



Procedure / protocol for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

1. Symptoms of Covid-19

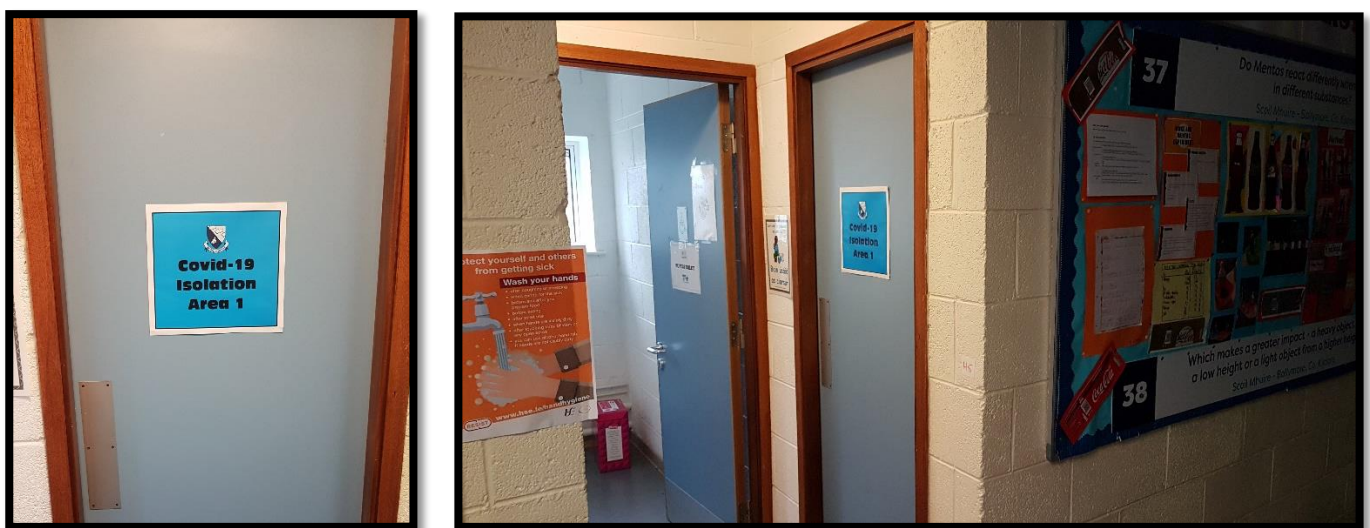
If a pupil, staff member or other visitor has symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they **should not attend school**. The most common symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Loss or change in sense of smell or taste

Please remember that many people who have COVID-19 are asymptomatic. If your child has been in close contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 please do not send your child to school, phone your GP to arrange a test or to seek clarification and continue to self-isolate until advised otherwise. Those who present as asymptomatic can also spread the virus and impact upon the health of others. Further advice is available here: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>.

2. Isolation Area

As per the guidelines contained within the Department of Education & Skill's COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of Primary and Special Schools (27 July 2020) and the HPSC's and HSE's Interim Recommendations for the reopening of schools and educational facilities (24 June 2020), the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire has designated the former gents toilet across from the office as the primary isolation area for any pupil, member of staff or sanctioned visitor who is considered to be a suspected case of COVID-19. Signs directing people to this zone are displayed within the school.



The following materials are available within the primary isolation area. Additional supplies of these items will also be available in the school office.

- Tissues
- Hand sanitiser

- Disinfectant wipes
- Gloves
- Facemasks
- Waste Bags
- Bins

In the event of an additional suspected case of COVID-19 being present in the school at the same time as the first case, a secondary isolation area has been identified. This area is located just outside the toilet area near the library. Signs directing people to this zone are displayed within the school.



The same materials listed above should also be available within the secondary isolation area.

3. Procedure in the event of a pupil displaying symptoms of Covid-19

If a child is displaying symptoms of Covid-19 such as those listed earlier or if the child has a fever or if a staff member has good reason to believe that a child may have COVID-19, the staff member currently in charge of the child should immediately ensure that the child moves 2 meters away from everyone else and is encouraged to practise good respiratory etiquette.

The staff member should then make contact with a designated member of staff (DMS) and await the DMS's arrival. If the staff member is not in charge of any other child at the time, then (s)he does not need to contact a DMS and should assume the role of DMS and continue to follow this procedure.

The following staff have been designated for contact in the event of a person on the premises suspected of having COVID-19. The **Principal** is the primary point of contact but in the event that he is unavailable the following staff should be contacted in descending order.

1. The Secretary
 2. The Lead Worker Representative
- The DMS will arrange for the parents/guardians of the pupil to be contacted immediately. The parent/guardian should be advised that their child is suspected of having symptoms related to Covid-19 and to contact their GP as soon as possible.

- The DMS will accompany the symptomatic child to the designated isolation area by the most direct route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times.
- Once the DMS and child have arrived at the isolation area, the child should wash/sanitise their hands and immediately be offered a visor or facemask to wear.
- The DMS should also wash/sanitise their hands, put on a face covering, if (s)he has not already done so. This is a precaution in the event that the child's condition deteriorates and requires close contact.
- The DMS should ensure that the window in Isolation Room 1 is open.
- The DMS and child should remain 2 meters apart but the DMS should offer comfort and reassurance.
- Gloves are available for the DMS to wear if desired but this is not a requirement.
- The child should be encouraged to avoid touching people, surfaces and objects.
- Advice should be given to the child 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 bin/bag provided.
- The child should remain in isolation until a parent / emergency contact has arrived at the school. If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick child is a Covid-19 suspect.
- When a family member arrives at the school, they should wait in the designated waiting area outside the school building (at the bench just under the window of the Principal's office).
- The DMS should accompany the child to the main school exit and explain the situation to the child's parent/guardian and advise them to contact their GP as soon as possible.

4. Procedure in the event of an adult displaying symptoms of Covid-19

Similar procedures apply in the event of either adults or children displaying symptoms of Covid-19 so it is important to read Point 3 in conjunction with Point 4.

- If an adult develop symptoms of Covid-19 while in school, they should immediately proceed, if possible, to the designated isolation area by the most direct route, keeping at least 2m away from others at all times. They should make contact with the Principal or DMS and inform him/her of the situation. They should put on a face covering.
- If the adult is in charge of a child or children at the time, they should move 2 meters away from everyone else and make contact immediately with a DMS.
- The DMS should arrange for the child(ren) to be cared for by an alternative member of staff and then accompany the adult to the designated isolation area by the most direct route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times.
- The symptomatic person should wear a face covering. The DMS should wear a face covering if remaining in the isolation area with the symptomatic person.
- 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 GP 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;

5. Follow-up

School staff **must not** inform parents that a pupil or teacher has been removed due to their symptoms as this could be considered a breach of the pupil's/staff member's right to privacy.

Other pupils or staff **do not** need to be removed from class. HSE Departments of Public Health will take action if the person has confirmed Covid-19 infection on testing, which will include HSE advice and guidance on communication to school pupils and staff where needed.

The staff member that hands over the child to a parent or legal guardian should again advise them to contact their GP as soon as possible. If it is determined by the GP that the child/pupil requires to be tested for Covid-19, any other household contacts should be removed from the school setting.

The DMS should arrange for the immediate and appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved – *(please see Procedure for Cleaning for details)*.

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 is essential at all times.

If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or unless they are subsequently advised to by public health.

6. Ratification & Review

This procedure/protocol was ratified by the Board of Management on 24th of August 2020 and has been updated subsequently. The Board have agreed the Principal, in conjunction with the Lead Worker Representative, can amend this policy on receipt of further advice from the Department of Education & Skills, Department of Health, HSE, HPSC, HSA or other relevant agency without further ratification.

The Principal will inform the rest of the Board of any changes being made in a timely manner and will provide copies to Board members of the amended policy/procedure.

Signed



John McCarville

Chairperson, Board of Management



Peter Roche

Principal