**Response Plan for the Reopening of the School 2020/21**

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and helpful guidance for the safe return to Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin of all personnel through the prevention, early detection and control of Covid-19.

Its purpose is “aimed at risk minimization of Covid-19, for young people, teachers, other staff, their families and the wider community, recognising the importance of education for health and well-being” (reference?)

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken in our school to minimise the risk of the introduction of infection into schools while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time.

This document is a work in progress that involves all stakeholders as we work towards the safe return to school on August 27th 2020.

**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 - students, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.
* In line with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills, it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week and for a full school day.
* It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the cooperation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced into the school and the consequent risk of it spreading.

**Some of the practicalities of the proposed actions will be inconvenient but with the cooperation, flexibility and the goodwill of all the partners in the school, management will be enabled to ensure the plan can be implemented effectively and safely.**

**Lead Worker Representatives:** Ed Keyes and Una Hayden

The role of the LWR is to:

* Keep up to date with the latest Covid-19 advice.
* Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress Covid-19 in the workplace in line with DES guidelines.
* Monitor in conjunction with school management adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
* Conduct reviews of safety measures that are put in place to address and suppress Covid-19 in the workplace.
* Report any areas of concern immediately and keep a record of issues and and actions taken to rectify them.
* Consult with colleagues on matters relating to Covid-19 in the workplace.and make representations to management where necessary.

**Return Dates:**

Friday 28th 1st years

Monday 31st 6th years & 1st years

Tuesday 1st 3rd years & 6th years

Wednesday 2nd 2nd years & 6th years

Thursday 3rd 5th years & 6th years

Friday 4th TY years & 6th years

The staggered return dates will allow for all students to be introduced to the new procedures in place for the safe return to school.

**Rooms:**

1,2,3,5,6 1st years

33,34,35,38 3rd years

19,20,21,22 2nd years

23,24,25,26,27 5th years

7,12,44,45 TY’s

28,29,30,31,32 6th years

SEN Teachers workroom

Students will remain in their base classes where possible and teachers will move during the day. This will reduce movement on the corridors and help with physical distancing.

There will only be 24 students in most classrooms and the overspill will go to the gym where they will access live streaming of the class. The  students involved will change every week. This will ensure that we are able to fully reopen with  all classes in attendance.

We will need the full cooperation of students in helping us to ensure their chair and desk surface are cleaned after they use them.

**Breaktime(s) -** staggered: 10.30 - 10.50 1st & TY’s

 10.50 - 11.10 2nd & 5th

 11.10 - 11.30 3rd & 6th

**Lunchtime(s) -** staggered: 12.30 - 13.10 1st, TY & 5th

13.10 - 13.50 2nd, 3rd & 6th

Once again this was put into place to limit the number of students on corridors at any given time which will help with physical distancing.

**Canteen:**

A screen has been mounted at the canteen hatch. Students will be asked, where possible, to order their food on Monday for the week. The possibility of ordering and paying online is currently being investigated.

Food will be distributed to students in the courtyard opposite the canteen or at designated points in the assembly area.

Students will eat their lunch outside when possible otherwise they will eat their lunch in their base classes.

The canteen has been repurposed for use as a staff eating area, as this allows for 2 metre physical distancing.

**Lockers:**

Lockers will not be in use for the foreseeable future.

**Movement between classes:**

All school personnel are asked to walk on the left side of the corridor.

**Arrival at school:**

* 8am opening time. All students and staff must wear their mask inside the school building.
* All students and staff must sanitise their hands on arrival to school.
* Also each student must use hand sanitiser as they enter a classroom. Hand sanitising dispensers have been mounted at all entrances to the school building and at each classroom.
* At 8.30 all students will go to their base classes. This is to aid physical distancing.

**Classrooms**

* Each student will be assigned a seat in their base classroom. They must sit in that seat at all times.
* On leaving a room the students will wipe down their desks and chairs.
* All windows in classrooms must remain open and where possible doors.
* All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area in the classrooms they teach in.
* There will be a regular collection of used waste disposal bags from the classrooms, office and other areas within the school.

**Entrances**:

* Front entrance 1st years and TY’s
* Entrance opposite the gym 2nd years
* Entrance beside SNA office Teachers

\*Hand sanitising dispensers are available at all school entrances/ exits and outside each classroom\*

**End of the School Day:**

* All classes must leave school via the nearest exit.

**Tutor:**

* Tutor time will remain as normal. Students will wipe down desks if they are leaving

 the room.

* Teachers will be provided with individual stamps to mark journals when a student is signing in or out of school, or going to the bathroom.

**Collection of Students during the School Day:**

If an adult has to collect a student during the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

* A note must be written in the school journal or a phone call/ email to the school outlining the time the student will be collected and the reasons why the student is leaving the school.
* A parent must not enter the school building.
* The student will sign out with the Principal/ Deputy Principal.

**Communication:**

Parents must not enter the school without a prior appointment.

On arrival the parent will sign the log in book with their own pen and they will be brought directly to the meeting room.

We hope that most queries will be dealt with over the phone or through email.

We cannot facilitate parents/ guardians dropping into the school with lunches, books, uniforms etc.

**Hand Hygiene:**

Each student should have a zip lock bag with hand sanitiser, wipes and a plain face mask. The face mask must be put in a separate zip lock bag.

Posters will be displayed around the school promoting good hand hygiene and demonstrating how to wash hands.

Students and staff should perform hand hygiene :

* On arrival to school
* Before eating and drinking
* After using the toilet
* When they cough or sneeze
* After playing outdoors
* When they are physically dirty

**Respiratory Hygiene:**

This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then disposing of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.

**Personal Equipment:**

* All students/ teachers must bring in their own pens, pencils, copies and books to school as sharing of materials is strictly prohibited.
* Folding cart bags will be provided for all staff to help transport their materials from one class to another.

**Classroom Layout:**

Where possible classroom layout has been changed to accommodate the one metre physical distancing rule. Any excess furniture in rooms has been removed to increase floor space.

In base classes students will be allocated specific seats and they must sit in these for the duration of the school year. In choice subjects students from the same base classes will sit beside each other where possible.

**Staffroom:**

The staffroom is now a study room for teachers which will accommodate a number of teachers all physically distancing. There is no eating in this room.

Pods will be created in the canteen for teachers to eat their lunch. Teachers must bring in all they need for lunch as there will be no tea making/ food preparation facilities available in the staffroom.

**Homework:**

In light of the fact that there is going to be more blended teaching and in response to a survey completed by staff regarding their online experience during lockdown the school has decided to invest in IT devices for teachers.

All classwork will be put up on Google classroom, i.e. notes, powerpoints, etc.

Homework will be returned via Google classroom/ email.

Feedback can be given digitally or in class.

**Impact of Covid-19 on shared devices and extra-curricular activities:**

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities like study, sport will be explored at a later date when the school has settled into a routine.

Chrome books will be cleaned between uses and their use may be limited.

In subjects like art, technical drawing, music etc. students must get their own materials as sharing is not an option.

**Uniform:**

Students are allowed to wear the PE uniform for the duration of the day when they have PE. This will facilitate parents by giving them time to wash the school uniform. On all other days the full school uniform must be worn.

We will stress the importance to parents of writing the name of their son/ daughter on each item of clothing as this will help us return the correct item of clothing to each student. This is particularly important at this time.

**Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19**

Staff or students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.

**We ask that parents have a plan in place for collecting their son/ daughter who may fall ill while in school. If a child falls ill and you are in your workplace it is imperative that we have the contact details of a nominated emergency contact. Please email such contact so that we can update VSware.**

The following outlines how a school should deal with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting:

A designated isolation area should be identified within the school building. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of COVID-19 should be considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases put in place. The designated isolation area should be behind a closed door and away from other staff and students.

**Isolation Room -** Back office

**Additional Room if required -** Back prefab (former prayer room)

**If a staff member/student displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following**

**are the procedures to be implemented:**

If the person with the suspected case is a student, the parents/guardians should

be contacted immediately;

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;

The isolation area does not have to be a room but if it is not a room it should be

2m away from others in the room;

Remember that 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 should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;

Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms if one is available. 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 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 HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process;

The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and student confidentiality is essential at all times.

**Please note that staff at Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin are not medical professionals, at all times we act in the best interests of all students in the school following the advice of the HSE.**

**Masks/ Gloves/ PPE**

Masks/ visors must be worn at all times in the school building.

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

PPE gear is not required to be worn within schools. However it may need to be used under the following situations:

* Performing intimate care needs
* Where a suspected Covid-19 case is identified while the school is in operation.

**Cleaning:**

The school will take particular care of the hygiene arrangements for hand washing and toilet facilities. Each school setting will be cleaned at least once a day. Additional cleaning if available will be focussed on frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, chairs, communal eating areas, etc.

**Signage:**

Signage will be displayed around the school outlining the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

**Teacher Absence and Supervision:**

In the event that a teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher or reassign an existing teacher.

**Ratification:**

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management of Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin on August 2020.

This plan will be reviewed regularly in line with Public Health advice and in line with further updates issued by the Department of Education and Science.

Signed:---------------------------------------------

Chairperson