

Mayo Abbey NS – COVID Response Plan

Risk Communication, Education and Training

The Board of Management has developed a response plan for the prevention and mitigation of Covid-19 following a risk assessment of the school facility. This plan highlights the measures necessary to protect the health and safety of staff in re-opening and modifying the work arrangements within the school.

The staff representative(s) will be properly consulted when developing and implementing the action plan for the prevention and mitigation of Covid-19 within the school and all staff will be informed about the measures being introduced, using specific risk communication and staff engagement approaches.

The Board of Management will:

- ✓ Ensure that all staff receive necessary training prior to returning to work
- ✓ Provide posters, information to increase awareness of Covid-19 among staff and pupils
- ✓ Promote safe individual practices within the school campus
- ✓ Engage with staff in providing feedback on the preventive measures and their effectiveness
- ✓ Provide regular information about the risk of Covid-19 using official sources, such as government agencies (HSE, HSA, etc.) and the World Health Organisation
- ✓ Emphasise the effectiveness of adopting protective measures especially good personal hygiene
- ✓ Provide specific training in the proper use of PPE for staff, where required

Hygiene

The BoM will ensure that all staff can wash their hands regularly. Water and appropriate sanitisers (i.e. hand gel dispensers, etc.) will be available throughout the school. Staff should:

- ✓ Wash their hands properly and often. Hands should be washed:
 - After coughing or sneezing
 - Before and after eating or preparing food
 - Before and after using protective gloves
 - Before and after being on public transport
 - When arriving and leaving the school campus
 - After toilet use
- ✓ Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their sleeve when coughing and sneezing.
- ✓ Put used tissues into a bin and wash their hands
- ✓ Develop a routine of increased cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched objects and surfaces

The BoM will supply required cleaning products, will ensure the correct use and storage of disinfectants and will ensure all products are stored safely and securely.

No employees are permitted to attend work if they display any of the symptoms below: -

- ✓ Fever (temperature of 37.5 degrees or above)
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Shortness of breath
- ✓ Breathing difficulties

Any Staff Member displaying symptoms must self-isolate and follow public health guidelines.

Any staff member living with someone who is self-isolating or waiting for a Covid-19 test must follow public health guidelines.

Any Staff Member who has tested positive for Covid-19 must not return to work until deemed fit to do so and upon approval of their medical advisor

Staff can follow <https://www2.hse.ie/> for regular updates or can contact HSELive for advice **1850 241850**

Hygiene

The Board of Management will ensure that:

- ✓ Appropriate signage in line with public health guidelines will be displayed throughout school facility (buildings and grounds).
- ✓ Appropriate social distancing markings are in place
- ✓ Necessary PPE is available to staff
- ✓ Standard cleaning and maintenance regimes are put in place and detailed records retained
- ✓ Toilet facilities are cleaned regularly.
- ✓ Equipment sharing is minimised. Staff are encouraged not to share equipment
- ✓ There is regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces and that staff are provided with essential cleaning materials to keep their own work areas clean (for example wipes/disinfection products, paper towels and waste bins/bags)
- ✓ All school equipment is sanitised – cleaning programmes to be devised to ensure that shared equipment is cleaned and disinfected between use by different people
- ✓ Covid compliant work areas to be available where social distancing guidelines can be applied
- ✓ There is staggered use of canteen/kitchen or other communal facilities
- ✓ Bins are provided for disposal of waste materials (tissues, paper towels, wipes, etc.) and that adequate waste collection arrangements to be put in place to ensure they do not overflow
- ✓ All waste collection points are emptied at the end of each day.
- ✓ Staff use gloves when removing rubbish bags or handling and disposing of any
- ✓ Rubbish and they wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds afterwards

Social Distancing

Physical distancing is currently a key control measure in reducing the spread of infection.

The Board of Management will ensure that:

- ✓ all persons will adhere to relevant social distancing rules in relation to entering the school, use of welfare facilities and while working in the school
- ✓ physical spacing will follow public health guidelines for work stations and common spaces, such as entrances/exits, lifts, kitchen areas, canteens, stairs, where congregation or queuing of staff, or students or visitors might occur
- ✓ School supervision procedures must be strictly adhered to
- ✓ Appropriate signage in line with public health guidelines will be displayed throughout school facility (buildings and grounds)
- ✓ Appropriate social distancing arrangements will be in place throughout the facility
- ✓ There is currently a strict no handshaking policy in place within the school
- ✓ All staff, contractors and visitors should avoid direct physical contact with any other persons as far as possible

Where 2 metre distance cannot be maintained the school will follow the most up to date Department of Education and public health guidelines.

Requirements for personnel working within 2 metres of each other (where activity cannot be suspended):

- ✓ No worker has symptoms of Covid-19
- ✓ The close contact work cannot be avoided
- ✓ Installation of physical barriers e.g. clear plastic sneeze guards
- ✓ PPE is present in line with public health advice
- ✓ An exclusion zone for <2m work will be set up pre task commencement
- ✓ Prior to donning appropriate PPE, staff will wash/sanitise their hands thoroughly

Cleaning

All cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.

- ✓ Staff are responsible for cleaning personal items that have been brought to work and items handled at work or during breaks. Staff advised to clean personal items that they have bring to work (e.g. mobile phones) and to avoid leaving them down on communal surfaces or they will need to clean the surface after the personal item is removed
- ✓ Cleaning staff will be trained in the new cleaning arrangements for the school
- ✓ Sufficient cleaning materials and PPE will be available to allow for increased cleaning
- ✓ Cleaning staff will be instructed to wear gloves when cleaning and are aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before and after wearing gloves
- ✓ System in place for the disposal of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a rubbish bag Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person suspected of having Covid-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection
- ✓ System in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use
- ✓ System in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use

Office and administration areas

- Office capacity to be limited to facilitate the maintenance of physical distancing between designated workstations and staff
- The number of employees permitted to work in an office at any particular time shall be limited as a necessary control measure to protect health and safety.

Use of PPE

The correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as face shields/visors or clear plastic barriers or Perspex screens etc. may be required in some circumstances to address identified risks of spread of the virus.

Where PPE is required by staff, they will be notified accordingly and be provided with the necessary PPE and provided with training and information in the proper use, cleaning, storage and disposal of PPE.

PPE needs to be consistently and properly worn when required. In addition, it must be regularly inspected, cleaned, maintained and replaced as necessary.

PPE will not be required to be worn within the school facility according to current occupational and public health guidance, i.e. if 2m distancing cannot be maintained.

Current Department of Education guidelines in relation to the wearing of face coverings, masks and gloves is available at the following Link:

<http://www.mayoabbeyns.com/uploads/2/9/3/7/29374913/covid-19-response-plan-for-primary-and-special-schools-v3-february-2021.pdf>

Face masks are available for all staff.

Gloves are not required generally within the workplace for infection prevention and control purposes according to current guidance. Due to the risks associated with the usage of gloves, the Board of Management will not be providing gloves to staff for general use.

*With regard to face coverings for children public health guidelines will be followed.

Handling books and other resources during Covid-19

The Board of Management has to prepare school books (book rental scheme) and other resource materials (including IT equipment) so that these will be available to pupils. The following guidelines are recommended for staff when receiving or assisting in compiling resource packs:

- Maintain physical distancing (currently 2 metres)
- Observe good hygiene (hand washing and respiratory etiquette, do not touch your eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands, etc.) before and after handling books and other materials returned to the school
- Follow the agreed school protocols if you are displaying symptoms of Covid-19
- Any shared books or other items (resource packs, computers, etc.) being returned to the school should be quarantined for 72 hours. Quarantining means placing these items in sealed boxes for the 72-hour quarantine period. These boxes should be stored in a separate location away from active work areas within the school
- Following the expiry of the 72-hour quarantine period the items may be unboxed, cleaned and prepared for use
- Hands should be washed in line with relevant guidance

Using hand tools or equipment

- ✓ Staff must wear the appropriate PPE for the nature of the work that they are undertaking
- ✓ All tools and equipment must be properly sanitised to prevent cross contamination
- ✓ Arrangements should be put in place for one individual to use the same tool, equipment and machinery as far as is reasonably practicable
- ✓ Cleaning material will be available so that all tools can be wiped down with disinfectant between each use
- ✓ All mobile machinery (including lawnmowers) must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised prior to use

Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

The Board of Management will:

- ✓ Appoint an appropriate person for dealing with suspected cases – the Lead Worker Representative (Geraldine Glynn)
- ✓ Have a designated isolation area (Principals Office) available within the school building. The designated area and the route to the designated area should be easily accessible and as far as is reasonable and practicable, should be accessible by people with disabilities. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 needs to be considered so having additional isolation areas available (school porch) for dealing with additional cases. It would be important that the designated area has the ability to isolate the person behind a closed door and away from other people.

If a person displays symptoms of Covid-19 the following procedure is to be implemented:

- ✓ Isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual 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 where practicable.
- ✓ Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms and the accompanying adult. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises where practicable.
- ✓ The child puts all items on their desk away. The accompanying adult (class teacher or SNA if available) brings the child and their belongings to the isolation area. The accompanying adult alerts the school secretary or SET who alert an SNA. The SNA then puts on PPE in the staffroom and goes to the isolation area. The teacher waits at the door of the isolation area until the SNA arrives to supervise. The school secretary or SET phones the child's parents.
- ✓ Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home and call their parents/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 should 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 of the isolation area and work areas involved. The isolation area will be out-of-use until cleaned and disinfected. The classroom space where the staff or pupils were located will be cleaned and disinfected.

Covid-19 cleaning

All cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.

- ✓ It is recommended cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after a suspected coronavirus (Covid-19) case. This will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people
- ✓ The area should be kept closed and secure for 72 hours (if possible) for cleaning as the amount of virus living on surfaces will have reduced significantly by 72 hours
- ✓ For cleaning purposes, wear a face mask, disposable gloves. These should be double-bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours and then put with the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished.
- ✓ Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you normally use. Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as toilets and door handles
- ✓ If an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with coronavirus (Covid-19) consider using protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and apron
- ✓ Wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning
- ✓ Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned as normal
- ✓ All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids

Cleaning a space with a suspected/confirmed case of Covid-19

All cleaning will be undertaken in line with DES and public health guidance.

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and mop heads to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, using an approved and recognised detergent and disinfectant in line with the manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times

Disinfectants used should be effective against viruses.

Additionally:

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.

Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.

When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered (upholstered furniture or mattresses for example) steam cleaning should be used

Any items that have been heavily contaminated with bodyfluids and that cannot be cleaned by washing should be disposed of

If possible, keep an area closed off and secure for 72 hours. After this time the amount of virus contamination will have decreased substantially, and cleaning can take place as normal

Travel to and from work

Where a staff member exhibits any signs of Covid-19 or has been exposed to a confirmed case **they should not travel to work.**

Wherever possible, staff should travel to work alone using their own means of transport – staff should not share transport to or from work.

If availing of public transport, sit down to minimise contact with frequently touched surfaces, handles, roofstraps, isolation bars, etc.

Wear a face mask and carry hand sanitiser (at least 60% alcohol) and use it regularly throughout your journey.

Dropping off and picking up of pupils

Arrangements for dropping off and picking up pupils from the school facility will be organised to maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe social distance between drivers/parents/guardians and all school staff.

Where pupils travel by public transport the Board of Management will provide a designated drop off/awaiting area (where possible) that supports social distancing measures.

Parents/guardians will be encouraged to wait in the car outside of the school

Where pupils with additional needs are dropped off and picked up, the accompanying adult should remain in the car/bus with the pupil. A designated staff member will come to the car/bus to receive the pupil and will avoid or limit physical contact with the accompanying adult. A similar process should be followed for pick up.

Visitors to school

The Board of Management will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all visitors to the school premises.

Visits to the school will be severely restricted and visitors will be asked to:

- ✓ Make a prior appointment before visiting the school
- ✓ Remain at home if they have any Covid-19 symptoms
- ✓ Follow the agreed Covid-19 protocols for the school
- ✓ Sanitise before entering the premises
- ✓ Attendance to be recorded on entry to building
- ✓ Wear PPE if instructed
- ✓ Adhere to social distancing requirements
- ✓ Not to loiter – complete their business and leave premises

Management of deliveries and supplies to school

- Ensure that all delivery transactions comply with physical distancing requirements
- All deliveries to be planned with allocated times for collections and deliveries as far as is practicable
- Appropriate sanitising arrangements at set down areas (for materials and stock) and at access and egress points.