# **COVID-19 Knowing the Symptoms**

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

# **Planning for the Prevention of COVID-19**

* Hand Hygiene
* Cough & Sneezing Hygiene
* Physical Distancing
* Follow the Procedures / Protocols in place in school
* Stay at home if unwell and contact your G.P.

# **Promoting Awareness**

* Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms
* 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
* 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, Covid-19 Response Plan)
* Advise everyone entering the school building that they needs 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 specific contact point
* Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible

# **Hand Hygiene**

* Students should understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands
* The school will promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the schools on how to wash your hands, following the HSE guidelines on handwashing – Tutor groups to watch video at induction <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>
* Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean)
* Student act responsible when using hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins 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 and with care taken to clean up any hand sanitizer spills to prevent risks of falls
* 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
* Hot air dryers are an acceptable alternative for hand drying. There is no evidence that hand dryers are associated with increased risk of transmission of COVID-19
* Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing will be placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities
* Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean)
* Students and staff should perform hand hygiene
* On arrival at school
* Before eating or drinking
* After using the toilet
* After petting animals
* After playing outdoors
* When their hands are physically dirty
* When they cough or sneeze.

# **Respiratory Hygiene (Cough / Sneeze)**

* Students need to make sure they, and the people around them, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering their mouth and nose with a tissue or a bent elbow when coughing or sneezing. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin
* By following good respiratory hygiene, students protect the people around them from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19

# **Physical Distancing**

* Where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1 m distance and where possible 2m. They should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down
* Dropping off/collecting students should be arranged to maintain physical distancing of 2m where possible and should not cause obstructions to the movement of traffic
* Staggered drop off/pick up times should be arranged where feasible
* Walking/cycling to school is encouraged as much as possible
* The aim of any arrangements is to avoid congregation of people at the school gates where physical distancing requirements may not be respected
* At the local shop/school gates – NO CONGREGATION
* Staggered release from school
* Students should head straight to their designated social space when they arrive at school in the morning and at break times. There are designated internal / external social spaces

# **Use of PPE in School – Face Masks**

* All staff will wear masks / visors both in classrooms / corridors / toilet / canteen / staffroom.
* All students must wear face coverings – Masks must be used.
* The face coverings worn should be reusable and washed once daily. All staff and students using the post-primary school transport service will be required to wear face coverings on the bus.
* All special needs assistants (SNAs) will be required to wear face coverings or, in certain situations, clear visors in the classroom, and other staff such as bus escorts who have close contact with students will be required to wear face coverings.

# **Dealing with a Suspected Case**

* If the person with the suspected case is a student, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately; (please ensure to have updated contact details)
* The student will be isolated but accompanied by key staff 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
* The isolation area will be a designated room-students to be advised of same (beside room 3)
* The virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room
* If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a student will wear a face covering or mask. Gloves will not be used as the virus does not pass through skin
* A mask will be provided for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
* Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
* Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice to be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided
* If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used
* If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a COVID-19 suspect
* Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
* Arrange for appropriate cleaning and disinfecting of the isolation area and work areas involved

# **Contingency Planning – Supporting Very High Risk Students**

The list of people in very high risk groups 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) COVID-
* 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. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, which will be in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, will be updated by the Department of Education following consultation with management bodies and unions and a circular will issue to all schools.
* A comprehensive student support plan will be put in place with the school and parents collaboration
* Regular communication essential
* Support resources provided
* The relevant support teachers will liaise with the relevant subject teachers, Year Head / Head of School, and Special Education Team (SET) where relevant, regarding curricular content and classwork
* Access relevant learning resources, including those produced by the subject teachers as well as other externally produced resources such as those on Scoilnet
* Provide the student with individualised support for his/her learning; this may include devising an individual support plan for the student in cooperation with the relevant subject teachers, class tutor/year head and, where relevant, the SET team
* Increase the student’s autonomy, motivation and wellbeing
* Improve the student’s capacity to become a self-directed learner
* Support the development of the student’s digital competence where necessary
* Avail of the communication / learning platform used by the student in school to ensure ongoing contact between the student and school and to facilitate some engagement with subject teachers and classmates.

# **Contingency Planning – For a Localised Full School Closure**

* School planning to ensure that the alignment of resources to support the continuity of teaching and learning
* Parents/guardians will be advised of where students are at in terms of their learning • Subject specific lesson activities developed to be carried out at home
* The use of Microsoft TEAMS as the official system in place for subject teachers to engage with students regularly during the week at timetabled class periods and to provide them with feedback on their work
* Prior planning at the reopening of school to ensure that students and staff are prepared using digital technology to continue to engage with their students and to support their learning in the event of a full school closure.

# **Other General Control Measures**

* Extra Curricular / Co-Curricular activities will be postponed until November and subject to NPHET and Department Of Education & Skills advices.
* Work Experience – This will be reviewed in late October and will take account of the guidance / advice of NPHET and Department Of Education & Skills