

**COVID-19 Response Plan
for the safe and sustainable
reopening of
Scoil Pól, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.**

Table of Contents:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) What is a School COVID-19 Response Plan?
- 3) School COVID-19 Policy
- 4) Planning and Preparing for Return to School
 - 4.1) Induction Training
 - 4.2) Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)
 - 4.3) Lead Worker Representative (LWR)
 - 4.4) Display signage
 - 4.5) Making changes to school layout
 - 4.6) Update Safety and Risk Assessment
 - 4.7) Access to the School and Contact Log
- 5) Control Measures – To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools
 - 5.1) Know the Symptoms of COVID-19
 - 5.2) Respiratory Hygiene
 - 5.3) Hand Hygiene
 - 5.4) Physical Distancing
 - 5.5) Use of PPE in Schools
- 6) Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities
- 7) Hygiene and Cleaning in School
- 8) Dealing with a suspected case
- 9) Staff Duties
- 10) Absence Management
- 11) Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

This is a living 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 or agreements with education partners as appropriate for post primary schools.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of this COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies with the Board of Management.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Scoil Pól COVID-19 School Policy Statement

Appendix 2 Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19

Appendix 3 Lead Worker Representative

Appendix 4 Risk Assessment

Appendix 5 School Contact Tracing Log

Appendix 6 Checklist for School Managers

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

Appendix 8 Checklist for Lead Worker Representative

Appendix 9 Checklist for Cleaning

Appendix 10 Correct use of Face Coverings

1) Introduction

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

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken in Scoil Pól to minimise the risk of infection while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. The documentation and templates in this booklet are supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe reopening of our school.

One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning. This document identifies the steps we can take to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself in the event that COVID-19 is introduced to the school.

2) What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?

A COVID-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

The COVID-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for our school to meet the Government's '*Return to Work Safely Protocol*', the Department of Education plan for school reopening that will aim to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

The resumption of school-based teaching and learning and the reopening of our school complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department.

In doing so the risk to students, staff and others is minimised. This response plan supports the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and students while promoting the educational and development needs of the students in our school. The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice and any other relevant agreement with education partners as appropriate for post-primary schools.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work and reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, students and parents.

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same

3) Scoil Pól COVID-19 Policy

This policy outlines the commitment of the school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy has been signed and dated by the chairperson of the BOM and principal and brought to the attention of the staff, students, parents and others by email/website as appropriate. See **Appendix 1**.

4) Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The BOM aims to facilitate the resumption of school-based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the workplace must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education. Details for the safe reopening of the schools and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

In preparation for reopening for the 2020/21 school year the following processes are in place and include the following:

- Means of keeping up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates (Principal);
- Means of passing on this information in a timely manner to staff, students, parents and others as required (Principal);
- Ensure that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education – staff should tick the appropriate sheet to indicate they have accessed the materials (**details at Section 4.1**) (Principal);
- Completion of the Return to Work (RTW) form by all staff (**details at Section 4.2**) (Principal);
- Identification and appointment of two Lead Worker representatives (**details at Section 4.3**) (BOM);
- Display of posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 (**details at Section 4.4**); (Covid Response aides)
Changes to the school layout to support the redesign of classrooms to support physical distancing (**details at Section 4.5**); (Principal and Covid Response aides)
- Removal of unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school but taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment; (Staff)
- Updating the health and safety risk assessment (**details at Section 4.6**);
Arrangements in place to restrict access to the school and maintain records of contacts to the school (**details at 4.7**); (Principal)
- Review of the school buildings carried out during the week of 24/08/2020 by Principal and Caretaker to check the following:
 - The water system - flushed at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease
 - School equipment and mechanical ventilation - checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again
 - Bin collections and other essential services - resumed

4.1) Induction Training

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

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

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and will be updated with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities. If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal who is supported in this role by the BOM.

A national information campaign to support parents and students will happen in advance of schools reopening on issues such as COVID-19 awareness and to help minimise the risk of introduction and spread of the virus in schools. Details will be circulated when available from DES/HSE.

4.2) Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available electronically or from the principal. A hard copy is attached also at **Appendix 2**.

A RTW form should be completed and returned **3 days** before returning to work ie 24/08/2020.

A RTW form to be completed and returned to Scoil Pól before returning to work. Staff are requested to confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

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.

There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at **very high risk**.

People at Very-High risk (extremely vulnerable):

The list of people in the Very High risk group include people who:

- are over 70 years of age – even if 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
- have severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means they 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 are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE.

4.3) Lead Worker Representative

The protocol provides for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in each workplace. In accordance with DES procedure, Scoil Pól will appoint two LWRs. The LWRs will work in collaboration with the employer (BOM) to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in our school. Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared obligation in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

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

The role of LWR is separate to that of the Safety Representative under the health and safety legislation. However, the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- 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;
- Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and students being exposed to COVID-19;
- Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, 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;
- Monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;

- Conduct reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
- 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.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 response plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, students or other s/he should contact the LWR(s) who will engage with the Principal.

Names of Lead Worker Representative/s:	Contact details:
Geraldine Murphy	063 91197
Yvonne O'Sullivan	06391197

All staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors have a responsibility, both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of this COVID-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

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

4.4) Signage

Scoil Pól has made arrangements to display signage and posters outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

4.5) Making Changes to School Layout

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Reconfiguration of classrooms and other areas to support physical distancing in line with the guidance in advance of school reopening has taken place.

4.6) Health and Safety Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings has been completed. See **Appendix 4**.

Scoil Pól's emergency procedures involving fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences have been reviewed to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school's existing emergency procedures have been documented and incorporated into the school's safety statement (which can be viewed at reception).

Risk assessments have been reviewed to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Changes to the school's current risk assessments have been documented and have been incorporated into the school's statement.

First Aid/emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure shall continue to apply. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, an ambulance and/or the fire brigade will be called on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

4.7) Access to School and Contact Log

Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents 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 will be maintained. The school will maintain a log of staff and students contacts. A visitor contact log will have to be completed. See **Appendix 5**.

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found here:

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-work-safely-protocol>

All school records and data will be maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts. The responsibility for compliance with the legislation rests with the school in our role as data controller.

5) Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student - student, staff - staff and staff- student, and must be managed in all settings.

A range of essential control measures has been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID -19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, students, parents and visitors as far as possible within our school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required.

It is critical that staff, students, parents and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements. *Staff, should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take*

reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

Minimising the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into our school: (Overseen by Principal)

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms (**See Section 5.1**);
- Advise staff and students that have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;
- Advise staff and students not to attend school
 - if they have been identified by the HSE as contact for a person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;
 - 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
- Advise staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school;
- Advise staff and students that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the principal (or deputy principal if the principal is unavailable) promptly;
- Ensure that staff and students know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (**details at Section 8**);
- Advise everyone entering the school building that they need to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- Advise all relevant parties that visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement with the principal and should be received at a school reception by secretary only;
- Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

5.1) Know the Symptoms of COVID-19

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

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties

- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

5.2) Respiratory Hygiene

Attention of the staff and students is drawn to the following guidelines:

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

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

5.3) Hand Hygiene

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

Scoil Pól will promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the school on how to wash your hands. The HSE guidelines on handwashing will be promoted and followed. Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash-hand basins will be managed so as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash-hand basins and hand sanitisers.

Hand sanitiser dispensers will be deployed at exit and entry points of schools and classrooms.

Warm water is provided in all toilets.

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

Hand washing facilities will be maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels will be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them.

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

Frequency of Hand Hygiene

Students and staff will be encouraged to perform hand hygiene:

- 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
- if changing classroom or seat
- after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
- if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms.

5.4) Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Care will be taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required.

It is also recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from students and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the student.

Where possible staff will maintain a minimum of 1 m distance and where possible 2m. They will also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

- Increasing separation
- Decreasing interaction

Increasing separation

The suite of measures taken by Scoil Pól includes:

1. Reconfiguring class spaces to maximise physical distancing – single desks, removed clutter, etc.
2. Utilising and reconfiguring all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing- use of Hall, Canteen and General purpose (GP) areas as teaching and learning spaces
3. Review of Timetables
4. Reconfiguring of Classes
5. Use of Live Streaming within the School (as necessary and practical)

Decreasing interaction

Maintaining of 1hour classes

Physical distancing of at least 1m will be maintained between desks or between individual students and/or staff.

As far as possible and practical, students will remain in the classroom and teachers will move between rooms.

As far as possible and practical students will be assigned to a main class cohort which will remain in the classroom for most subjects, with teachers moving between rooms.

Where students have an elective subject, they will move quickly into the new classroom and will be seated with members of their class cohort, observing as much physical distance as possible.

Hand washing and/or sanitising will be required when moving between classes by teachers and students

Physical distancing between the teacher and class will be observed.

Where movement of class groups between rooms is required it will be planned to minimise interaction with other class groups.

Interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas will be limited.

Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) can not take place.

Where students need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) congregation at the shared resource shall be minimised.

Staff and students should avoid sharing of personal items.

Where teaching and learning involves use of equipment such as keyboards, tablets, etc, the contact surface of the equipment will be cleaned regularly, and hand hygiene encouraged.

Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school

School drop off/collection

Arrangements for dropping off/collecting students will be arranged to maintain physical distancing of 2m where possible.

Walking/cycling to school will be encouraged as much as possible.

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

Staggered drop off/pick up times will be arranged where feasible.

If schools have additional access points, consideration may be given to whether they can be used to reduce congestion.

Students should head straight to their designated learning space/classroom.

Staff

A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as in the staff room and arriving to work.

If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much as distance as is possible and guidance on face covering should be observed.

Consideration will be given to formation of staff “pods” or teams who work together and take breaks together.

Staff meetings will be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing.

A no hand shaking policy will be Implemented

Gatherings at the beginning or end of the school day will be minimised

Canteen

On reopening on 31/08/2020 students will be required to bring their own food/drinks for break/lunch.

If canteen facilities are being used the following will apply:

- Physical distancing will be applied in the canteen facilities
- Canteen use will be staggered and extended serving times will be put in place where possible to align with class groupings.
- A queue management system will be Implemented.
- Students will be expected/obliged to clean their hands before and after entering the canteen area.

Corridors and Stairwells

Staff and students will be expected to avoid physical contact and informal group discussions.

Lockers will not be available to students.

Ventilation

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.

5.5) Use of PPE in School

PPE – other than Face masks/visors, will not be required to be worn within schools 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. 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.

Appropriate PPE will be available 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.

Face coverings

Usage of face coverings will be in accordance with HSE/DES guidelines

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

Advice on how to properly use face coverings can be found from government sources.

As all areas outside of the classroom are possible places of congregation all staff and students will be required to wear a face covering.

Gloves

The use of disposable gloves in the school by students or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for matters such as cleaning or intimate care settings. 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.

6) Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities

The Department will work with stakeholders to provide more detailed advice on school activities in advance of school reopening.

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

Scoil Pól will refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport.

Shared Equipment

Students are expected to have their own individual equipment/supplies.

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

Musical Equipment/Instruments – To the greatest extent possible, instruments will not be shared between students and if sharing is required, the instruments will be cleaned before re-use.

Sports Equipment – sports equipment sharing will be minimised and shared equipment will be cleaned between uses by different people.

Staff/Students are expected to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

7) Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools

The Department of Education will provide additional funding to schools to support the enhanced cleaning required to minimise the risks of COVID-19. Scoil Pól will avail of such support to ensure best practice.

The specific advice in relation to school cleaning is set out in the HPSC advice and will be covered in the induction training. This advice sets out the cleaning regime required to

support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected cases of COVID-19

The HSPC guidelines advise that each school setting should be cleaned at **least once per day, preferably at the end of the day**. Additional cleaning, when necessary, will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

If students are moving between classrooms consideration will be given to appropriate cleaning products being provided to enable them to wipe down their desk, chair and surface before leaving the room and again on taking up their classroom space on entering a classroom.

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, classroom and other areas within the school facility.

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

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

Person/s assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and use appropriate PPE and follow these guidelines:

- Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine-based product (household bleach).
- Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.
- Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.

8) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

Staff or students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. If there is a suspected case:

The person should be brought to the designated isolation area.

If a staff member/student displays symptom(s) of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a student, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately to collect their child;
- The person will be accompanied 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;
- Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects;
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used;
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a COVID-19 suspect;
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved – **(details at Section 7)**

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

The rooms should be cleaned as soon as practicable/possible.

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

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

9) Staff Duties

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

The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school. All staff have a key role to play.

In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adherence to the School COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- Completion of the RTW form before they return to work.
- Informing 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.
- Completion of COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Awareness of, and adherence to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Coordination of practices and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Inform themselves of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolation at home and prompt contact of their GP for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Not return to or attend school under any circumstances in the event of the following:
 - if they have symptoms 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.
- Adherence to the procedures outlined above if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility.
- Keeping themselves informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school
- Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required in Scoil Pól as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

10) COVID-19 related absence management

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

11) Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective self-care. Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team. An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for individual staff members in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum.Life under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláin Le Chéile'.

Under the EAS, employees have a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc. Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home). A bespoke wellbeing portal and app which offers access to podcasts and blogs on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition is also available. In addition online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided. As part of the services provided by Spectrum, Life a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. They will also be providing a series of webinars and presentations to promote staff wellbeing in schools as schools reopen and during the upcoming school year.

APPENDIX 1 COVID-19 Policy Statement

Scoil Pól is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our students. To ensure that, we have developed 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 students 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
- inform all staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and students engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice and support

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), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: _____ Date: _____