

Derryclough NS Covid Response Plan 2021-22

Introduction

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) of Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough NS in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school.

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol', the Department of Education and Skills plan for school reopening and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with all protocols to minimise the risk to students, staff and others.

As the advice issued by NPHE continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and re-opening of our schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of management, staff, pupils and parents.

This document aims to provide details of:

1. COVID-19 School Policy
2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School
3. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative
4. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment
5. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus
6. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)
7. Control Measures
8. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19
9. Staff Duties
10. Covid related absence management
11. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.

Note: The plan is a live working document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from www.Gov.ie, www.dbei.ie www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie; www.education.ie

1. COVID-19 Policy Statement

Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough NS is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- assign a worker representative (Suzanne Murphy) to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff 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 pupils 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 Representative (Suzanne Murphy), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The Board of Management of Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government.

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

School Building: Before re-opening we will check the following:

- Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
- Has school equipment been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
- Have bin collections and other essential services resumed.

Signage

Schools are required to display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene. The following is a link to the dedicated area of the Health Protection and Surveillance Centre (HPSC) website where there are a number of posters, including those appropriate for primary school pupils, located. Irish versions are also available here. <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/posters/>

In Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough NS, we have placed these signs in all classrooms, in the hallway and on the door leading into the school. Hand washing/sanitiser rubbing method posters are displayed over all sinks and beside all sanitiser stations. There are stickers on the floor to indicate appropriate social distancing.

Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace at the start of each term, *and after any subsequent absence*, staff must complete a Return to Work (RTW) form, which is available electronically or from the Principal.

A hard copy is attached also at Appendix 1. A RTW form should only be completed at least 3 days prior to any proposed date of return to the workplace.

On receipt of the completed form the Principal will provide: details of the Induction Training for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

Note: The training videos for all staff can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dd7fb-induction-training-for-reopening-schools/>

3. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative (LWR)

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

The Return to Work Safely protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint a Lead Worker Representative to carry out a specific role.

The role of the worker representative is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows:

- Work collaboratively with the employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19.
- 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 with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Make representations on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan and control measures or the adherence to such control measures by staff, parents/guardians, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact the lead worker who will engage with the Principal/BOM.
- Name of Lead Worker representative in Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough NS : Suzanne Murphy.
- All staff, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

4. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough NS. Risk Assessment is included at Appendix 2.

WE have also reviewed our 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.

5. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus

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

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a school is to minimise the risk of introduction of the disease into the school setting in the first place. This can be achieved through the following measures:

- Promoting awareness of COVID-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents and visitors, and keeping information and notices up to date.
- Staff and pupils must self isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any of the signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and must contact their GP to arrange a test.
- Staff or pupils must not return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - If they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - If someone they live with has symptoms of the virus
 - If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
 - All staff and pupils are advised to co-operate with public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.

- Everyone entering the school building is required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
- Visitors to school during the day should be by prior arrangement only and will be received at the front door.

Updated advice from the HSE is available on its website – <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools. Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner. The Department has been working closely with the HSE and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) to develop health advice which has been tailored to the needs of schools in order to support schools.

Hand Hygiene

- Wash your hands frequently - Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19.
- Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing: For advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link is helpful:
<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>
- Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of hand sanitisers (when hands are not visibly dirty). Sanitiser stations are located at the door in each classroom and by the school front door.
(NOTE- Alcohol based sanitiser must NOT be stored or used near heat or naked flame)
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.

Physical distancing

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace. In Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough we have moved pupil tables apart, placed markings on the floor to allow for physical distancing when moving around the classroom and hall or lining up. The class teacher and SNA will observe physical distancing where possible.

Ventilation

The Department have published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice: '[Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools](#)'. This guidance sets out an overall approach for schools:

- Windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break times or lunch times and at the end of each school day).
- Windows should be partially open when classrooms are in use.
- CO2 monitors will be supplied to the school from September 2021. These will be monitored at regular intervals and if the level goes into the 'Red' zone, windows and doors must be opened to allow fresh air to circulate.

This [guidance](#) provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

Practice 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.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid19.

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly and regularly can help stop the spread of the virus. It is, therefore, crucial that all staff adhere to this advice and adopt the following practices as strictly as possible.

Do

- Wash your hands properly and often.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze.
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Do Not

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.

Face Coverings/Masks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Whilst staff may wish to utilise their own face covering on a day-to-day basis, Derryclough NS has available a stock of additional disposable face coverings, available for staff in case a back-up face covering is needed throughout the day or where required on an ongoing basis.

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

6. Procedure for Returning to Work

i. Return to Work Form

Staff will be required to complete a RTW form at least 3 days prior to any return to the school facility (see section 2 above).

The purpose of the RTW form is to get confirmation from staff that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has no symptoms of Covid-19, has not been in recent contact with a positive case, nor has recently travelled outside of Ireland and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.

ii. Induction Training All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building.

The aim of such training is to ensure that staff have full knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health Covid-19 symptoms
- What to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school

iii. 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 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.

People at very high risk (extremely vulnerable)

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are defined as being at very high risk.

The HSE has set out these groups, which include people who:

- are over 70 years of age - even if you're fit and well
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma

- who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs.
- severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell) are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and you are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Staff who are in this group should self-declare on the Return to Work form if they believe that they are at very high risk. Details of the leave arrangements that will apply will be updated by the Department of Education and Skills. If the Board/Principal is unsure whether or not staff fall into the very high-risk category, advice will be sought from the Occupational Health Service. (Medmark)

7. Control Measures

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors as far as possible within the school .

These control measures are outlined in this document. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

Staff, in particular, 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. The following control measures have been put in place:

- Return to Work Form Staff will be required to complete a RTW form at least 3 days prior to any return to the school facility (see section 2 above).
- Induction Training All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building.
- Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette It is crucial that all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.
- Guidance documentation and Information posters are available at various locations within the school facility. Information posters are prominently displayed at appropriate

locations within the school facility including by the front door, hall, classrooms and toilet areas. These are intended to inform but also remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

- Handwashing facilities and hand sanitisers are available in each classroom, hall, bathrooms and school entry.
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) PPE will not be required to be worn within the school facility according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. This includes roles where:
 - Performing intimate care
 - Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Appropriate PPE is available (stored under sink in staff bathroom) for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid.
- Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.
- The use of a face covering is required for all staff and other adults within the school building, particularly where physical distancing cannot be maintained, there will be prolonged close contact and/or that exposure to fluid/respiratory droplets is likely. Wearing of Gloves: Disposable gloves are available for cleaning, intimate care needs and dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19. Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.
- Cleaning Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school has been made.
 - Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces shall be conducted, in particular, toilets, lifts, door handles and kitchens.
 - Cleaning will be performed regularly and whenever facilities or surfaces are visibly dirty.
 - All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area.
 - Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.
 - There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.
 - Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.).
 - A contract cleaner will do a thorough clean of all bathrooms/communal areas and classrooms each evening after the staff and pupils have left.(surfaces, floors, touch points)
 - A weekly cleaning log is kept for each area.
 - Toys and educational hands-on equipment will be sanitised/washed weekly.
- Access to the school building /contact log - Access to the school facility is in line with agreed school procedures.

- Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents/guardians will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal.
- 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 log of those entering the school facilities is maintained. The school is maintaining a log of staff and students contacts.
- First Aid/emergency procedure The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in Scoil Iosaf Derryclough. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 Contact the principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident

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

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

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

Shared Equipment

Toys

All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis for example weekly. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cleaning Procedure for Toys

- Wash the toy in warm soapy water, using a brush to get into crevices.
- Rinse the toy in clean water.
- Thoroughly dry the toy.
- Some hard plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher.
- Toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up should be wiped with a damp cloth and dried.
- In some situations toys/equipment may need to be disinfected following cleaning for example: toys/equipment that pupils place in their mouths. Toys/equipment that have been soiled with blood or body fluids or toys where a case of COVID-19 has been identified.
- If disinfection is required: A chlorine releasing disinfectant should be used diluted to a concentration of 1,000ppm available chlorine. The item should be rinsed and dried thoroughly.

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

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

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

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

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

9. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. The following outlines how Scoil Iosaf, Derryclough will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of work.

- A designated isolation area is located in the hall. There is space for seating separately if more than one suspected case occurs at the same time.
- If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in Scoil Iosaf the following are the procedures to be implemented:
 - If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately
 - Isolate the person and accompany the individual to the designated isolation area 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
 - Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms if one is available. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
 - Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents and 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.
 - If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
 - Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
 - Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

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

School staff are encouraged (as of March 1st 2021) to download the HSE COVID-19 Tracker App to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

10. Staff Duties

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

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. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play.
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid-19.
- Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
- If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- 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.
- Must complete Covid-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- Not return to school if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.
- Not return to school if they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances, staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Co-operate 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 the school.
- Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in the school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.

11. Covid related absence management

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with DES.

12. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Board of Management aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff (physical, mental, spiritual etc.) both at work, whether in the school facility or at home and outside of work.

The Board of Management is mindful that the support and promotion of staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.

The Board of Management aims to foster a culture and work environment that support healthy behaviours and staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to staff as well as organising suitable support programmes, initiatives and events.

These are challenging times for everyone. Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the principal.

The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provides teachers and immediate family members, i.e. partner, spouse or adult child (aged 18 and over) residing at the same address as the employee, with access to confidential counselling and assists in coping with the effect of personal and work-related issues. Counselling is provided on issues such as health, relationships, addictions, bereavement, stress, conflict, critical incident and trauma. The service is free and confidential and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to teachers in schools. It is provided by Inspire Workplace Services which was formerly known as Carecall. Free Phone: 1800 411 057 Email: support@carecallwellbeing.ie or make contact via the website. Visit the Inspire Workplaces website

Appendix 1: Return to Work Form (New version March 2021)

[RTW Form in line with V3.docx](#)

Appendix 2: Full Risk Assessment

[Full Risk Assessment](#)

Appendix 3: Isolation Quick Guide for Children under 13 (v 1.8- 17-2-2021)

[Isolation quick guide for parents and guardians of children older than 3 months and up to 13 years of age](#)

Appendix 4: Contact Tracing Log

[Daily Contact Tracking Sheet](#)

Appendix 5: Classroom and Hall/Communal Area Cleaning Schedule

[Classroom and Hall Cleaning Schedule](#)

Appendix 6: Bathroom Cleaning Schedule
[Bathroom Cleaning Schedule](#)