

Covid-19

Response Plan



Nurturing excellence in education

St Joseph's COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines the commitment of the B.O.M to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus.

COVID 19 Policy Statement

St Joseph's NS is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. All staff and pupils 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 and parents.
- provide up to date information to our staff 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
- support our AP1's who maintain a good reporting system.
- inform all staff, pupils, parents of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- have all staff & pupils undergo an induction / familiarisation briefing
- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- intensify cleaning in line with government advice

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

This can be done through the senior management

The Board of Management of St Joseph's N.S. reserves the right, In consultation with the education partners to review and modify the COVID-19 policy as necessary.

This was drafted by the Board of Management on 18th June 2020 & reviewed on 28th August 2020.

Sr. Joan Watters

Chairperson of BoM

Dr Roz Morris

Principal/Secretary to the BoM

RESPONSE PLAN

Senior Management

We senior management, supported by the lead worker representative Tess Hughes, will ensure that the plan is implemented and checklists are completed.

Senior Management will:

- use checklists to identify any areas for improvement
- regular checks to ensure the plan is being implemented
- review of risk assessments and the safety statement
- renewal of statutory certification where needed
- training
- reviewing emergency procedures and first aid

We senior management have:

Responsible Persons Task Register (Non-Exhaustive)		
No.	Tasks (non-exhaustive list)	Responsible Person(s)
1	Person responsible for overall implementation of the plan	Principal / D.P
2	Identification and training of senior management	Principal / D.P
3	Planning and Preparing to Return to Work	Senior Management
4	COVID-19 Induction	Principal / Senior Management
5	Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19	Senior Management
6	Cleaning and Disinfection	Principal / D.P
7	Return-to-work forms	Principal / D.P
8	Lead Worker Representative	Tess Hughes
9	Other:	

Control Measures

This section deals with the measures we are implementing to prevent or minimise the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and in our communities. Please see revised Risk Assessment and Child Safety Statements.

Measures include:

- Hand hygiene / Hand sanitising
- Respiratory hygiene
- Physical distancing
- Minimising contact
- Considering at-risk workers
- Parents / visitors

Protocols

- All classrooms and corridors have hand sanitisers
- Children clean their hands regularly throughout the day, before and after they eat and play.
- Drills are practised in class by teachers and SNA's.

Staggered Arrival to School in the Morning

- Arrival time for all pupils will be from 8.50am
- Senior pupils may enter from Tom Bellew Avenue, main school entrance; Junior and infant pupils from old infant entrance gates
- These gates will all be held open each morning in order to minimise touch points and will be supervised by senior members of staff and SNA's
- Parents and pupils, please avoid congregating at both school entry points in advance of the school premises opening.
- Parents and visitors are not allowed to enter the school grounds at any time without prior appointment.
- Pupils will enter the school building go straight to their classroom and sit at their table.

Dismissal

- Staggered departures for infants from 1.30pm.
- Staggered departures for all other classes from 2.20pm
- Parents in the set down area are asked to remain in their cars.
- Parents waiting to receive their children should observe the 2m social distancing rule outside the school gates.

Play Protocols

- There are outdoor sinks adjacent to the Halla to support children during play.
- All children play in class bubbles in assigned yard areas.
- We have a one-way system throughout the school. Children always walk in single file, socially distanced.
- All staff wear masks at all times, supported by visors when required.
- All SNA's and resource teachers use screens while working with pupils.

Parent Protocols

- Parents do not access the school or schoolyard except by prior appointment.
- All parents / visitors complete a contact log, stored in the office.
- Parent / teacher meetings records / forms which take place in school are kept by heads of Departments and HSCL.

Physical and Social Distancing

Social Distancing

- The recommended 1 metre is maintained between desks or between individual pupils and DES classroom layouts are adhered to
- This recommendation does not apply to pupils from junior infants to second class.
- Staff maintain a 2m distance from each other and a minimum of 1m from pupils. Staggered breaks support social distancing within the staff room.
- Where staff cannot maintain the 2m social distancing rule masks and/ or visors are worn.
- In intimate care settings or the administration of First Aid staff wear appropriate PPE including masks, gloves and aprons as per requirements and circumstances.

In the classroom

- Sharing educational materials/electronic devices and IT resources between class pods are not permitted until all resources and equipment have followed cleaning and sanitizing protocols. This occurs at the end of the school day or at the end of the week
- Pupils do not share personal items.
- Pupils have their own individual box to store their books and work throughout the school day.
- Each class grouping has been supplied with their own sports equipment which are cleaned and rotated when required
- The staff make frequent use of the outdoor space across the curriculum in order to help children to adhere to social distancing, engage in physical activity in a non-contact way, and build their sense of wellness and contentment.
- Emphasis is placed on strands on Athletics or Outdoor and Adventure Activities with particular focus on the strand units of running, jumping, throwing and orienteering.

Homework

- All homework for all classes is digitized for this year, with the exception of written / practice work which may need to be done in a copy. Homework in such cases will be corrected on a designated day and hand hygiene protocols adhered to.

Classroom design and classroom ventilation follow DES guidelines

- Teachers have been given the freedom to design their classroom as best suits the needs of their class, ensuring that the layout is within the parameters of DES guidelines
- Any unnecessary furniture and resources have been put in storage

The DES Guidelines on Ventilation in schools.

- Windows should not remain open if they are causing discomfort. It is suggested that they are open in the morning, break times and home time
- Open windows (fully) before school, after school and during breaks
- Turn on heating (when required) and partially open windows above the radiators so as to offset any local chilling effect that occurs because windows are open!
- It is better to partially open several windows than to open one window fully.

COVID-19 Induction / Familiarisation

The following range of items will be discussed and brought to the attention of the staff:

- **Communication system**
 - Regular emails to staff and reference to updates at each Croke Park hour.
 - Text to parents and regular updates on the school website
 - Pupils updated during assemblies / class and during morning update from Principal when required
 - Lead worker representative regularly communicates concerns between staff and management
- Return-to work form – emailed to staff and available from office.
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Control measures to help prevent infection
- COVID-19 contact log – reception and AP1's
- Changes to risk assessments and child safety statement – available throughout the school
- Response Plan – available throughout the school
- Minimising contact
- Reporting procedures – as above

Attendance at a COVID-19 induction will be recorded and records kept - **Completed**

Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19:USE of IR rooms

This details our procedure to be followed in the event of someone developing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 while in the school.

- There are two I.R rooms (Isolation Rooms) within the school
- Any child presenting with symptoms is given a mask and brought by management to one of the I.R rooms
- Parents are contacted and advised to keep child at home for **48hrs** to monitor symptoms.
- Children vacate the classroom which is then sanitized before children return.

Steps that will be taken in the event of a confirmed / suspected case of Covid 19 in St Joseph's on school website,sjns.ie

The HSE has issued guidance for parents which addresses the following issues:

- Symptoms to look out for and when to contact your GP
- When to keep your child at home and phone your GP
- When it's okay to send your child to school or childcare

You can access this guidance at HSE: Covid-19 Advice for Parents

1. ***If your child becomes unwell at school*** and presents with symptoms associated with Covid-19, we will follow the procedure that is set out in Section One of our school's Covid-19 Response Plan. This involves bringing your child to a designated area within the school. This area is called an "isolation area" and every school is required to have such an area identified to deal with a potential case of Covid-19. We will contact you and ask you to collect your child as soon as possible. **Please note** that the school is not required to inform anyone that your child has been removed due to his/her symptoms. This procedure is purely precautionary. If you have other children in the school, they do not have to be removed from the school at this point. You are required to contact your GP to discuss concerns and we would ask that you keep the school updated on the advice given by your GP. The next steps will depend on the advice given to you by your GP.
2. ***If your child is referred for a test***, all other members of the household that attend the school should remain at home.
3. ***If your child is confirmed positive for Covid-19***, the HSE will begin the process of contact tracing. This will most likely mean that the school will be contacted to assess the Public Health Risk.

From this point onwards, the process will be led by the Public Health HSE.

- i. The school cannot take any action in relation to exclusion, part closure or full closure, unless the Public Health HSE determine that the action is required.
- ii. If any action of this nature is required, the HSE will liaise with the school to provide clear guidance to the school community.
- iii. If the school has not been contacted by the Public Health HSE in relation to a confirmed case in the school community, then contact with the school has not been deemed necessary.

It is a distressing time for families who are dealing with a suspected or confirmed case and all pupils and their families are entitled to confidentiality. The school cannot and will not make the name of a pupil with a suspected or confirmed case known to the public. Unfortunately, we have no control over exchanges on social media, where information based on hearsay is shared. We would respectfully request that parents who choose to communicate about this issue on social media should consider how these comments could be misinterpreted. Please refrain from naming pupils and their families on these platforms. We will continue to implement the measures set out in the school's Covid-19 Response Plan to provide a safe learning environment for our pupils and a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff.

We look forward to your continued co-operation. Thank you for all your support and understanding thus far.

Ms Roz.

Cleaning and Disinfection in the Workplace

We have put in place an effective cleaning and disinfection system as regular cleaning and disinfection will help reduce the spread of the virus. We have arranged for frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, light switches, kitchen appliances etc. to be cleaned regularly by classroom teams (Teachers and SNA's).

- Communal areas are cleaned after each break.
- If disinfection of contaminated surfaces is needed, this will be done in addition to cleaning.
- Staff are provided with cleaning materials to keep their own workspace hygienically clean and advised to regularly clean any personal items brought in from home.
- Cleaning staff have been given information and instruction in relation to the new procedures, and a clear line of communication between staff and cleaning personnel.
- Classrooms are cleaned and defogger sanitizer used each evening – particularly for infant resources and activities
- Photocopiers / lift sanitized before each use by members of staff, (UV wand and cleaning fluids).
- Teachers / SNA's complete online survey form if cleaning routines by cleaning staff are not adhered to
- A cleaning log is available in the Principal's office
- All members of staff complete incidental cleaning routines throughout the day
 - Cleaning / sanitizing spray
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitizing holders while on yard duty
 - Kitchen paper

Staff Responsibilities in the Workplace

Staff keep themselves updated on the latest advice from Government and the HSE. They co- operate in maintaining the control measures put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and report any issues or concerns they may have.

- All staff supply office with Return to Work form after each absence before they begin back in the classroom