

ScoilAonghusa C.N.S.
Covid-19 School
Response Plan

Updated Mar 2022

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Introduction

This *Covid-19 Response Plan* is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM)/Education Training Board (ETB) in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Scoil Aonghusa C.N.S.

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 the protocol 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**
 - a. **School Building**
 - b. **Signage**
3. **Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**
4. **Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative(s)**
5. **Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**
6. **General advice to prevent the spread of the virus**
 - a. **Wash your Hands Frequently**
 - b. **Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitiser**
 - c. **Avoid Touching your Eyes, Nose and Mouth**
 - d. **Physical Distancing**
 - e. **Practice Respiratory Hygiene**
 - f. **Do**
 - g. **Do Not**
 - h. **People at Very High Risk (Extremely Vulnerable)**
7. **Managing the Risk of Spread of Covid-19**
8. **Control Measures**
 - a. **Return to Work Form**
 - b. **Induction Training**
 - c. **Induction Training – On-line Video**
 - d. **Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
 - e. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
 - f. **Wearing of Gloves**
 - g. **Cleaning**
 - h. **Access to the School Building / Contact Log**
 - i. **First Aid / Emergency Procedure**
9. **Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**
10. **Staff Duties**

11. Covid related absence management

12. 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. Scoil Aonghusa C.N.S. COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others.

COVID 19 Policy Statement

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

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

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

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

Signed: *Amanda Greene*

Date: 27.09.20

Signed: *Amanda Greene*

Date: 13.10.21

Date	Change made
August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Return to Work Checklists completed by all staff ○ Covid 19 School Response Plan, Logistics Plan, Policy Statement and Risk Assessment drawn up. ○ Covid 19 Induction Training completed by all staff ○ Covid Cleaning Training completed by cleaning staff ○ Shared SEN teacher spends all day Wed, Thurs, Fri in our school so as not to move between schools in one day ○ Lead Worker Representative (Amanda Greene) and Deputy Lead Worker Representative (Rose McCarthy) appointed. ○ Two Isolation Rooms set up and all staff are familiar with the procedure in the event that a child may need to go to the isolation room. ○ Separate entrances and exits for each class bubble. ○ Marked spots outside for social distancing at drop off and collection ○ No visitors permitted to the school unless absolutely necessary. Any visitors must fill in a contact tracing log and wear a mask. ○ Staggered break times so that there are less children on the yard at any one time. Each class bubble has a separate yard area. ○ Pods in each class. 1 metre maintained between pods, as much as possible. No sharing of resources between pods. ○ 2 metre marked on the ground around teachers' tables ○ Perspex screens will be ordered on staff request ○ Each class has a timetable of handwashing, hand sanitising and cleaning schedules of their own work space and resources throughout the day. ○ Paper hand towel dispensers installed to avoid sharing of cloth towels ○ Foot pedal bins have been ordered for all toilets and classrooms ○ Wall mounted hand sanitisers installed in every classroom and at class entrance and exit doors ○ Library – each class has a set day a week – books are quarantined for 3 days before being put back on the shelves ○ All PE to take place outdoors except for Special Classes ○ Staffroom – limited to five people at a time. ○ Sanitising fog gun purchased to sanitise large spaces. ○ Perspex screen installed in secretary's office ○ Toilets divided between classes (no sharing of toilet blocks between class bubbles) ○ One way system put into place around school building ○ Each class bubble assigned separate entrance and exit door ○ Signs erected outside building to show classes which routes to use to enter classes ○ Teachers assigned to morning supervision to supervise children in their classrooms so as not to mix class bubbles ○ 2m area cordoned off around teachers' desks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PPE purchased for all staff members (face masks, gloves, disposable aprons, visors) - Individual hand sanitisers purchased for each staff member - Cleaning sprays, disinfectant sprays and cloths purchased for each class - Bum bags purchased for all staff members to hold ppe and hand sanitiser. - Standalone large hand sanitising dispenser purchased for school foyer - Wall mounted hand sanitisers, paper towel dispensers, sanitising fog gun - Traffic cones purchased to divide yard into class bubbles - Each class was set up on Google Classroom to prepare for distance learning - No homework for at least the month of September to avoid too many items being brought from school to home. - Tin Whistle Classes deferred until further notice
<p>Oct 2020 Reviewed by: Amanda Greene and Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second Staffroom set up in Room 6 ● Bins with lids and foot pedals added to all classrooms and toilets and Isolation Room ● Perspex screen for Ms. Walsh's Room and 1 SET room and for infant corridor ● Increased cleaners hours from 16 hours per week to 26 hours per week ● Agenda item in all staff meetings ● Whole School Assembly: How to Wash Hands ● Whole School Assembly: Closing the toilet lids. ● Cleaning Schedule discussed with Cleaning Staff ● Document: Procedures for dealing with suspected Covid 19 cases distributed to teachers to be displayed prominently ● LWR and/or Deputy LWR check stock of cleaning products, ppe and hand sanitiser weekly ● SEN: Group and Individual Withdrawal groups are kept to the same class bubble. ● SEN: Procedure of hand sanitising before and after group/individual SEN support ● SEN: Equipment is sanitised or quarantined for 72 hours before use by other students ● Junior Infant Vaccinations will be held in Mallow Primary Healthcare Clinic instead of the school. ● All staff and BOM Meetings held online ● All parents encouraged to wear facemasks when on school grounds via parent newsletter
<p>Dec 2020 Reviewed by: Amanda Greene and Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ REcall of Virapro products - teachers were asked to return their individual (virapro) hand sanitisers if they still had them ○ Increased space made between tables in staffroom ○ 3 Perspex screens for Room 7 ○ Agenda item in all staff meetings ○ Boxes of surgical grade masks for each staff member ○ Box of reusable masks to be kept in principal's office ○ Boxes of gloves purchased for SEN and junior infants

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Document: Covid 19 Information Sheet distributed to staff to be displayed prominently in classrooms. This will also inform substitute staff to the Covid 19 procedures in the school. ○ A second fridge has been ordered for the second staffroom so that staff will not need to access the main staffroom. ○ Class pods updated after midterm ○ Handwashing posters hung up in staff and pupil toilets ○ Hall – in use before small break and after big break to allow for ventilation between use. ○ Indoor PE has been given the go-ahead by CETB with guidelines such as limiting equipment use, opening doors and windows for ventilation and prioritising outdoor PE. ○ The school underwent a deep clean by cleaning staff during the midterm break. ○ LWR and/or Deputy LWR check stock of cleaning products, ppe and hand sanitiser weekly ○ Parent Teacher Meetings held by telephone ○ Student Support Plans emailed to parents before meeting for consultation
<p>Feb 2021 Reviewed by: Amanda Greene and Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Long sleeved disposable gowns purchased ● Deep clean of school ● Parents asked to complete Return to Educational Facility Form ● Parents asked to review and sign updated HSPC guidelines issued on 29.01.21 ● Parents reminded not to send children to school if they are close contacts of a person with COVID 19, are awaiting a test or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. ● Parents reminded that the HSPC guidelines state that if their child is 'off-form', they should be kept at home for 48 hours to observe emerging condition. ● Parents reminded of the importance of not congregating at or near school and that communication with the school must take place by phone or online. ● Parents/Guardians are advised not to return or attend school if they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances parents/guardians are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel ● All staff returning to work are required to complete the updated Return to Work Form (Appendix 2) ● Staff requested to review updated HSPC guidance issued on 29.01.21. ● Staff requested to refresh the relevant training undertaken prior to September 2020 return. ● Staff requested to refresh their knowledge of the Ventilation guidelines issued on 30.11.20. ● Staff requested to view videos demonstrating correct donning and doffing procedures for masks and visors at: PPE - Health Protection Surveillance Centre (hpsc.ie) ● Staff were informed that alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame ● School staff have been encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19

	<p>tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff and pupils are reminded that they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser including when entering and exiting vehicles and when entering and exiting school buildings ● 'Guidance for Schools Regarding Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) Supporting Children and Young People with Additional Care Needs in the Context of COVID-19 V1.1 07.01.2021' has been brought to the attention of staff. ● Circulars 0001/21 and 0002/21 Temporary Leave Changes for Teachers and SNAs have been brought to the attention of staff. ● Updated Wellbeing Resources can be found at the following link: gov.ie - Supporting the wellbeing of school communities as schools reopen: Guidance for schools (www.gov.ie) ● Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) guidance on the re-opening of schools: Reopening of Schools January 2021 with initial focus on special schools and special classes has been brought to the attention of staff ● The DES COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of Primary and Special Schools February '21 has been used to inform the update of this Covid 19 School Response Plan. ● All staff members were contacted individually by lead worker rep. and any concerns and questions were relayed to the Principal. A staff meeting was held following this to discuss these concerns and queries. ● Principal, lead worker and deputy lead worker have ensured that there is sufficient PPE in both ASD classes for their return on 22-2-21 ● Parents have been offered the option of students wearing their normal clothes for increased cleaning purposes. (while only ASD classes are open) ● Parents have been informed that they can avail of the grants scheme instead of using taxis/buses to reduce their child's contact with students from another class.
<p>Apr 2021 Reviewed by: Amanda Greene and Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hand sanitiser, face masks, plastic aprons ordered. ● Homework updated weekly on Google Classroom to avoid need for homework journals ● One face-to-face BOM meeting held for CP purposes in Term 2 - meeting held in hall that was well ventilated with all attendees wearing masks and hand sanitising. Meeting was kept under 15 mins. ● Stock checked every week by Lead Worker and Deputy Lead Worker ● Covid updates discussed at Croke Park hour on March 22nd ● Staff asked to complete Return to Work form after Spring Break ● Parents asked to complete Return to Education Declaration after Spring Break ● Covid 19 Information Sheet for staff and substitutes updated and distributed ● Designated Area in Aistear room for PPE ● Increase of Covid signage
<p>June 2021 Reviewed by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Floor arrows ordered for corridors ● Face masks ordered

<p>Amanda Greene Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School passed a SSPS Covid Inspection conducted on 5.5.21 ● School awaits guidelines from the DES as to the provisions that must be put in place for Term 1 2021/22 ● Staff have requested that classes continue to use separate entrances and not gather in the hall in the morning. ● Staff have requested that staggered breaks be discontinued pending DES guidelines. ● Additional PPE ordered to have PPE area fully stocked for September ● Reminder email sent to substitute teachers on how to wear and dispose of masks correctly ● Stocks checked weekly by Covid officers ● Sprays have been removed from each classroom and antibacterial wipes are used as an alternative.
<p>Aug '21 Amanda Greene Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second staffroom moved to GP Servery room as previous room is now in use as a classroom ● Confirmed with Lead Worker Representative that they are happy to continue ● All staff completed Return to Work Form ● All staff reviewed Covid 19 training videos ● 5 CO2 monitors are in use in the school ● Locksmith has fixed door in staffroom to improve ventilation ● DES Covid 19 Response Plan V4 discussed at staff meeting on Aug 25th ● All rooms restocked with cleaning supplies and PPE ● Pods formed in classes from 1st - 6th ● Staggered breaks are continuing ● Class bubbles assigned yard areas ● Class bubbles assigned separate entry and exit points ● Junior Infants and new pupils given allocated times to visit the classroom and meet the teacher before school reopening ● List of updated symptoms communicated with parents and staff ● New staff informed of school procedures for a suspected case of Covid 19 ● School Covid 19 Policy Statement Updated ● School Covid 19 Risk Assessment Updated ● Contact Tracing Log continues to be implemented for any essential visitors
<p>Nov '21 Amanda Greene Aine O'Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular stocktake of PPE and sanitizer and ordered as necessary ● Google Classroom in use for homework ● Parent Teacher meetings conducted via phone ● All staff vigilant to the signs of Covid 19 ● Regular reminders sent out to parents about not sending children to school with any signs of Covid 19. ● Staff meetings to continue over zoom ● Staggered Breaks are continuing ● Class Teachers are monitoring their CO2 monitors and bringing their class for outdoor breaks if they turn orange.

<p>Jan '22 Amanda Greene Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular stocktake of PPE and sanitizer and ordered as necessary ● HSPC Isolation guidelines regularly sent out to parents ● Regular reminders sent out to parents about not sending children to school with any signs of Covid 19. ● More CO2 monitors have been requested from the Department ● The school has requested that Coady Architects assess the schools ventilation ● FFP2 masks ordered for staff that request them. ● Contact Tracing Log for essential visitors ● Parents of children in a pod offered home antigen tests if the school is informed of a positive case. If there is more than one case in different pods, all parents in the class are offered home antigen tests. ● Increased hours for school cleaning continues ● Students are given masks from the PPE stock when needed ● The current CO2 monitors are timetabled to circulate to each class
<p>Mar '22 Amanda Greene Aine O Connor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PPE and cleaning stock ordered ● The Dept sent three more CO2 monitors which have been distributed to classes ● Regular reminders sent out to parents about not sending children to school with any signs of Covid 19. ● Parents of children in a pod offered home antigen tests if the school is informed of a positive case. If there is more than one case in different pods, all parents in the class are offered home antigen tests. ● Increased hours for school cleaning continues ● Students are given masks from the PPE stock when needed ● Information Note 0003/2022 guidelines are being followed

2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The Board of Management 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.

a. School Buildings

Before re-opening schools in the new school year schools are reminded to check the following:

- Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella 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

b. Signage

Schools will be 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/> Schools can download the posters and display in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets.

3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete the updated **Return to Work (School)[RTW(s)]** form, which is available from the Principal and is Appendix 2 of this Plan.

A RTW form should only be completed **at least 3 days** prior to any proposed date of return to the workplace.

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: Induction Training for staff will be developed by the Department in consultation with stakeholders and made available for all schools and staff prior to schools reopening.

4. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative

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(s) who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

Name(s) of Lead Worker representative:	Contact details
Amanda Greene	agreene@scoilaonghusacns.ie

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.

5. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

The school will review its emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the COVID-19 School Response Plan. Any changes to the schools existing emergency procedures should be documented.

The school will also review 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 should also be documented.

6. 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. They are:

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.

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:

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
 - Advise staff and parents of pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other acute infectious diseases not to attend school, to phone their GP and follow the HSE guidance on self-isolation.
 - Advise staff and parents of pupils who have been identified by the HSE as contact of a person with COVID-19 not to attend schools and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.
 - Ensure that staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
 - Everyone entering the school building should be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
 - Visitors to school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contact point.
-
- Staff and pupils are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a test.
 - Staff and pupils are advised not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
 - If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
 - Staff and pupils are advised 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;

Staff, pupils and visitors should at all times adhere to the up to date advice and instructions of the public health authorities in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

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 Aonghusa C.N.S. will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

7. Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19

a. *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 will be helpful:

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

b. *Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers*

Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of a hand sanitisers (when hands are clean).

Hand sanitisers are more readily deployed in school settings to avoid disruption to teaching and learning and to avoid congestion of staff and pupils waiting to use hand washing facilities.

They will be available at entry and exit points and in each classroom.

Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame

c. *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.

d. *Physical Distancing*

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace. Scoil Aonghusa C.N.S. will follow guidance on the physical distancing requirements as informed by public health advice for schools.

Ventilation

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

e. *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 Covid-19.

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.

f. *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

g. *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.

h. *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:

The list of people in very high risk groups 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.

8. 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:

a. Return to Work Form

Staff will be required to complete the updated Return To Work form available at Appendix 2 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 and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.

b. 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
- 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.

c. Induction Training for Return to School

The Department has prepared short induction training for schools operating the summer provision this year. It is intended that this training will be updated and become more comprehensive to cover all aspects of the return to school safely protocols. The Induction training for the Summer Provision may be of interest in the context of the kind of training which staff will need to undertake is available at the following link.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/summer-education-programme-2020.html#SchoolBased>

d. *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 will be available at various locations within the school facility. Information posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school facility including offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilet areas. Such 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/or hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations within the school facility and should be available in each classroom.

e. *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.

Such include roles where:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. This will be updated in line with advice from the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre)

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 will conceal facial expression and can make communication difficult and as such may not be practical in a school setting. However, the wearing of a visor as an alternative to a facial covering may be considered where there is a concern that physical distancing cannot be maintained, there will be prolonged close contact and/or that exposure to fluid/respiratory droplets is likely.

f. *Wearing of Gloves:*

The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by pupils or staff is not appropriate. It 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.

g. *Cleaning*

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school will be 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. 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.

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

h. Access to the school building /contact log

Access to the school facility will be 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/sign out log of those entering the school facilities should be maintained. The school should maintain a log of staff and students contacts.

i. First Aid/emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in Scoil Aonghusa C.N.S.

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.

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 Aonghusa C.N.S. will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of work.

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

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in Scoil Aonghusa C.N.S. the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately
- Isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 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. Public

transport of any kind should not be used

- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

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

School staff are 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.

COVID-19 Tracker App

COVID Tracker app is a free and easy-to-use mobile phone app that will: alert you if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus) keep other app users safe by alerting them if you test positive for COVID-19 give you advice on what to do if you have symptoms. You can download the free app from Apple's AppStore or the GooglePlay store

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

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 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 to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus

If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.

- Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school
- Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

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 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 staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of '*Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile*'.

Updated Wellbeing Resources can be found at the following link:

gov.ie - Supporting the wellbeing of school communities as schools reopen: Guidance for schools (www.gov.ie)

Appendix 1

Pre-Return to School Questionnaire COVID-19

CORK EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD - RETURN TO WORK QUESTIONNAIRE

TO BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 3 DAYS PRIOR TO RETURN TO WORK WHERE AN INDIVIDUAL HAS NOT BEEN IN THE WORKPLACE FOR 14 DAYS OR MORE

Employee Details

Name	
Employee Number	
Department	
Return to Work Date	

Health Declaration

1. Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness, flu like symptoms or loss or change to your sense of smell and taste now or in the past 14 days? Yes/No	
2. Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days? Yes/No	
3. Have you been advised by the HSE that you are a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? Yes/No	
4. Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time? Yes/No	
5. Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time? Yes/No	
If you have answered Yes to any of the above 1- 5 questions you are strongly advised to follow the medical advice you receive or seek medical advice BEFORE returning to work	
6. Have you been advised by your doctor that you are in the very high risk group? Yes /No If Yes, please liaise with your doctor and Principal/Coordinator/Manager re: return to work and follow the procedure in the relevant Circular Letter	
7. Have you been abroad in the past 14 days? Yes/No	
If you have answered Yes, you must follow the public health restrictions in place and contact your Principal/Manager/Coordinator regarding access to your workplace prior to return	

Training Declaration

Have you completed the Covid-19 Induction Training material provided? Yes/No	
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Employee signature
Date

Data Protection

The data requested in this form will be used to process your return to your workplace in Cork ETB and will be retained as part of your personnel record for the appropriate period of time. The employer will treat all information and personal data you give according to relevant legislation.

Appendix 1:

Very high-risk groups (extremely vulnerable)

The list of people in very high-risk groups 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 leukemia, 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're pregnant

High risk groups

The list of people in high risk groups includes people who:

- are over 60 years of age
- have a learning disability
- have a lung condition that's not severe (such as [asthma](#), [COPD](#), emphysema or bronchitis)
- have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- have [high blood pressure \(hypertension\)](#)
- have [diabetes](#)
- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a medical condition that can affect your breathing

- have cancer
- have a [weak immune system \(immunosuppressed\)](#)
- have cerebrovascular disease
- have a condition affecting your brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neuron disease, multiple sclerosis, or cerebral palsy)
- have a problem with your spleen or have had your spleen removed
- have a condition that means you have a high risk of getting infections (such as HIV, lupus or scleroderma)
- are [taking medicine that can affect your immune system \(such as low doses of steroids\)](#)
- have obesity
- are residents of nursing homes and other long-stay settings
- are in specialist disability care and are over 50 years of age or have an underlying health problem

What to do if you in a very high- or high-risk group

Please follow the advice of the HSE and contact your manager to discuss any necessary supports

Appendix 2 **Return to Work Form**

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

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

Name: _____

Name of School: _____

Name of Principal: _____ Date: _____

	Questions	Yes	No
	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, difficulty breathing, loss or change in your sense of smell or taste now or in the past 14 days?		
	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
	Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?		
	In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19?		
	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time?		
	Have you been advised to restrict your movements at this time?		

	Have you been advised to cocoon at this time? Note: if you're at very high risk (extremely vulnerable) from COVID-19 you may be advised to cocoon.		
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I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test and have not been advised to restrict my movements.

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

Signed: _____