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

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

## **10. Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19**

Staff or students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The following outlines how Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle deals with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting.

A designated isolation area is located at reception. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of COVID-19 is considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases is put in place. The designated isolation area is behind a closed door and away from other staff and students.

If a staff member/student 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 student, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately.
- Isolate the person and follow the procedure to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times.
- If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a student 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 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. **(Details at Section 9)**

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 student 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 7.2)**



## 11. Staff Duties

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties.

The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID19 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 COVID-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- New staff 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. Coordinate practices 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.
- Follow the HSE guidance if they are identified as a close contact.
- In instances where staff have travelled outside of Ireland, they are advised to consult and follow the latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility, staff should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- 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 as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.

## 12 COVID-19 related absence management

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with

agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

### 13. Employee Assistance Service

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 behavioral 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.

### 14. Evaluation of Wellbeing

Checklists provided by the DES to assist schools on the details of what is needed for these arrangements in the Appendices of this plan will be completed by the relevant personnel to ensure Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Drimnagh Castle is fully compliant with the guidelines.

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis. Feedback is encouraged and will be acted upon where appropriate.

## Appendix 1 COVID-19 Policy Statement

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís Drimnagh Castle is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our students. To ensure that, we have developed and updated 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.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís Drimnagh Castle 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 students on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- Display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, correct handwashing and mask wearing techniques.
- Agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- Inform all staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- Adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- Keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- Ensure staff and students engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- Implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- Provide instructions for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- Implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues, or suggestions. This can be done through the Lead Worker Representatives, who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: John Devilly

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## Appendix 2 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.

## Appendix 3 Lead Worker Representative – Post primary Schools

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

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

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

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- The [Work Safely Protocol](#);
- the [Guidance and FAQs for Public Service Employers during COVID-19](#);
- COVID-19 Response Plan for Post primary 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 are key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Work Safety Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared obligation in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

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

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

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health, and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice

- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the 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
- Configuration/re-configuration of the school facilities, including classrooms, corridors, halls, open areas, entry and exit points, school grounds etc.
- 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(s)

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

In schools with more than 40 staff, a second Lead Worker Representative will be appointed.

## 6. Selection of Lead Worker Representative(s)

The school staff are entitled to select staff members for the LWR position(s). The LWR(s) represent 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, where a school has two LWRs, the roles should be spread between teaching and non-teaching staff where feasible

All staff are entitled to volunteer for the LWR role and have their name put forward for election where necessary. The process for the selection and appointment of the LWR(s) is that management will seek expressions of interest from all staff in the first instance. A template email for this purpose is attached. If an election is necessary, all school staff members will have an equal vote to select the LWR(s).”

## 7. Supports for the Lead Worker Representative/s

The LWR(s) shall be entitled to:

- Be provided with information and training in respect of their role [*further detail to be provided*]
- Be consulted by school management on the control measures being put in place by the school to minimise the risk of being exposed to COVID-19
- Regular communication with school management on issues related to COVID-19
- Be informed of changes in practice arising from COVID-19 response measures
- Have access to any risk assessments prepared or carried out in relation to COVID-19 and to details of incidents of suspected COVID-19 cases that have been notified to the HSE, where they occurred, and any actions taken
- Be provided with **the necessary facilities to enable them to consult with employees or prepare any submissions or reports. These might include access to a meeting room, photocopier, communications, and equipment**

Where the LWR is a teacher, the LWR will receive protected time of 2 hours per week from timetable to enable them to carry out their duties in that role. In the rare instances where the appointment of a teacher selected for the LWR would cause curricular/timetabling difficulties which cannot be resolved, school management will examine internal and external possibilities to enable the teacher’s appointment as LWR. Where the matter cannot be resolved, management will set out the reasons why this is the case. In this circumstance, an alternative individual must be appointed as LWR.

Where the LWR is an SNA, 66 of the “72 hours” will be utilised by the LWR to carry out their duties in that role

Where the LMR 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 within the scope of their normal contracted hours.

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

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

If agreement cannot be reached, the LWR should 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.

## **9. 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 Safety 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 Post primary 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 Safety 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.

## Appendix 4 Risk Assessment

**COVID-19 Risk Template** (List identifies COVID-19 as the hazard and outlines infection prevention control measures required to deal with this risk)

Hazards	Is the hazard present? Y/N	What is the risk?	Risk rating H=High M=Medium L=Low	Controls (When all controls are in place risk will be reduced)	Is this control in place?	Action/to do list/outstanding controls  *Risk rating applies to outstanding controls outlined in this column	Person responsible	Signature and date when action completed
COVID-19	N	Illness	H	School Covid19 Response Plan in place in line with Department of Education guidance and the Work Safely Protocol and public health advice		<i>Examples of Actions</i>  Follow public health guidance from HSE re hygiene and respiratory etiquette  Complete School COVID-19 Policy Statement  Return to Work Forms received and reviewed  Induction Training provided  Contact log in place  Complete checklists as required: School Management How to deal with a suspected case  Other school specific checklist	Name of staff member	

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

Risk Assessment carried out by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: / /

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**Appendix 5**

**Contact Tracing Log**

<b>Name of School</b>			<b>School Contact Person</b>	
<b>Address of School</b>			<b>For Queries only: Phone No</b>	
			<b>Email</b>	
<b>Name of Visitor</b>				Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Date of Visit</b>	___ / ___ / _____	<b>Time</b>	<b>Entry to school</b> _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Exit from School</b> _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Visitor Status</b>	Contractor <input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please complete: _____	
<b>Contact details of visitor</b>	Company Name <small>(If applicable)</small>			
	Address			
	Contact No.		Email Address	
	Reason for Visit			
<b>Who the visitor met (separate line required for each person the visitor met)</b>				
<b>Name of Person visited</b>				<b>Length of time spent with each person in the school</b>

## Appendix 6

## Checklist for School Management



### Composite Checklist for Schools

This checklist supports planning and preparation, control measures and induction needed to support a safe return to school for students, 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 students 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 students? **Department guidance and templates provided**
3. Have you a system in place to provide staff and students 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 requested 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 DES agreed arrangements for management of those staff?
13. Have you advised staff and students they must stay at home if sick or if they have any [symptoms of COVID-19](#)?
14. Have you advised staff and students 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 students to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel?
16. Have you told staff and students 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 and students 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, students and visitors adhering to hand hygiene measures in accordance with Department guidance?
29. Have arrangements been made for staff and students to have regular access to handwashing/hand sanitising facilities as appropriate?
30. Are hand sanitisers easily available and accessible for all staff, students, 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 students 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 students 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 students 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?
42. Have you arranged in each room that the teacher's desk should be at least 1m (and where possible 2m) away from student desks?
43. Have you arranged in each room that students would be, at least 1m and (where possible 2m) away from each other?
44. Have you where possible and practicable assigned students to main class cohorts to minimise the risk of infection from COVID-19?
45. Have you arranged the timetable to facilitate double classes where possible and practicable?
46. Have you advised staff and students that when students are moving to an elective subject they would, where practicable be seated with members of their main class cohort?
47. Have you made arrangements to limit interaction on arrival and departure from school and in other shared areas?
48. Have you encouraged walking or cycling to school as much as possible?
49. Have you made arrangements, in so far as possible, to open additional access points to school to reduce congestion?

50. Can you provide a one system for entering and exiting the school, where practical?
51. Have you arranged for staff meetings to be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing?
52. Have you taken steps to minimise rotation of staff between classes where possible?
53. Have you a system to regularly remind staff and students to maintain physical distancing?
54. Have you advised staff and students not to shake hands and to avoid any physical contact?
55. Have you stopped all non-essential travel for school activities?
56. Have you advised staff of the Department's guidance to achieve good ventilation?
57. Have you checked any mechanical ventilation systems to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air is used?

### **Visitors to Schools**

58. 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?
59. Are there arrangements in place to inform essential visitors to schools of the measures to help prevent the spread of infection?
60. 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?

## **Appendix 7 Checklist for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19**



Staff members will be required to manage a suspected case in line with the protocol and training.

A nominated member of the school management team will be 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 students 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. Student – have you immediately contacted their parents/guardians and arranged for them to collect their student? Under no circumstances can a student 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 should be 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?
- 27.** Have you been provided by the Principal/ school management with the supports to which you are entitled in your role as Lead Worker Representative?
- 28.** If you are a teacher, have you been provided with the 2 hours per week of protected time off class contact hours, as provided for in the protocol?
- 29.** If you are a school secretary or a caretaker have your duties been re-prioritised by school management to afford you sufficient time to carry out your duties as LWR within the scope of your normal contracted hours, as provide for in the protocol?

## Appendix 9

## 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 students 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?