



Loreto Community School, Milford COVID-19 Response Plan

Updated Friday 2nd October 2020.

Updates in maroon coloured type

Updated Friday 13th November

Updates in purple coloured type

Updated Monday 1st March 2021

Updates in green coloured type

Updated Monday 12th April 2021

Updated in red coloured type

This plan is designed to support management, staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment of Loreto Community School.

The COVID-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for Loreto Community School to meet the government's Return to Work Safely Protocol.

The aim of this plan is to minimise the risk to students, staff and others.

This response plan also aims to support the sustainable reopening of Loreto Community School where the overriding objective is to protect the health of our students and staff while promoting the educational and development needs of students in the school.

The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice and any other relevant agreement with education partners as appropriate for post primary schools.

The key to a safe and sustainable return to work in Loreto Community School, and reopening of the school requires good communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, students and parents/guardians.

It is not possible to eliminate the risk of infection. However, with the co-operation of all members of our school community, it is possible to minimise the risk of the virus being introduced to school and the consequent risk of its spread.

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

Our response is only as strong as the will of each and every member of the school community to make individual choices that will protect themselves and each other.

The government’s Roadmap for the Full Return to School has made many changes to the normal procedures that are necessary for the safe running of Loreto Community School.

These controls and measurements are detailed below.

Dates for reopening

Dates for Reopening		
Day	Date	Year
Monday	Aug 31st	1st Only
Tuesday	Sept 1st	1st & 6th Only
Wednesday	Sept 2nd	3rd & 6th Only
Thursday	Sept 3rd	3rd, 5th & 6th Only
Friday	Sept 4th	1st, 3rd, 5th & 6th Only
Monday	Sept 7th	2nd, 3rd & 5th Only
		Full Reopening
Tuesday	Sept 8th	1st, 2nd, 3rd, TY, 5thLCA, 6th

Face Coverings

- ❖ As outlined by the Department of Education all members of the school community must wear a face covering. The following excerpt has been taken from the Government document on Reopening 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.

Health guidelines dictate that cloth masks provide the best protection and therefore it is recommended that cloth masks are worn. Visors should only be used only in the most exceptional of circumstances and as recommended and certified by a doctor.

Recent medical advice indicates that disposable medical grade masks provide the best protection and thus on their return to school all staff and students have been advised to wear disposable medical grade masks.

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.

COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of post primary schools Information should be provided on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>

All teachers and students should be aware that they should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a face covering.

Face coverings should be stored in a space designated for each student that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labelled containers or bags).

Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.

Face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe

Wearing a face covering or mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic

- ❖ If for medical reasons a student cannot wear a mask, they should submit a doctors' letter to the school outlining the reasons why they cannot wear a mask-in such cases a visor should be worn.
- ❖ Students must provide their own masks and these masks should be stored in a "zip loc" bag for hygiene reasons
- ❖ **Arrival at school**

Students arriving at school before 8.40am are permitted to stay outside if they wish provided that they go to their allocated outside zone.

- ❖ It is recommended that all students access the school through main door in a socially distance way, first thing in the morning.
- ❖ Students arriving after 8.40 am will go immediately to their base classroom.
- ❖ Parents/Guardians please drop off your child and leave immediately.
- ❖ From 12th April return ,all students have been advised to go straight to their registration classrooms on entering the school.

Visitors

- ❖ No adults, other than staff members, should be in the schoolyard or enter the building without a prior appointment.
- ❖ If you do have an appointment,please ring the main office from your car when you arrive at the school and someone will meet you at the main door,take your details for contact tracing and show you to your meeting.

End of the school day

- ❖ Students must leave the building in an orderly manner, keeping their distance from other students and staff.
- ❖ Parents/Guardians, who are collecting their children from school at the end of the day should wait if possible until approximately 4.10pm arriving by which time all buses will have gone and parking will be safer and easier before.

Classrooms

- ❖ All classrooms have been measured and desks positioned to allow for 1-metre social distancing.
- ❖ All teachers will have a seating plan for each class to ensure members of each base class group are positioned together to limit the amount of contact between each class.
- ❖ All teacher's desks will be positioned appropriately.
- ❖ Where class groupings are small and allow for 2 metre social distancing, students will not be required to wear a face mask/covering.
- ❖ Where class groupings are larger students will be required to wear a face mask/covering during class.
- ❖ Tape will be placed on the floor to mark each desk in each room.
- ❖ A protective screen will be placed at each teacher's desk.
- ❖ All staff will be wearing a face mask or face shield where a 2-meter social distancing cannot be kept.
- ❖ Sharing of pens, copies, books between students is no longer permitted; all students will need to have all equipment needed for each class.

- ❖ At the **start** of each class and as each student and teacher prepares to **enter** a classroom, they must take a sanitising wipe provided to them and sanitise their own chair and table.
- ❖ This will happen each time they prepare to **enter** a class to ensure that the furniture is **clean**
- ❖ Each practical department will set out their own list of guidelines and sanitising processes to allow for practical classes.

Corridors

- ❖ Face masks/shields will be worn on the corridor.
- ❖ All corridors are marked with arrows to allow for everyone to walk safely and quickly.
- ❖ Changes to the timetable have been made to reduce movement in the corridor e.g double and triple lessons have been introduced, as well as base classrooms for classes where possible and staggered break and lunch practises in order to comply with the guidance to increase separation and decrease interaction.

Ventilation

Ventilation has been improved by attaching extenders to windows to for a wider opening area. All external doors will remain open and the main door of each toilet leading on to the corridor will remain open at all times

Lockers

- ❖ Lockers will not be available to students at the start of the year and this will remain under review.
Lockers have been offered to 6th year students - 68 students have taken up the offer and all allocated lockers are 2m apart and located throughout the school building

Canteen

- ❖ The Canteen Company, Get Fresh are introducing a cashless system where students can will buy a card from the company that can be topped up with credit. This has the added advantage of parents being able to check what foods students have purchased and when etc.
- ❖ **Cash will still be able to be used in the canteen**
- ❖ They will be able to pre order food which may be able to be delivered to classrooms as our canteen can sit 80 people only at any given time to allow for social distancing. It is hoped that we will permit two-year groups per day to have their lunch in the canteen
- ❖ Students will wear face masks/shields when queuing for the canteen, this will be marked on the floor.
- ❖ The canteen will provide food items that require less time to serve so that students will have less time to wait in queues for food. A limited menu will be provided.
- ❖ **We have additional outdoor furniture in place throughout the three outdoor zones which will allow for some students to have their lunch outside. A permanent outdoor canopy area for outside the canteen is ordered and will be constructed in the coming weeks-this will allow for more sheltered outside space in which to eat.**

- ❖ From March 1st 6th Year students and from March 15th 5th year students have been advised to wear masks outside when it is not possible to maintain a 2m distance. All students have also been asked to complete a Google Form by their Year Head of the zone that they wish to stay in at break and lunch

Break times

- ❖ Morning breaks will be staggered Junior break 10.25am -10.40am and Senior break 11.05am -11.20am and lunch breaks will continue to be staggered as was the case last year.
- ❖ An emergency plan is in place for lunch breaks in very wet weather when it would not be possible to allow students outside.
- ❖ When students are on break or lunch, they can access the canteen only on the days they are permitted to do so. Otherwise they go to their designated zone for break or lunch this will minimise students mixing outside of their year group.
- ❖ Our water Fountains will have to be switched off and cannot be used at this time.
- ❖ Extra supervisors will be on duty in all areas at break and lunch to help with the maintenance of social distancing.
- ❖ Masks should be put back on immediately after eating and outside at all times when students are unable to maintain a 2m distance

Staffroom

- ❖ The main staffroom can accommodate 30 staff members at any one time in a socially distant arrangement. The overflow staffroom in the Fitness Suite can accommodate 30 staff members
- ❖ Social distancing must be adhered to when using the kitchen area.
- ❖ Staff must sanitise their hands on entering and exiting the staff rooms.
- ❖ All cups, plates and cutlery will be removed from the staffroom.
- ❖ Each staff member must bring their own cups and utensils each day and take them home with them.
- ❖ All staffroom surfaces will be cleaned at the end of each day so all staff must sanitise all surfaces they use as they go. A fogger machine will be used each evening in both staff rooms to ensure that the soft furnishings are sanitised and safe for use the next day.
- ❖ Screens will be placed between the computers in the staffroom.
- ❖ Seats will be spaced out to allow maximum distance.
- ❖ Photocopiers must be wiped down before and after each use but everyone should scan materials and email to all students as giving out photocopies is not recommended at this time.

Timetable

- ❖ A new timetable has been produced to include double and triple lessons.
- ❖ Classes will have base rooms where possible or areas where they are based.
- ❖ All students will move to practical classes for their practical subjects.
- ❖ Staggered break and lunch will be scheduled.
- ❖ Where students have PE, they will wear their PE gear to and from school that day as changing rooms will be closed; this is to allow the uniform to be washed if necessary. It is not envisaged that the wearing of PE gear on the specific day should be a fashion show!

Staggered Return

- ❖ Students will return to school gradually with priority being given to 6th and 1st years initially.
- ❖ Staff will return on Wednesday Aug 26th and as each year group returns they will meet with the Principal, Deputy Principals and Year Head . They should go straight to the **Base Classrooms** on their arrival at school on their first day back. Class tutors will go through a full outline of all new procedures with students and an outline of expectations will also be given.
- ❖ **Assemblies for half year groups (3 classes at a time)will be held in the Canteen area as it is safely set up to hold 80 students comfortably.**
- ❖ **During the phased return (9 March 2021) all students will go straight to their first class in the morning and a roll will be taken in that class- there will be no morning registration .**

Code of Behaviour

- ❖ All students, staff and parents will be encouraged to appreciate that everyone's safety is a shared responsibility among everyone in the school and that they have an important role to play.
- ❖ A new section will be included in the Code of Behaviour (COB) which will aim to discourage students from deliberately putting themselves or others in the school at risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus.
- ❖ Sanctions will be included in the COB that may include a student being sent home or refused permission to attend school.

Access to the Building

- ❖ Prior appointment is essential for all visitors to the building.
- ❖ Any Parent/ Guardian who needs to collect a child must telephone in advance and wait outside for the child to exit.

Cleaning and Sanitising

- ❖ Additional cleaning hours have been granted to the school.
- ❖ Each day the school will be cleaned, and all surfaces sanitised.
- ❖ Touch surfaces, toilets, door handles, benches, floors and surfaces will be prioritised for extra cleaning.
- ❖ Sanitiser dispensers are located at the main doors of the school.
- ❖ Sanitiser dispensers are in all classrooms for everyone's use.
- ❖ Free standing sanitiser units are positioned in frequently used areas.
- ❖ Soap dispensers are provided in all toilets.

Signage

- ❖ Signage is positioned around the school to maintain a constant awareness of the Covid-19 virus and how everyone can work to prevent it being brought into the school environment.

Suspected Symptom of Covid-19

- ❖ It is recommended that Parents/Guardians check students each morning before leaving home for symptoms of Covid-19.
- ❖ Symptoms of Covid-19, cough, fever, loss or distortion of taste or smell.
- ❖ Anyone with symptoms of Covid-19 should not attend school, this applies to students and staff.
- ❖ We have invested in a thermal camera located in the main reception area as an added safety measure.
- ❖ It is recommended that all students access the school through this door first thing in the morning. The camera can take up to 30 temperatures at a time as students move through the area.

Students who should not attend school,

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school

- ❖ Student who has been diagnosed with Covid-19.
- ❖ Student who has been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19.
- ❖ Student who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending.
- ❖ Student who has been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending.
- ❖ Student with underlying health conditions who has been directed by a medical professional not to attend school.
- ❖ Student who has returned home after travelling abroad and if the government require them to self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
- ❖ Student who is generally unwell.

If a student displays symptom of Covid-19 while in the building, the following procedures will be implemented:

- ❖ Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
- ❖ The student will go to reception and will be sent to the designated isolation area . The child will be accompanied to the main office by a classmate who will remain 2metres from the student at all times.If there are any concerns and the Principal or Deputy Principal will be called upon if there are serious concerns about a student.
- ❖ The staff member (using PPE gloves and an apron) will remain at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic student and will also make sure that others always maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic student.
- ❖ If the student is very unwell or advice is required, following a discussion with the parent, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick student is a Covid-19 suspect.
- ❖ Arrangements will be made 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.

If a staff member displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in the building, the following procedures will be implemented:

- ❖ Contact senior management.
- ❖ They will be asked to go home immediately.
- ❖ If they are unable to drive the staff member will be accompanied to the designated isolation area.
- ❖ Another adult will remain at least 2 meters away from the symptomatic staff member and will also make sure that others always maintain a distance of at least 2 meters from the symptomatic staff member.
- ❖ If the staff member is very unwell or advice is required, following a discussion with their GP, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick adult is a Covid-19 suspect.
- ❖ Arrangements will be made 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.

Impact of a Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19

- ❖ If the school is notified that a person in the school has a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19, public health advice will be sought and followed,
- ❖ Parents/guardians and all staff will be informed **as a policy of honesty and transparency whether the HSE contacts the school or not.**
- ❖ Our students will be reminded of the dangers of speculation and the right to privacy.
- ❖ We may have to give information to the HSE in order to facilitate contact tracing.
- ❖ We will maintain confidentiality in relation to any case or suspected case as it is the responsibility of public health authorities to disclose such information to relevant persons.
- ❖ In the event of a case or suspected case of Covid-19 we may have to close a class, a year group or indeed the whole school.
- ❖ We will act on the instructions given by the HSE and health authorities and will give parents as much notice as possible of any such closure.

Communication

- ❖ Returning to school will be an anxious time for Staff, Students and Parents/Guardians.
- ❖ Communicating to all within the school community, the controls and measures that will be in place to ensure everyone's health & safety is key to ensuring the safest return to school as possible.

Risk Assessment

- ❖ An assessment of potential Covid-19 risks has been completed.
- ❖ The report to follow will be attached to the Loreto Community School Covid-19 policy statement, this will be circulated to all stakeholders in due course.

Return to Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- ❖ All staff and students are required to prepare for a situation of remote teaching and learning in the event of another school closure.
- ❖ Any student who for medical reasons has decided not to return to school should be given every opportunity to access daily school work.

Online Diary

- ❖ We are planning to run a pilot programme with a group of students with view to testing out an online diary. This could assist us with remote learning, if we were required to return to it in the future.

eBooks

- ❖ The book companies have very kindly extended the free access to their range of eBooks for the duration of the pandemic.
- ❖ Teachers will facilitate access to these eBooks were necessary.

Compass

Increased use of Compass means that parents/guardians will be able to use it to
-Account for their child's absence (to replace a written note in the school diary)
-Check for any positive/negative notes (replacing written notes in the school diary)

Signing in Late/Leaving School Early

If a student is coming in to school late, they should use the Card Reader to record the time they have come in to school and the reason for this. This information will be recorded instantly onto their Compass record

It will still be necessary to have a written note from parents/guardians in the Student Diary for leaving school early. This note must be signed by the Year Head and shown to the Office Staff before using the Card Reader to sign out.

An Outdoor eating space has now being provided which alleviates some of the dangers of proximity and overcrowding associated with poor weather conditions at lunchtime when students cannot get outside, however we still continue to be concerned. Therefore, should we have a sustained period of very bad weather, one year group per day could be asked to learn remotely at home following that days timetable with teachers interacting with them at the designated time. This will only be used if really necessary and 6th year students will not be asked to stay at home.

Students may wear a plain navy jacket, fleece or hoodie on top of the school uniform for the moment as the supplier has run out of school jackets.

All students and staff have been provided with a return to school form for completion before they return to school - a dedicated email address returntoschool@loretomilford.net has been established for convenience.

Extra supervisors are at the main school door each morning to ensure that students sanitise their hands on entering the building and pass the thermal camera.

An additional outdoor canopy has been provided as an additional eating space for students which will be used on a rota basis when the full return to school happens.

As part of the Wellbeing programme when students are out walking , they must be accompanied by a teacher at all times and should be encouraged to wear masks.

The canteen area has been rearranged and students should only sit where there are “Sit Here” stickers. additional outdoor seating has also been provided

We are looking forward to welcoming all our staff and students back to Loreto Community School - we have missed you and we are putting everything we can in place to ensure your health and safety on your return.