



**all different**  
**all equal**

# **Covid- 19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of Mount Temple Comprehensive School**

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol', the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning. This document identifies the steps schools can take to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself in the event that COVID-19 is introduced to the school.

### **School Covid-19 Policy**

The school Covid Policy is available on our website and as at appendix 1.

### **Planning and Preparing for the Return to School**

Up to date information with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates will be available on the Mount Temple App or through email or the School Website

Arrangements have been made to pass on this information in a timely manner to staff, pupils, parents, and others as required.

All staff were provided with the training material provided by the Department of Education.

All staff must complete the Return to Work (RTW) form

The Lead Worker representatives for Mount Temple are Mr Steele, Ms Nic Ruairi and Mr Fox.

Posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 are posted throughout the school.

The necessary changes to the school and classroom layouts have been made to support physical distancing

All unnecessary clutter removed to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school, considering the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment.

Updated the health and safety risk assessment (see Appendix 2)

Made necessary arrangements to limit access to the school to necessary visitors and maintain records of contacts to the school.

Reviewed the school buildings to check the following:

the water system was flushed following low usage to prevent Legionella disease?

bin collections and other essential services resumed.

## **Induction Training**

All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. The aim of such training is to ensure that staff have full knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Latest up-to-date advice and guidance on public health.
- Covid-19 symptoms.
- What to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school.
- Outline of the Covid-19 response plan.

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of Covid-19 and will be updated with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the Covid-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal or Deputy Principals

## **Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a Return to Work (RTW) form. An RTW form should be completed and returned 3 days before returning to work. The Principal will also provide details of the Induction Training for completion by staff and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility. There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at very high risk. This will be updated in line with public health advice.

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, is available in circulars [0049/2020](#) and [0054/2020](#) . This circular was sent to all staff.

## **Lead Worker Representatives (see Appendix 2)**

The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

The school staff are entitled to select staff members for the LWR position

Following the agreed process Mount Temple has appointed Ms Nic Ruairi, Mr Steele and Mr Fox.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan,

control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, pupils or others he/she should contact the lead workers who will engage with the Principal or Deputy Principals.

All staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

### **Signage**

Signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene and social distancing are displayed around the school.

### **Making Changes to School Layout**

We have reconfigured classrooms and other areas as necessary to support physical distancing in line with the guidance in advance of school reopening.

- We have had to re-organise the school: usually, students travel to teachers' classes; now, in order to facilitate social distancing and limit social interaction (which we hate to do, but have to) students will have a home-base form classroom as much as possible and teachers will move.
- We have divided the gym into four classrooms; the library is now two classrooms and Mount Temple Hall will be used as a classroom
- Some specialist rooms e.g music, Home Economics and one Science lab are now form / home-base classrooms
- Each year (other than 2nd) will have at least six forms and each form is assigned a room big enough to accommodate the numbers
- All classrooms have been stripped of storage facilities
- Double desks have been replaced with singles
- Hot water is currently being installed in toilets
- Corridors have been marked as one way systems (a video on this will be circulated)
- Sanitiser in every room and every entrance and exit
- Cleaning materials in every room
- Cleaning contract renegotiated to increase level of cleaning
- Staff rooms have been reconfigured to allow for 2m social distancing. All cups, cutlery etc has been removed and all staff will provide their own and be responsible for the cleaning of the same.
- Fridges and microwaves are available as previously but will have to be sanitised after each use.
- Kettles and milk will be provided in staff resource areas.
- The possibility of providing an outside covered area is still being investigated but proving very costly.

### **Health and Safety Risk Assessment**

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is outlined in a separate document. COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment.

### **Access to School and Contact Log**

Arrangements for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal. The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools and centres for education to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

Teacher's roll calls (taken on vsware) will form our own contact tracing log. It is imperative that these are taken correctly. It is also crucial that students attend the classes on their timetable - they may request a change of subject but may not move class until informed that the change was made. Teachers are asked to keep a seating plan of classes.

Staff and students are encouraged to download the HSE Covid Tracker APP.

A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities are kept in the school office. All visitors must use hand sanitiser and wear face covering.

Parents/guardians are asked not to drop in without making an appointment and to do so then only when absolutely necessary. When dropping students to school, parents/guardians should not enter the school grounds, walking, cycling or by car.

### **Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student-student, staff-staff and staff-student and must be managed in all settings.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents, and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements. Staff should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

### **How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into Schools:**

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms - posters of the symptoms are displayed

in the school.

**Common symptoms of coronavirus include:**

- [a fever \(high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above\)](#)
- [a cough](#) - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- [shortness of breath](#) or breathing difficulties
- [loss or change to 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
- Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser and wear face covering,
- Visitors to the school during the day will be by prior arrangement and will be received at a specific contact point.
- Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

**Attendance**

**Staff/ Students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. If a student or staff member is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school:**

- anyone who have been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- anyone who has been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- anyone who has a suspected case of COVID-19 and the outcome of the test is pending;
- anyone living in the same household as a person who has a suspected case of COVID-19 and the outcome of the test is pending;
- anyone with underlying health conditions who has been directed by a medical professional not to attend school;
- anyone who has returned home after travelling abroad (to a non-Green List country) must self-isolate for a period of 14 days;
- Anyone who is generally unwell.

If a student or staff member displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the procedures to follow are outlined in appendix 4.

## Respiratory Hygiene

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 and safely into a nearby bin. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.

## Hand Hygiene

We will promote good hygiene by displaying posters throughout the schools on how to wash your hands. Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing. Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean). The HSE video on hand washing forms part of staff training and student induction.

Hand Sanitisers are provided in every classroom and the entrance and exit to every building.

## Frequency of Hand Hygiene

Pupils and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school.
- Before eating or drinking.
- After using the toilet.
- After playing outdoors.
- When their hands are physically dirty.
- When they cough or sneeze
- After having direct contact with another person, shared item or resource

## Physical Distancing

Physical distancing can be usefully applied in a post primary school setting allowing for some flexibility when needed. It must be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Care should be taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at time.

It is also recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from students and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the student.

**Where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1m 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. The teacher's desk should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks.**

### **Decreasing Interaction**

When students arrive at school they go straight to their base room. Where possible students do not arrive to school before 8.30 am

No lockers are available.

No small break

Interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas is limited.

Bike racks are designated for the different year groups..

Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) will be discouraged.

Students are encouraged to leave the building at lunch time except on very wet days.

All students should wear layers of clothing to school and bring a warm jacket. Doors and windows will be open to increase ventilation. Students should also bring rain gear for lunch time.

Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it should be organized to the greatest degree possible to minimize congregation at the shared resource.

Staff and pupils should avoid sharing of personal items.

Encourage pupils to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth).

Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device should be cleaned regularly, and hand hygiene encouraged.

In certain rooms (G7 computer room) perspex screens are used to separate workstations as the configuration of the room doesn't allow acceptable distancing.

### **Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school**

Students and staff are encouraged to walk/cycle to school.

Staggered breaks and no morning break. Classtimes are now

8:45 - 9:25

9:25- 10:05

10:05 - 10:45

10:45 - 11:25

11:25 - 12:05

**12:05 - 12:45 Lunch 1**

**12:45 - 13:25 Lunch 2**

13:25- 14:05

14:05-14:45

14:45 - 15:25

Staggered dismissal is not as simple as 1st years leave at 3:20 etc - classes in the Maths and Science block and Mount Temple Hall will be dismissed first each day starting at 3:20.

Students are expected to vacate the premises immediately and to maintain social distance when leaving.

Senior students who for one reason or another have chosen to give up a subject (not those doing resource class) will have to remain in the classroom as there is no library or supervised space available.

Vending Machines are still available but with a cashless facility, hand sanitiser and an antiviral keypad. Queueing spaces are designated. Their use will be monitored and they will be discontinued if the queueing is considered unsafe.

The canteen will operate with a more limited menu. Staff/students can order the night before on the APP. Junior classes will have their lunch delivered to base classroom while senior classes will collect theirs from the canteen area (with a supervised queueing system),

To minimise interactions with other schools or the wider public, students will not be allowed to leave the premises at lunchtime.

Students have a dedicated outside area for each year group to congregate.

2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as the staff room and arriving to work.

No hand shaking policy.

## **Use of PPE in Schools**

### **Masks/Face Coverings**

**Cloth face coverings** act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission

of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact.

It is therefore **a requirement** that teachers, staff and students attending post primary schools wear a face covering when a physical distance of 2m from other staff or students cannot be maintained.

**In certain situations the use of clear visors should be considered**, for example staff interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.

All students on the post primary 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:**

- 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.

All staff and students wearing face coverings should be reminded to not touch the face covering and to wash or sanitise their hands (using hand sanitiser) before putting on and after taking off the face covering.

The HSE provides guidance on how to wear a face covering here

<https://youtu.be/OBR0udoIaiY>. [htt](#)

**How to use a face covering properly:**

**Do:**

- clean your hands properly before you put it on
- practise using it so you are comfortable putting it on and taking it off
- make sure it is made from a fabric you are comfortable wearing
- cover your mouth and nose with it and make sure there are no gaps between your cloth face covering
- tie it securely
- carry unused masks in a sealable clean waterproof bag (for example, a ziplock bag)
- carry a second similar type bag to put used masks in

**Don't:**

- touch a mask or face covering while wearing it - if you do, clean your hands properly
- use a damp or wet medical mask or reuse a medical mask
- share masks
- lower your mask to speak, eat and smoke or vape - if you need to uncover your nose or mouth, take the mask off and put it in the bag for used masks
- discard masks in public places

**Taking off a cloth face covering**

To take it off properly:

- remove it from behind - do not touch the front of the mask
- do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth
- clean your hands properly
- put disposable masks in a bin straight away

All staff are provided with a personal kit - hand sanitiser, reusable face mask, glasses with removable visor.

Students should bring their own facemask (and spares in a clean pouch), hand sanitiser and a packet of tissues.

Extra PPE equipment will be available in the school.

**Impact of Covid 19 on certain School Activities**

The Department is currently working to provide greater guidance on school activities.

Sports - for the foreseeable future we will be without a Sports Hall. We are very lucky with our extensive grounds and PE classes will be held outdoors. Students will be allowed to wear tracksuits on the days they have PE as there are no changing facilities. Students should go to the assigned room and leave their school bag in that room which is locked when the class leave for PE.

The situation with after school sports is still unclear. At present there will be no after school activities and we will review this constantly.

We are working with staff to minimise the amount of shared equipment in practical subjects and also awaiting further direction from the DES.

School books will not be collected or stored in base rooms and should in general be kept at home for homework.

When moving room students will bring their school bags and belongings with them.

There is no school library for the foreseeable future.

Teachers will set and accept homework on Google Classroom to avoid the necessity of collecting homework.

All permissions - trips, leaving early, excusing lates or absences will be done via the APP to avoid the necessity of collecting notes.

The school will be completely cashless - all payments will be made on the APP. (We have moved from Vsware to allow parents/guardians to add all items to one basket and reduce service charges).

### **Hygiene & Cleaning in Schools**

The school will be cleaned at least once per day. Additional cleaning will focus on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

The cleaning company has been provided with the DES Induction training and a cleaning schedule drawn up.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building.

Staff and students should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

There will be a regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

Shared equipment e.g chromebooks, science equipment, drills etc in practical subjects will have to be cleaned before use.

For senior classes there will still be movement between classrooms, cleaning materials are provided for students to wipe down their chair and table before use.

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

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The isolation area is in the Home Economics block opposite sickbay. If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures 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. (see Appendix 3)

If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately.

Keep at least 2m away from the symptomatic person making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times. 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.

Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin.

A mask will be provided for the person presenting with symptoms (should already be worn).

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 who will 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.

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

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 pupil confidentiality are

essential at all times. The SCA will be notified of any confirmed cases.

### **Staff Duties**

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. 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. In this regard and 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 COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of school
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- Must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Not return to or attend school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances.
- If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with the same.

### **COVID-19 related Absence Management**

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education. See Circular 0049/2020 which was sent to teachers and SNAs.

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

If a staff/student is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school:

- staff/students who have been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- staff/students who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- staff/students who have a suspected case of COVID-19 and the outcome of the test is pending;
- staff/students who live in the same household as a person who has a suspected case of COVID-19 and the outcome of the test is pending;
- staff/student with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school;
- staff/students who have returned home after travelling abroad (to a non-Green List country) must self-isolate for a period of 14 days;
- staff/students who are generally unwell.

### **Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective selfcare. 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 staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. 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'. Employees have 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. Where required, short term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home). A bespoke wellbeing portal and app which offers access to podcasts and blogs on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition is also available. In addition online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided. As part of the services provided by Spectrum. Life a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. They will also be providing a series of webinars and presentations to promote staff wellbeing in schools as schools reopen and during the upcoming school year.



## Appendix 1

## COVID -19 Policy Statement

Mount Temple Comprehensive is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our students. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff 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
- provide up to date information to our staff and students 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
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan in relation to summer provision
- inform all staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and students engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

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

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

18/8/2020

## **Role of the Lead Worker Representative**

The role of LWR is separate to that of the Safety Representative under the health and safety legislation. However the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
  - Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
  - Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
  - Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and students being exposed to COVID-19;
  - Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
  - Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
  - 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 in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
  - Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
  - Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

## **What can a Lead Worker Representative Do?**

The LWR may consult with, and make representations to, school management on any issue of concern in relation to COVID-19. These include issues in relation to:

- Cleaning protocols and their implementation
- Physical Distancing
- Configuration/re-configuration of the school facilities, including classrooms, corridors, halls, open areas, entry and exit points, school grounds etc.
- Implementation of one-way systems in the school to ensure social distancing including when entering and exiting the school
- Hand Hygiene facilities including their location and whether they are stocked and maintained
- Hand sanitising
- Staff awareness around hand hygiene in the school
- Respiratory hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- At Risk Groups
- Visitors/Contractors

### **Does a LWR have any legal responsibilities?**

No. A Lead Worker Representative does not have any duties in relation to COVID-19 other than those that apply to employees generally. In other words, the LWR is not responsible for the control measures within an organisation, which remains the employer's responsibility

### **Supports for the Lead Worker Representative/s**

The LWR(s) shall be entitled to:

- Be provided with information and training in respect of their role
- Be consulted by school management on the control measures being put in place by the school to minimise the risk of being exposed to COVID-19;
- Regular communication with school management on issues related to COVID-19;
- Be informed of changes in practice arising from COVID-19 response measures;
- Have access to any risk assessments prepared or carried out in relation to COVID-19 and to details of incidents of suspected COVID-19 cases that have been notified to the HSE, where they occurred and any actions taken.
- Be provided with the necessary facilities to enable them to consult with employees or prepare any submissions or reports. These might include access to a meeting room, photocopier, communications and equipment.

### **Procedure for dealing with issues that arise**

Where a COVID-19 control concern is identified by the LWR (or is notified to the LWR by a staff member), the LWR should bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the Principal as a matter of urgency. Staff should be informed of the outcome. It is envisaged that issues will be resolved at school level to the maximum extent possible.

If agreement cannot be reached, the LWR should notify the Board of Management (Chairperson in the first instance) of the issue. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the BoM as a matter of urgency. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

If, having exhausted the process above, a serious issue of concern remains outstanding, the LWR may have recourse to the [Health and Safety Authority](#).

## Appendix 3 - Dealing with a suspected case of Covid 19 in school.



### Mount Temple Comprehensive School Suspected Case Protocol

To all staff - please follow the protocols below when you have a suspected case of Covid 19 in your classroom.

For all staff

1. If a child is showing signs and symptoms of Covid 19 in your classroom you should talk privately to the child ascertaining if they have the symptoms of Covid 19 - temperature, new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, shortness of breath.
2. If they have symptoms please inform management immediately by phone.
3. Get the class ready to be removed to go for a walk if fine, canteen if wet.
4. Once student has been removed from the class, take your class outside (to the canteen if wet) with bags as quickly as possible following the one way system
5. Before the room is next used it will be cleaned by a cleaner using the following PPE:
  - a. Disposable apron
  - b. Gloves
  - c. Face covering and shieldThe cleaning will consist of:
  - a. The carpet hoovered
  - b. All desks and chairs disinfected
  - c. All other surfaces disinfected
6. Do not interact with any other class, if there are two members of staff with your class and you take the students for a walk, one takes the front while the other takes the back, if there is one member of staff they are to take the back.
7. Discourage use of mobile phones and report to management any disruptive use of them.
8. Lesson finished and the students are still in base group - remain in canteen for collection by next teacher
9. Lesson finished and students are in options - dismiss students and inform them to go straight to the next lesson.

### **School Protocol and Follow Up**

If a student displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented. These procedures will be explained to the students at induction.

- The student will be accompanied to the Isolation room, supervised, supported, comforted and put at ease. 2 metres distance will be kept from the symptomatic person at all times
- The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted immediately
- The student will be encouraged to wear a face covering, if possible, in a common area with other people or while exiting the school building.
- The student will be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in a waste bag provided.
- If the student 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
- 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 student is too unwell to go home or advice is required, 999 or 112 will be contacted and informed that the sick student is a COVID-19 suspect.
- An assessment of the incident will be undertaken which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery.
- Arrangements will be put in place for appropriate cleaning of the Safe Room, classroom and other areas.
- The Parent/guardian will be asked to contact the school if the GP determines that the student should be tested for Covid-19. At this point any other household members should be removed from the school setting.
- If a symptomatic child has a Covid 19 'not detected' result, the child should remain home until he/she is clinically well enough to return to school, unless parents are specifically asked by HSE Public Health for their child to remain excluded because of other investigations e.g if the child is a known contact of a now confirmed case.
- 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 school will follow all HSE instructions.
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery [arrange for appropriate cleaning](#) of the any work areas involved and the isolation room.

### **Cleaning of a room where a pupil/staff member with a suspected case of Covid 19 was present**

The room should be cleaned as soon as practicable possible.

Once the room is vacated the room should not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.

Disinfection only works on things that are clean. When disinfection is required it is always as well as cleaning.

Person/s assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household gloves and a plastic apron.

Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine based product (household bleach).

Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.

Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.

If a pupil or staff diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a canteen or if they used the toilet or bathroom facilities, then the areas should be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant (as outlined in the [HSPC health advice for schools](#) ) as soon as is practically possible.