

**Covid-19 School Response Plan
Cloverfield National School
Dromkeen
Co. Limerick
15700M**



This document has been prepared on the basis of current public health advice and guidance from the Department of Education and Skills. It is a working document and will continue to be updated in line with public health advice.

August, 2020

Introduction

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in **Cloverfield National 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 and Skills plan for school reopening and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHE continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and re- opening of our schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of management, staff, pupils and parents.

This document aims to provide details of:

- 1. COVID-19 School Policy Statement**
- 2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School**
- 3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**
- 4. Control Measures – To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools.**
- 5. Cleaning In School**
- 6. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**
- 7. Special Educational Needs**
- 8. Staff Duties**
- 9. Covid related absence management**
- 10. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.

Note: The plan is a live working document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from www.Gov.ie, www.dbei.ie www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie; www.education.ie;

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils.

The response plan sets out what the operation of schools will look like and the range of supports which will be available in a COVID-19 context. 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.

This COVID-19 response plan is a live working document and will continue to be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from www.gov.ie etc... as appropriate for primary schools.

1. Cloverfield COVID-19 Policy Statement

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy has been signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and will be brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others on the school website www.cloverfieldns.com

COVID-19 Policy Statement

Cloverfield National School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. 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 pupils 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
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements

- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff 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 pupils 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 (Siobhan McCarthy) and the Assistant Lead Worker Representative (Louise Ryan), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed:

Anne O’Dea (Chairperson)

Noreen O’Dea (Principal)

Date: 28 / 09 / 2020

28 / 09 / 2020

2.Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school - based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government.

Details for the reopening of the school facility and the applicable controls are outlined in this document. The following will be put in place prior to the return to school:

- Induction Training:** email sent to all staff with links to various tutorials as provided by the Dept of Education and Skills.
- Procedure for Returning to work:** In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a Return to Work (School) [RTW(s)] form, which is available electronically. A RTW form should only be completed at least 3 days prior to any proposed date of return to the workplace. The purpose of the RTW form is to get confirmation from staff that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has no symptoms of Covid-19 and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.
- Lead Worker Representative Lead and Associate Lead Worker Representative:**

Siobhán McCarthy (LWR) and Louise Ryan (ALWR) have been appointed to these roles.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and the School Leadership. The Return to Work Safely protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint a Lead Worker Representative/Associate Lead Worker Representative to carry out a specific role. The role of the worker representatives is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Collaborate with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices such as regular hand washing and maintenance of good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- 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.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan and control measures or the adherence to such control measures by staff, parents/guardians, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact the lead worker(s) who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

- d) **Display Signage:** The school will display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- e) **Making changes to school layout:** Changes to the school/ classroom layout necessary to support physical distancing will be made. Unnecessary clutter and unused furniture items will be removed and stored in the “Teach” to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment.
- f) **Update Safety and Risk Assessment:** A Covid-19 Risk Assessment has been prepared and completed.

- g) **Access to the School and Contact Log**: New arrangements will be put in place to limit access to the school to essential visitors. Appointments will need to be made through the School Secretary. **ALL** staff and visitors to the school will sign in the designated sign-in/out book in the entrance hall.

3. Control Measures – To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools.

a) **Know the symptoms of COVID-19**

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptom. They are

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a school is to minimise the risk of introduction of the disease into the school setting in the first place. This can be achieved through the following measures:

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other acute infectious diseases not to attend school, to phone their GP and follow the HSE guidance on self-isolation. Advise staff and parents of pupils who have been identified by the HSE as contact of a person with COVID-19 not to attend schools and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.
- Ensure that staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
- Everyone entering the school building should be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
- Visitors to school during the day should be by prior arrangement only.

Staff, pupils and visitors should at all times adhere to the up to date advice and instructions of the public health authorities in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

Updated advice from the HSE is available on its website – <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools. Cloverfield N.S. will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

b) Respiratory and Hand Hygiene

It is crucial that all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Guidance posters and Information posters will be available at various locations within the school facility. Information posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school facility including offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilet areas. Such are intended to inform but also remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

Hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations within the school facility and available in each classroom. Paper towels are available at the handwashing basins.

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

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in Cloverfield N.S. Non-serious incidents will be dealt with by staff on duty on the yard or in the classroom.

c) Physical Distancing

It is recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from pupils and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the pupil i.e. if a child sustains an injury and requires first aid.

However, 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. A teacher's desk should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupils.

If the class is divided into Pods, there should be at least (1m distance) between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible.

Sharing educational material between pods should be avoided/minimised where possible. Staff members e.g. Special Education Teachers (SET), Special Needs Assistants (SNA) who move from class bubble to class bubble should be limited as much as possible.

Additional measures to decrease interaction include:

- Limit interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas.
- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) should be discouraged.

- Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it should be organised to the greatest degree possible to minimise congregation at the shared resource.
- Staff and pupils should avoid sharing of personal items.
- Pupils should be encouraged 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 and hand hygiene encouraged.

Staff

A distance of 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. If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much as distance as is possible and guidance on face covering should be observed.

Physical distancing should be observed between staff members within the staff room.

Staff meetings should be held in large classroom to facilitate physical distancing. Implement no hand shaking policy.

Minimise gathering of school staff at the beginning or end of the school day. Staff can rotate between areas/classes but this should be minimized where possible.

Yard/Supervision

The risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low. In order to further reduce such risk we will:

- Organise entrance/exiting from individual classrooms to minimise crowding at the main entrance and exit points of the building.
- Keep consistent groups when pupils play together outdoors, in so far as this is practical.
- Encourage children to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities.
- Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

d) Use of PPE Equipment

According to current occupational and public health guidance, children under 13 are not required to wear PPE. Staff must do so, where a distance of 2m cannot be maintained.

PPE equipment has been purchased for all staff.

For a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

Such include roles where:

- Administering first aid
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases
- intimate care needs

This will be updated in line with advice from the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre) Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

The wearing of a visor as an alternative to a facial covering may be considered by staff.

5. Cleaning in School

The Board of Management has allocated extra hours for the daily cleaning of the school.

Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces shall be conducted, in particular, toilets, lifts, door handles and kitchens.

The cleaning regime will be in accordance with the Covid-19 HPSC Interim Guidelines for reopening of schools and education facilities 01/07/20.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area.

Staff 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 office and all other areas within the school facility.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.) as brought from home each day.

6. Dealing with a Suspected Case

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

The following outlines how Cloverfield N.S. will deal with a suspected case that may arise in a pupil displaying some or all of the symptoms of COVID-19 during the course of the day

- If teacher notes child is displaying symptoms of Covid-19 teacher contacts the school LWR who will ask the secretary to contact child's parent.
- Teacher then contacts Principal/Deputy Principal who will come to the class and remove child from the class.
- The child will be given a mask to wear outside the door by the Principal/Deputy Principal and led to the Isolation Area to await the arrival of their parent/family member who will then take the child home.
- Once home, the pupil's parent/guardian should telephone their doctor and give details of the pupil's symptoms.

- The child will bring his/her schoolbag to Isolation Area.
- The teacher will sanitize the child's table area and chair
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area.

7.Special Educational Needs

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or appropriate to implement.

The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection and where symptoms are present children should not attend school.

Similarly, staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or symptoms of respiratory illness.

Hand hygiene

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.

8.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. In order 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 outlined.
- 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. 16
- 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 same.

9. Absence Management

The management of a Covid-19 related absence in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education and Skills (DES)

10. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Board of Management aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff (physical, mental, spiritual) both at work, whether in the school facility or at home and outside of work. The Board of Management is mindful that the support and promotion of staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.

The Board of Management aims to foster a culture and work environment that support staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to staff.

These are challenging times for everyone. Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the Principal.