



Covid – 19 Response Plan

This plan was reviewed and updated on 31st August 2021

Wellbeing of the School Community

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff. These are promoting:

- *A sense of safety*
- *A sense of calm*
- *A sense of belonging and connectedness to school*
- *A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy*
- *A sense of hope*

(DES Roadmap)

1. Introduction

This Covid-19 Response Plan for reopening our school is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in St. Anne’s School. It is also to inform parents of our practices and their role in supporting us.

The plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government’s ‘Work Safely Protocol’, the Department of Education and Skills publication “COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of Primary and Special Schools” issued 4th August 2021, 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 Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC)

The response plan will support the safe and sustainable operation 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. It is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice as appropriate for primary and special schools.

Health and Safety

Covid-19 represents a hazard in the context of Health and Safety in the school environment. This response plan is supported by our Covid-19 Risk Assessment. (See Appendix 1)

2. Underlying Principles

- The school has a responsibility to make every effort to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all members of our school community – children, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.
- It is *not possible* to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the co-operation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread.



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- As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented. We all have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this plan and a collaborative approach to the implementation of the plan is essential to success.

Assumptions

- All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system. Due to the size of our class groups the bubbles will only have 6 – 8 children in them.
- All children will start school at the correct time of 9.00 a.m. However depending on when the buses arrive and numbers of children disembarking – access to the building may be slightly delayed
- Children arriving in buses or taxis will remain in the vehicle until they are collected by staff and will enter the school in stages via different entrances.
- The day will include 2 x 20 minute breaks for staff and children
- *The risk of spread of infection in education or other settings is related to the size of the groups of people that interact with each other. Generally speaking the larger the number of people in a group, the more people are placed at risk if infection is accidentally introduced.* (Interim Recommendations for Reopening of Schools and Educational Facilities - June 2020).

Our classes have small numbers with 6 being the average and space is not an issue. Extra space has been allocated to some classes and pupil numbers reduced in others. Each class is considered to be a bubble and we will do our best to ensure that there is as little contact as possible between bubbles.

- Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and support rooms and all hygiene guidelines adhered to.

Maintaining Bubbles

The junior school and senior school must be considered as two distinct bubbles and as such must not interact in any way with each other. This means that from now the following will apply:

- I. Senior school pupils must not go on messages to, nor visit the main building. It is acceptable for them to complete messages within their own building. Pupil's movement down corridors should be minimal and avoided. Outside entrances and exits should be used where available
- II. Pupils may go to the main building for the following:
 - a. Home Economics - When moving to this class – pupils remain in their pods and move to the Home Economics room via the outside of the building and following the green arrows. They enter the building by the side door just beside the Home Ec room.
 - b. Access to the large sensory room – this is by prior arrangement only and must be timetabled. A full record of pupils using the room must be maintained. Sensory rooms should contain only materials and equipment that are conducive to cleaning. See following link:



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<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c0243-supports-for-the-special-education-sector-in-the-reopening-of-schools/>

This room can only be used for individual and not group use
Staff accessing this room must **fully** sanitise it after use. Staff using this room should enter the building via the side door by the Home Ec. Room

This information is relevant to using any sensory room in the school

- ii. It is allowable for staff to move between bubbles and pods. See Supports for the Special Education Sector in the Reopening of Schools - Section 16, at the following link <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c0243-supports-for-the-special-education-sector-in-the-reopening-of-schools/>
A record of where staff are placed will be kept for contact tracing.
- iii. Use of sensory garden. This is allowable as it is an outside activity. However it should be used with caution as it is a classroom for the senior school bubble. It should not be used if there are other options for movement/walks etc. or if another group is there.

3. Entering/exiting the school (arrangements for safe access and egress)

Children will be allocated groups according to their classes.

Group A	Group B	Group C
Classes in Group A	Classes in Group B	Classes in Group C
J1 – LT J2 – MF J5 - RK MM – Home Economics	J3 – JK J4 – SON S3 - CS	S1 – JS/TOH S2 - AMcK S4 - HH S5 – DOB S6 – FB S7 – AF Art Rm - SOS

Key to Entrances & Exits (This will be based on bus groups and not class groups)

Entrance and Exit Points	Number
Door at the side of the new extension	1
Main door in old building	2



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Entrance to new prefabs (via new gate) Door 1	4
Entrance to new prefabs (via new gate) Door 2	3

Entrance & Exit Points for Specific Classes

Teacher	Class	Entrance & Exit Point
LT	Jun 1	1
MF	Jun 2	1
JK	Jun 3	2
SON	Jun 4	2
RK	Jun 5	1
JS/TOH	Sen 1	4
AMcK	Sen 2	3
CS	Sen 3	2
HH	Sen 4	3
DOB	Sen 5	3
FB	Sen 6	4
AF	Sen 7	4
SOS	Art Rm	4
MM	Home Ec.	1
LH	Horticulture	TBA

4. Arrival at school

School buses

It is important to acknowledge that how bus passenger lists are organised is outside of the control of the school however we are advised that all arrangements will be in line with all government directives.

- Buses/ taxis will be divided into three specific groups and assigned drop off and collection times accordingly, as specified in St. Anne's school bus plan 2020. For Health and Safety reasons and to ensure efficient unloading and loading of buses, the old Senior School yard will be used as a waiting area to reduce traffic in the car park area and queueing onto the road. As each bus arrives escorts will be informed that pupils must stay on the buses until the relevant staff member arrives to bring the child to the appropriate entrance designated for the class group to which the child belongs. Depending on the time of arrival



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of the bus, each child may enter at the building at a different time. During this time – all regulations regarding social distancing will be adhered to.

- This applies to parents who may bring their child to school. If a parent, for some reason, is obliged to bring their child in – they will be instructed to phone the office from the car park, a staff member will be sent out to escort the child to his/her classroom via the appropriate route. If this is to be a daily/ongoing arrangement please ensure that you advise the school and the bus driver of this.
- No adults, other than staff members, should enter the building.
- Messages for teachers can be written in the school diary, sent by email to office@stannesthecarragh.ie, or by phoning the school office.

End of School Day

- When collecting children from school at the end of the day, drivers, escorts and parents should wait by their vehicle until the child is brought out and handed into the care of the adult who is there to collect them. Staff will support children to exit via the appropriate route. Buses/ taxis will again be required to park and load students in accordance with St. Anne’s school bus plan 2020

Collection of Children during the School Day

If an adult has to collect a child during the course of the school day, the following arrangements will apply

- Parents will be advised to notify the school in advance that their child will be collected.
- When the adult arrives at the school, they should phone the office or use the buzzer at the front door. Please wait until the secretary approaches you.
- The child will be brought from their class to the adult by a member of staff
- The adult who is collecting will be asked to sign the child out
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so
- Visitors to the school are only admitted by prior arrangement

5. Lead Worker Representative

The school has established a team that will undertake this role. The team is made up of a nurse, a caretaker, and a teacher. The team will work collaboratively with all staff to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of staff and pupils.

Lead Worker Representatives

Pauline Dempsey	Principal
Mary Fleming	Deputy Principal
Audrey Metcalfe	Nurse
Liam Loakman/Mark Doyle	Caretakers



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6. Physical Distancing and Safe School Attendance

We are continuously planning and changing our procedures and routines within the school to ensure that there is as much physical distancing as is possible in our building. We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way determined by age appropriate guidelines as set out by the Department of Education and recognising that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue.

Staff will not always be able to maintain physical distance from their students and it is not appropriate that they would be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the student or the learning and health and safety of other students.

(DES Roadmap)

However where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1m distance and if possible 2m. Staff should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down. Social physical contact i.e. hand to hand greetings, hugs etc. is discouraged.

Staff can rotate between areas/classes but only if necessary

Gathering of school staff at the beginning or end of the school day is to be avoided and where necessary staff meeting will be arranged according to bubbles or pods in designated areas.

Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -

Increasing Separation. Our classes have small numbers with 6 being the average number of pupils. Extra space has been allocated to some classes and pupil numbers reduced in others. Each class is considered to be a bubble and we will do our best to ensure that there is as little contact as possible between bubbles.

Within bubbles children are to be organised into pods, the idea of this is that pods stay together but some social distancing may be required. Based on the size of our classrooms and the number of pupils in each room social distancing will be implemented according to the needs of the children. This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing as far as is practicable.

Decreasing Interaction. This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles to interact. There will be marked routes for various bubbles to enter and exit the school and to access their classrooms. Bubbles will have different mid-morning and lunch-time access to the playground.

As our corridors are of an acceptable width social distancing is possible during transitions. Staff and children should keep to the left when walking down corridors and out of exits. Signs will be in place to remind them of this

Entering and Exiting the School. The pupils will all have different entry and exit points according to where their classroom is (P.3). This strategy is constantly under development as we obtain more information.



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Maintaining Social Distancing

1. Wearing a mask or a visor does not negate staff responsibility to socially distance. **Staff must maintain a 2 metre distance from colleagues at all times** and 1 metre distance where possible when working with a child. It may not be possible to keep a distance from the children you support but it is possible to maintain appropriate social distancing from your colleagues.
2. Social distancing must continue at break times when eating in the staff room. Staff must not rearrange tables or chairs
3. Parents and clinicians can only visit school with a prior appointment made through the office. Parents/clinicians who have made an appointment, must come to the main door at all times prior to visiting the school. This is to enable them to complete contact tracing documents.
4. Do not approach children who are not in your pod – unless your placement that day is with that child
5. **Please keep all doors to the senior school closed at all times.** This is to discourage younger pupils from the junior school bubble from entering.
6. A social distancing line has been marked outside the main door. Visitors must stay behind this until invited in by the secretary (LWR Mtg. 17.09.2020)

Break Times.

- Physical distancing will be maintained in accordance with St. Anne's Management of Recreation Periods (with Covid – 19 Restrictions). See P.6

7. Accessing the school Building/ Contact log

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. This will include members of the Network disability Team who will visit classes by prior appointment. Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

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. All callers to the school will be requested to sign the contact tracing form. The school will maintain a log of staff and students contacts. ***It is essential that families provide the school with an active, reliable contact number that they can be reached on. We would also ask that an emergency back-up number is provided for use in emergencies.***

8. Changes to School Routines – Recreation periods / Staff Breaks:

- The DES guidelines state that the risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.
- Additionally, DES guidelines recognise that a common-sense approach is needed in our Primary schools. To that end, every effort will be made to limit interaction within



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classrooms, to limit contact between class groups and to limit the sharing of common facilities including at break times

- The children, their teachers and SNAs will work in Class Bubbles at recreation periods, limiting the level of contact between bubbles as far as is practicable. A plan for safe organisation of recreation periods has been adopted by the school and is available should parents request a copy.

Use of Staffroom

During the initial stages of reopening the school a second room will be provided for staff breaks. This is at the bottom of the blue corridor in the extension (formerly a classroom). Table and chairs will be organised as far as possible to allow for physical distancing.

- All staff members should maintain a physical distance of 2 metres when they are not engaged with students e.g. when they are using the staff room.
- Staff members must bring their own cups, bottles, cutlery, etc. to school. These must have secure lids if individuals are moving through the school for any reason. Staff *should not* share utensils in the staffroom.
- Staff should maintain hand hygiene protocols prior to and after using the Staffroom and also should clean/sanitise the area that they use in the staffroom before they leave.

Accident/Incident Forms:

- Usual protocols regarding the completion of the above should be adhered to.

9. Hand Hygiene and coughing etiquette

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

Do

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

Do Not

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

Clean your hands

Use soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser to clean your hands regularly. Many hand sanitisers are alcohol-based and highly flammable. Do not use alcohol-based sanitiser near heat or a naked flame.

How to wash your hands with soap and water



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1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together palm to palm until the soap forms a lather.
3. Rub the back of one hand with your palm and fingers spread so you wash between fingers. Repeat with the other hand.
4. Interlock the top of your hands and rub your fingertips - this cleans your fingertips and knuckles.
5. Then finally grasp your thumb tightly and twist to make sure your thumbs are cleaned. Repeat with the other hand.
6. This should take at least 20 seconds.
7. Rinse your hands under running water.
8. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel.
If you have dry skin or a skin condition, apply moisturiser after washing your hands and at night.

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

a) Hand Sanitisers

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

Hand sanitiser 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 all entry and exit points, outside the door of every room utilised in the school and in each classroom.

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.

b) Other considerations in maintaining good hand hygiene:

Hand jewellery

Staff are advised that all hand jewellery should be kept to a minimum and wearing of nail varnish is discouraged

c) Supporting Children to maintain good hand hygiene:

It is important that staff support our pupils in carrying out good hygiene practice. Children should wash their hands at specific times in the day

- On arrival at school
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing outdoors;



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- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.

There may be other times during the day after certain activities – this is decided at class level based on the needs of individual children.

d) Staff Responsibilities in maintaining hand hygiene

Additionally staff must also be aware of the following

- before and after preparing food,
- if in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms,
- before and after being on public transport (if using it),
- before and after being in a crowd,
- when arriving and leaving the workplace/other sites,
- before having a cigarette or vaping,
- when hands are dirty,
- after toilet use.

e) Environmental Hygiene

1. Classroom staff know the areas they work in/go to and where their children go. Extra care is required in the following areas:
 - I. Sanitising areas used by children during the day – hand rails and play areas/equipment outside of classes.
 - II. Sanitising tables and chairs after lunch in the staffroom
 - III. Bringing in all equipment, cups, plates etc. for personal use.
 - IV. Please bring everything home with you to avoid leaving anything in the sinks in either staffroom.
 - V. Hand jewellery and nail varnish is discouraged from a hygiene perspective.
 - VI. Bring your own pen for signing in – do not borrow one from the office
 - VII. Bins must be emptied and bags placed into the refuse bins outside as soon as they are full.
 - VIII. Checklists for cleaning/sanitising sensory rooms to be provided to classes using them. These are to be forwarded to the office at the end of every week
 - IX. Timetable and checklists for sanitising common areas in the school to be provided to caretakers. These are to be forwarded to the office every week.
 - X. Provide chairs that can be more easily sanitised for staff room
2. The school is cleaned once a day and additional cleaning is carried out on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, etc. Staff have responsibility for sanitising areas they use in addition to classrooms e.g. photocopier, printers etc.

f) Ventilation

See “Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools.”



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The overall approach for schools should be to have windows 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. It is worth noting that windows do not need to be open as wide in windy/colder weather in order to achieve the same level of airflow into the classroom. This will assist in managing comfort levels in classrooms during periods of colder weather.

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Monitors have been provided and will enable staff to monitor the air quality of the classrooms, further information is available at this link

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ad236-guidance-on-ventilation-in-schools/#carbon-dioxide-and-carbon-dioxide-monitors>

10. PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

Guidance in proper use, donning/doffing, cleaning, storing and disposal of PPE is available on the following websites:

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/covid-19_business_supports/business_supports/hse-hpsc_posters_and_videos

While it is not envisaged that PPE will be worn by staff at all times, staff who are attending to particular care needs, who are unable to maintain social distancing OR where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation, will wear appropriate PPE including aprons, gloves and face masks. Decisions to do this will be considered at class level depending on the needs of individual children and the activity being carried out. As social distancing is difficult to follow through with in our school, it is advisable for staff to wear visors when working closely with the children e.g. table top activities. Appropriate PPE for other activities i.e. intimate care should include masks, gloves and aprons. PPE must be selected based on the hazard to the child/staff, such decisions are made at class level.

a. Masks/visors

The HSE have provided guidelines for use of face coverings in child care and educational settings. Below is a brief summary of what they recommend.

A small proportion (5%) of overall COVID-19 cases reported in the EU/EEA and the UK are among children. Children are more likely to have mild or asymptomatic infection, meaning that infection may go undetected or undiagnosed. While very few significant outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools have been documented thus far, they do occur.

Cloth face coverings are now obligatory in the community in certain settings for example where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others and when using public transport. Wearing of masks is and mandatory in the school

Recommendations for use of face-coverings in childcare and educational settings

In childcare and educational settings, the implementation of mandatory face-covering usage is challenging, as it is known that children will have a lower tolerance and ability to use the



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face covering properly, and use of face-coverings by teachers and staff caring for very young children may cause undue stress to the children.

- It is challenging for staff caring for young children in pre-school settings to wear a face-covering, as this may cause undue stress and anxiety for the children, in this scenario a clear visor can be worn.
- It is not recommended that children attending primary school or preschool/childcare settings wear face-coverings.
- It is recommended that teachers and staff in primary schools wear a face-covering when a physical distance of 2 meters from other staff or children cannot be maintained.
- It is recommended that teachers, staff and students attending secondary schools wear a face-covering when a physical distance of 2 meters from other staff or students cannot be maintained. However children with assessed general learning disabilities are exempt from this regardless of age.
- In certain situations the use of clear visors should be considered, for example staff interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.
- All children on the post primary school transport scheme should be asked to wear face coverings unless there is a good reason not to do so.

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

- Primary school or pre-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.

Practical Considerations

- All staff and students wearing face coverings should be reminded to not touch the face covering and to wash or sanitize their hands before putting on and after taking off the face covering.
- Information is provided on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings (click on this link). <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>
- All teachers and staff should be aware that they should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a face covering.
- Face coverings should be stored in a space designated for each student that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labelled containers or bags).
- 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 has provided additional disposable face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day.



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Appropriate use of Masks:

The following information is taken from

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/face-masks-disposable-gloves.html#:~:text=Taking%20a%20reusable%20face%20covering,clean%20your%20hands%20properly>

Wearing a face covering reduces the spread of coronavirus in the community. It helps to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets from people infected with coronavirus. This helps to stop people who are not aware they have the virus from spreading it. They are only effective if used alongside the following safety measures:

- Social distancing
- Regular Handwashing
- Avoiding touching the face
- Respiratory hygiene
- Cleaning Surfaces

NPHEP Advice

- When you are about to enter a situation where face covering use is recommended put on a clean one and ensure it is covering your nose and mouth.
- Once the face covering is in place, try not to touch the front of it.
- Leave the face covering in place until you are at the location of your break or the face covering is damaged or wet.
- If your face covering is wet or soiled remove it and replace with a fresh one.
- When you remove the face covering do so without touching the front of it and dispose of it or place it in the bag for used face coverings.
- Clean your hands as soon as possible after removal of a face covering.

Don't

- Do not use face coverings instead of self-isolation.
- Do not use face coverings instead of keeping your distance of 2 m from other people whenever possible.
- Do not use face coverings instead of hand hygiene.
- Do not wear a face covering when you are alone in a room or in your car or in an open space away from other people.
- Do not allow other people to use a face covering that you have used (until laundered).
- Do not lower the face covering to speak, eat, and smoke or vape. If you need to uncover your nose or mouth remove the face covering and dispose of it or place in the bag for used face coverings.
- Do not place used face coverings on surfaces that are likely to be touched by other people in public places (for example on tables).
- Do not discard face coverings in public places other than into refuse bins.
- Do not criticise or judge people who are not able to wear a face covering.



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Further website information on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings can be found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6ZqdpLfSqw>

b. Disposable gloves

The following is advice taken from HSE guidelines:

Do not wear disposable gloves instead of washing your hands.

The virus gets on them in the same way it gets on your hands. Also, your hands can get contaminated when you take them off.

Disposable gloves are worn in medical settings. They are not as effective in daily life.

Wearing disposable gloves can give you a false sense of security.

You might:

- sneeze or cough into the gloves - this creates a new surface for the virus to live on
- contaminate yourself when taking off the gloves or touching surfaces
- not wash your hands as often as you need to and touch your face with contaminated gloves

However in school there are situations where it is essential to wear gloves. In particular gloves must be worn for all intimate care needs and when a child needs support with feeding. Other needs may be identified at class level based on specific needs of the child.

11. Children feeling unwell.

For our pupils maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or reasonable to implement. The focus therefore is on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which might suggest illness/COVID-19 infection *and, where symptoms are present, children should not attend the school.*

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**

While all children will be welcome back to school, we will remind parents that, where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms, they should not be sent to school. Children who display such symptoms in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from



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the school. It is essential at this time that we have active phone numbers and a reliable backup emergency contact number if parents are delayed when asked to collect their child.

It is no longer necessary for parents to complete a Return to Educational Facility Declaration Form

Please note: St. Anne's School reserves the right to decline entry to pupils who appear to have fever or respiratory tract infection

12. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. If symptoms of Covid-19 are displayed while in the building, the following are the procedures will be implemented:

- A designated isolation area has been identified. This is in the prefabs at the side of the assembly hall.

For children:

- Classroom staff contact the school nurse immediately if concerned.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately
- The child will be accompanied to the designated isolation area via the isolation route by a member of staff. The staff member will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic child and will also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic child at all times
- A mask will be provided for the child presenting with symptoms, if one is available unless s/he is exempt from using it. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
- An assessment will be made as to whether the child who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
- The school will facilitate the child presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation, if they cannot immediately go home, and will assist them by calling their GP.

The child presenting with symptoms should be advised/ assisted to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided. Where this is not possible social distancing and increased PPE should be used.

- If the child is well enough to go home, the school will arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible, and advise them to inform their GP 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, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick child is a Covid-19 suspect.
- An assessment of the incident will be carried out, this will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
- Arrangements will be made for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.



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Staff:

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
- Complete the RTW form before you return to work
- You 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
- You must complete Covid-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school
- You must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices
- Coordinate and work with your colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained
- Know and recognise the symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if you display any symptoms of Covid-19
- Not return to nor attend school if you have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
- Follow HSE advice if you are identified as a close contact of a suspected/confirmed case of Covid – 19
- If you have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel
- If you develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, you are advised to bring this to the immediate attention of the Principal.
- Co-operate 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.

Covid-19 Related Absence Management

This will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education. Refer also to Section 21 below.

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.

13. Children who should not attend school

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school –

- Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19



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- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days
- Children who are generally unwell

14. Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in a Class

If the school is notified that a person in your child's class has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19, we will follow all HSE recommendations

- Public health advice will be sought and followed
- The parents of all children in the class will be notified by the HSE

15. Induction Training

It is important to be aware of the latest advice and guidance on public health. This can be accessed on the following links:

All new staff will access induction training at the following link:

[gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - [Training for reopening schools \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/472f64-covid-19-coronavirus-guidance-and-advice/>

[Coronavirus - HSE.ie](https://www.hse.ie)

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/covid-19_business_supports/business_supports/work_safely_online_courses/

Staff must complete the return to work form and access the above links prior to returning to school

16. Provision of Signage

Appropriate signage has been displayed throughout the school buildings outlining the signs and symptoms of Covid – 19, advice regarding physical distancing and to support good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene. It is vital that staff, pupils and visitors to the school do not ignore the guidelines and adhere rigidly to the recommendations outlined.

17. Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time, a teacher will support the child remotely and provide suggested activities to support the child's learning at home in consultation with parents/guardians.



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18. Other Considerations:

Personal Equipment

- In so far as possible, it is requested that all children will bring their own pens, pencils, colours, rubbers, etc., and all other equipment relevant to their needs to school to avoid the sharing of equipment. The class teacher will advise you of what you need to provide
- It is further requested that all items have the child's name on them for ease of identification.

Shared Equipment

By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, sensory equipment and other resources relevant for the curriculum and for use for structured activities and play. Cleaning of such shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

19. Nursing Support

Nursing support to the pupils will continue as usual with the following exceptions:

- Staff must not bring the child to the nurse's room under any circumstances.
- All nursing support will be carried out in the child's classroom

If nursing support is required contact can be made in any of the following ways:

- By pre-agreement e.g. PEG feeds, medication where a time may be allocated for this
- A designated member of staff for each room should contact the nurse via the office
- By phoning the nurses mobile
- If a child is unwell, contact the nurse immediately. The nurse may advise that the child attends the isolation room. The teacher will arrange for a member of staff to accompany the child to the room and stay there until the child's parents/guardians arrive.

20. Some Changes to Curriculum Organisation

Senior School Curriculum Areas

In keeping with our planning for putting pupils forward for certification in Junior Cycle Learning Programmes and/or QQI, our post primary aged pupils will now only move to ETB teachers for home-economics, Art and Horticulture. To ensure we don't mix bubbles in these classes teachers will take each bubble on certain days, bubbles can be broken into pods for these classes if necessary. Base class teachers will no longer be specific subject teachers. Each pupil has a base class and it is this class that is the "bubble" s/he will remain in instead of subject ability groups as before. This will be reviewed again in line with information and advice from the relevant department bodies.



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PE/Swimming/Social Training

Where possible, PE should take place outdoors and use of equipment should be confined for use by different classes. If the PE hall is being used by class groupings, common touch points should be cleaned at intervals throughout the school day.

Other activities such as swimming, pony riding and social training will not take place until further notice.

21. Teacher Absence and Substitution

In the event that a teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class. We are part of a cluster group of 15 schools that are able to access substitute teacher support specifically for those schools. However if a substitute teacher is not available, it is no longer appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes as before.

In such circumstances where a substitute teacher is unavailable, that class will not attend and will stay at home on that day or until a substitute can be sourced. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents. This will be through Text-a-Parent as it is the most efficient way to pass on information at short notice. Parents may also receive a phone call from the office. When parents get notification that their child's class is closed, they are instructed not to bring their child to school as we cannot provide safely for him/her.

22. Staff Wellbeing

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 Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile'. The EAS is a self-referral service where employees have access to a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc. The service is also available via SMS, WhatsApp, e-mail, live chat and call back request.

23. Communication

The Lead Worker Representatives have committed to keeping up to date with public health advice and any updates from the DES. This will be done by accessing new information from the following sites – www.Gov.ie, www.dbei.ie, www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie, www.education.ie on a regular basis.



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New information will be communicated to staff, pupils, parents and all other as required e.g. clinical team members, by the relevant means. This will be by letters, emails or information posted on the school website and staff meetings.

All staff take part in revised Covid training at the start of the school year and as required. New staff will receive induction training prior to commencing employment.

24. Data Protection

All records and data collected as part of this Covid Response Plan will be maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts

Please be advised that this plan is a working document and is constantly under review. As we receive further guidelines that may alter our practice we will update the information contained within the plan.

Signed

Chairperson

St. Anne's Board of Management

31st August 2021