

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

St. Oliver's National School, Duncannon.

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2.Planning and Preparation for the Return to School

Information and Induction

Prior to the return to school, all pupils will have been sent a copy of the COVID-19 response plan, a virtual video of the school and a letter from the school explaining the procedures put in place to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

All new pupils to our school, have been invited to the school for an induction day along with a family member. This coincides with the back-to-school virtual video that was sent to all students.

Staff Members

Each staff member will attend a back-to-school staff meeting. At this meeting, each staff member will be provided with a COVID-19 folder in which will be the school COVID-19 policy, the COVID-19 response plan and documents explaining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Any updates that will be released, will be shared with staff through their COVID-19 folders or email. It will be the responsibility of each staff member to read all information provided to them. Each staff member has also completed a COVID-19 return-to-work form which has been returned to the school.

All staff members have completed the relevant back-to-school training provided by the Department of Education.

Signage

There are many different COVID-19 posters displayed throughout the school. The posters highlight correct hand washing procedures, hand sanitising procedures, social distancing, the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and information for visitors. The new rules in the school are clearly displayed in the corridor. The Isolation area is also clearly highlighted.

Updated Policies/ First Aid

St. Oliver's National School has now, an updated risk assessment in relation to COVID-19.

The school's emergency plan which includes, first aid, fire drill and critical incident policies are currently under review by the relevant persons to reflect COVID-19 control measures in place within the school building.

Each staff member will be participating in a first aid course early in 2021. Our school are currently updating our first aid policy. If a child requires first aid, the class teacher will provide first aid to the injured child. Each staff member will wear gloves and a mask when providing first aid. The gloves and masks will be disposed of immediately according to government guidelines.

Preparatory Cleaning

Before our pupils return to school, the water system in our school has been flushed out. The outside grounds and windows have also been power washed and the school grounds cleaned.

All surfaces and equipment have been cleaned before the pupils return to school. A daily cleaning schedule will begin on Thursday 27th, September. All surfaces, doors, benches, handles and equipment will be cleaned daily as part of the cleaning schedule. All equipment in the school has also been checked for deterioration and damage.

3. Control Measures to Prevent the Introduction and Spread of COVID-19

Staff and pupils that have symptoms are advised not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation.

Staff and pupils are advised not to attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a contact for person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.

Staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school are to bring this to the attention of the Principal and LWR promptly.

Hand/ Respiratory Hygiene

While planning for a safe return to school we have introduced many measures to ensure the safety of our school community. The school is now equipped with many hand sanitising stations. Every pupil and staff member will be shown the correct procedure for sanitising their hands. The school has acquired all the necessary PPE in order to keep everyone safe. Hand washing stations are also available throughout the school. Emulsifying soap and paper towels will be used at all hand washing stations.

Both staff and pupils will be informed and reminded about the importance of hand hygiene throughout the day. The staff of St. Oliver's National School have all watched the 'How to wash your hands' video provided by the Government and Department of Education. This information will be relayed to all pupils in the school.

Staff members and pupils will wash their hands or use hand sanitizers at the following times:

- 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
- after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
- if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms

All Staff members and pupils were made aware to cover the following control measures:

- 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

All of this information is clearly displayed in the school.

Physical Distancing

Unfortunately, in St. Oliver's National School we do not have the space for each child to be 1m apart at all times. In relation to Government and Department of Education guidelines, our school will be arranged in bubbles and pods. Each classroom is seen as a bubble. No two bubbles will mix under any circumstances during school hours. Within each bubbles the children will be divided into pods. There will be no more than 5 children in any one pod. Each pod will be at least 1m apart at all times. Resources will be designated to each pod and will not be shared between pods.

The teacher's area will be at least 1m apart from the students' pods. Teachers will be doing their best to achieve a 2m distance from the children. If this is not possible in certain situations, the teacher will have the appropriate PPE.

There will be staggered drop off times in the morning to ensure physical distancing. There will be a one way system and separate entrances for each bubble (class). At the end of each day, each bubble will be let out at different times. There will be 2m marking on the pathways to and from the school to ensure our school community are practising physical distancing. There will be cones and no parking signs in area around the school to create space for pupils and parents to physically distance themselves.

Parents or guardians will not be allowed approach staff members without an invitation.

During lunch time, students will have playtime at different times. Third to sixth class be will encouraged to social distance as much as possible while playing.

Staff meeting will be held in small groups and if not possible, online. Each member of the school community is reminded not to shake hands and remain at least 2m apart.

School Visitors

Each visitor to the school building will be invited through appointment only. Each invited visitor will be asked to wear a mask and complete a contact log, which will be filed in the school for contact tracing purposes. Any visitors must enter through the hall door, where they will sanitise their hands appropriately. The relevant visitor must remain in that area until given further instruction by a staff member.

If a member of the school community wishes to contact a staff member please first use email to contact the relevant persons. Emails will be checked twice daily. Once before 9am, and again after 3pm. If any visitor needs to contact the school in an emergent situation, please phone the school.

The school will be completely locked during the school day. No unauthorised access is permitted.

Use of PPE

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 pupils. 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 pupils.

PPE will also need to be used at certain work activities or work areas. These might include roles such as:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not in the list of those categorised as people in very high risk groups, or may be living with people who are in a very high risk category
- Administering first aid
- Parent Teacher meetings

Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Face Coverings/Face Visors/Masks

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:

- Primary school children
- 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.

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.

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.

The school will have additional disposable face coverings available for staff in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day.

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

Gloves

The use of disposable gloves in the school by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for cleaning, intimate care settings and 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 will be worn for intimate care needs or for staff assigned to cleaning an area where a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 was present.

4. Impact of COVID-19 on certain School Activities

Choir/Music Performance

Choir practices/performance and music practices/performance will be ceased for the time being in our school until further advice is given.

Music may be used in the classrooms for necessary educational purposes. This will be done at the discretion of the teacher.

Sport Activities

Extracurricular sports activities such as Rackard league will be ceased until further notice. P.E. in the school will be at the discretion of the class teacher. The focus for the beginning of the year will be athletics and outdoor activities such as orienteering.

Shared Equipment

Toys

All toys will be cleaned weekly. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.

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

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

Art – Children will share art equipment in their pods. The equipment will be for the use of the individuals in each pod only.

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

Library Policy – The children will be allowed to access the class library. Once finished with a library book, the book will be isolated for 72 hours before returning to the class library.

Shared Sports Equipment – We will minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

5. Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools

In St. Oliver's National School, our brilliant cleaning team will be working daily to achieve optimum results. There will be a cleaning schedule. All surfaces, doors, benches, chairs and door handles will be disinfected daily. The bathrooms will be thoroughly cleaned daily also.

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. All teachers and cleaning staff will use the recommend cleaning equipment and materials daily.

Waste bins will be collected daily and correctly disposed of.

Cutlery and kitchen materials used will be cleaned and dried by each staff member. The kitchen and eating area will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

5. Dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

A nominated member of the school management team (LWR) will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with a suspected case have been adhered to.

Isolation Area

The Isolation area in our school is clearly marked out, with signage. It is located in the P.E. hall. The Isolation area is very accessible and located close to an exit.

There is a designated bathroom along with the isolation area. This bathroom will be cleaned thoroughly after use by a staff member after a suspected case of COVID-19.

If there is more than one suspected case, another area will be marked out in the P.E. hall 2m x 2m.

The isolation area is equipped with tissues, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, disinfection and disposable cloth, gloves, masks and waste bins.

Isolating a Person

If a person is suspected to have COVID-19, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The class teacher will accompany the suspected case to the isolation area remaining 2m distance.
2. Contact the parents/guardians immediately. If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the school will contact the emergency contact on file. If the school fails to contact anyone above, the school will call the relative authorities for advice.
3. The suspected case should be given a face mask immediately and asked to wear it until out of the school building.
4. Inform the LWR about the suspected case.
5. The class teacher will stay with the suspected case wearing all relative PPE.
6. The S.E.N teacher will supervise the class while the teacher is occupied.
7. The other children sitting at the child's 'pod' will be removed from the area until the area is disinfected.
8. The teacher supervising the suspected class will be responsible for all cleaning and disinfecting after a suspected case.
9. That teacher will wear all appropriate PPE when cleaning the infected areas.
10. If the S.E.N. teacher identifies a child as a suspected case, while in her room, that teacher will be responsible for accompanying the child to the isolation area, supervising the child and cleaning and disinfecting prior to a suspected case.

Isolating a Person – Staff Member

1. The staff member must be moved to an isolation area immediately.
2. If in the case of a class teacher, the S.E.N. teacher will disinfect the teacher's area and supervise the class.
3. If capable the staff member should return home as soon as possible and follow government guidelines. Self isolation and call their GP.
4. If a staff member is unable to get themselves home, the school will ring their emergency contact.
5. The staff member must remain in the isolation area until collected by a family member.

Follow Up

An Assessment of the incident will be carried out by the LWR. The LWR will provide advice and assistance if contacted by the HSE.

Cleaning

All areas that may have been infected will be taken out of use until the relevant teacher has cleaned and disinfected all areas.

The cleaning team will be informed of the incident.

After school hours, the cleaning team will clean and disinfect all surfaces once again.

6. Special Educational Needs

The special education needs team will still be working to the best of their abilities to provide children with the best education possible. The school will remain operating as normal in this respect. All children will be withdrawn as timetabled. The special educational team will not be teaching in the bubbles.

The SEN room will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each student/group. Each student/group will have their own resource box in the SEN room. If children are withdrawn in groups they will remain in their pods from their bubble.

Children who may have additional educational needs, the focus should be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection and where symptoms are present children should not attend school.

Hand hygiene

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hand using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.

Equipment

Some children may have care needs (physical or behavioural) which requires the use of aids and appliances and/or medical equipment for example toileting aids, moving and handling equipment and respiratory equipment. Where cleaning of aids and appliances is carried out in the school it is recommended that a cleaning schedule is provided, detailing when and how the equipment is cleaned and the cleaning products to be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

7. 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 COVID-19 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 COVID19, 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.
- 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 to 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.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

Lead Worker Representative

There has been a Lead Worker Representation (LWR) appointed in the school. This role is very important to our school community and we will work as a whole to ensure our response plan is implemented and continued within the school.

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 Return to 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.

<i>Name(s) of lead worker representative:</i>	<i>Contact details:</i>
Ciara Dunne	msdunne.stolivers@gmail.com
Rachael Chapman	mschapmanstolivers@gmail.com

All staff, pupils, 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 control measures.

8. Absence Management

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

Any new substitute entering the school will fill out a contact tracing form. The substitute will be provided with a COVID-19 folder with all of the relevant information about the response plan in the school. The substitute will also be briefed by the school management or LWR.

9. Employee Wellbeing

Every staff member will be directed to a wellbeing webinar to watch. The wellbeing of our staff is a high priority in our school. The lead working representative will be available to listen to any concerns or worries of the staff. Any concerns or worries will be brought to management and addressed.

The link to the wellbeing programme available to our staff is available below.

<https://youtu.be/o1t-4023kKY>