**Tralee Educate Together NS**

**COVID -19 RESPONSE PLAN**

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of

Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of

Covid-19 at Tralee Educate Together National School.

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for the 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 (NPHET).

It is important that the resumption of school-based teaching and learning and the

reopening of school facilities complies with the protocol to minimise the risk to

students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHET continues to evolve, this

protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The Response Plan will support the reopening of our school. The objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while meeting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the re-opening of our schools requires communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of Management, staff, pupils and

parents.

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching

and learning and a return to the workplace for staff. The return to work must

be done safely with strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health

authorities and the Government.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors are aware of and adhere

to all control measures implemented in the school and cooperate with all health and

safety requirements.

**COVID-19 POLICY STATEMENT**

Tralee Educate Together NS 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(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: Sinead Kelleher (Chairperson) Date: 17th August, 2020

**Know the Symptoms of Covid 19**
In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. They are:

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



**Promoting Awareness**

* All members of our school community will actively promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms.
* Signage informing members of the school community of the symptoms of Covid-19 and the need for social distancing are displayed at access points to school grounds.
* All members of the school community will model and teach appropriate respiratory hygiene and hand hygiene.
* Parents, pupils and staff will adhere to all practices and procedures.
* Please refer to <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/> for up to date information, advice and instructions on Covid-19.
* If your child has symptoms of coronavirus please see the following advice <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>
* For information and advice in a number of home languages please see <https://nascireland.org/covid-19-world-service> and <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/intercultural-health/translations-and-easy-read-documents.html>

**Practices and Procedures**

**Drop Off**

At 8.30am the main gates will be opened for the children to

enter the school.

Drop off time is from 8.30-8.45. Please make every effort to have your children at school on time as the school gate will be closed from 8 45.

The main car park is the designated drop off point for bus goers and pupils from 3rd – 6th class.

The barrier to the staff car park is the designated drop off point for pupils from Infants - 2nd class

Children from 3rd-6th class will walk independently from the car park to their classrooms.

Children from Infants-2nd class will stay with their parents at barrier until they are greeted by the principal/teacher.

It will not be possible for parents to enter the school area and we ask that parents leave immediately their child has been greeted at the barrier.

Physical distancing will be maintained at all times.

Pupils will be supervised by their class teachers in their rooms from 8 30 until school starts at 8.45. On entering a classroom, the children will sanitise their hands before taking their assigned seats and engaging in table top activities/reading/writing.

The main gate will be closed from 9 o’clock onwards.

**New Infants First Day**
A timetable has been drawn up allocating 5 minute slots for parents to accompany children, from the same pod, into the classroom and stay with them for 5 minutes. 3 children at a time with their families so social distancing can be maintained. Adults will be required to wear face masks.

 **Pick up**

The collection areas for home time are the main car park and the barrier to the staff car park.

Please make every effort to be on time.

Parents will wait at car park or outside the barrier. It will not be possible for parents to enter the school area. Physical distancing will be maintained at all times.

Children will be directed to their parents one at a time. Families must leave the collection area immediately.

Any child whose parent is late for collection will wait with their teacher at the collection area.

**1.25:** **Junior/Senior Infants** will line up with their teacher at the barrier to staff car park.

**2.25: 1st/2nd class and children who travel on the school bus** will line up with a teacher at the barrier to staff car park.

**2.30: 3rd/ 4th class** will line up in their pods at the barrier and will walk independently to

 main car park.

**2.35: 5th/6th class:** will line up at the barrier and walk independently to the main car park.

1 metre physical distancing between each child.

**Break times**

We have timetabled 4 staggered breaktimes, so pupils will remain within their bubble and not mix with pupils from other rooms.

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| **Time** | **Class**  |  | **Mon** | **Tues** | **Wed** | **Thurs** | **Fri** |
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| 8.30-8.45 | Pupils go straight to class | Mary  | Deirdre  | Mary  | Deirdre | Jean/Amy |
| 10.10-10.20 | Infants |  | Deirdre | Mary  | Deirdre | Mary  | Mary |
| 10.20-10.30 | 1st/2nd |  | Deirdre | Mary  | Deirdre | Mary  | Mary |
| 10.30-10.40 | 3rd/4th |  | Jean | Jean | Amy  | Amy | Deirdre |
| 10.40-10.50 | 5th/6th |  | Jean | Jean | Amy  | Amy | Deirdre |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
| **Lunch** |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
| 12.00-12.20 | Infants  |  | Mary | Deirdre | Mary | Deirdre | Mary |
| 12.20-12.40 | 1st/2nd |  | Mary | Deirdre | Mary | Deirdre | Mary |
| 12.40-1.00 | 3rd/4th |  | Jean  | Jean  | Amy | Amy | Deirdre |
| 1.00-1.20 | 5th/6th |  | Jean  | Jean  | Amy | Amy | Deirdre |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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Staff will take their breaks in their own spaces/classrooms/offices at this time. All staff will have their own appliances and utensils.

**Teaching and Learning**

* We are committed to providing a supportive environment for teaching and learning.
* We will consider the needs and skill level of each child in relation to where they are at with Literacy and Numeracy. We understand that the children have had different learning experiences during the school closure and we will assess this as we plan for review and new learning.
* For the first few weeks we will be focussing on review and catching up with what has been missed during the school closure.
* SPHE will be given greater attention in the first few weeks. Wellbeing will be promoted through this subject. Social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene will be integrated and form part of the class timetable as part of the SPHE curriculum.
* Time will be given to class discussions in order to promote wellbeing.
* Homework will not be assigned for the first 2 weeks.
* Homework will be introduced gradually after that.

**Teachers/SET/SNAs**

* Support Teachers and SNAs will move between classes but this will be limited to as few bubbles (classrooms) as possible. When rotation occurs, sanitising routines will be observed.
* Team Teaching/Support will be provided through in-class support and withdrawal.
* The provision of support will be organised to ensure our SET teachers work with as few bubbles (classes) as possible.
* Where a support teacher/SNA is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both must be mindful of maintaining social distance.
* The desks, chairs and touch points in SET rooms will be wiped clean by the SET in between different pupils or pods attending.
* Pods of pupils going to SET rooms will be limited to allow for social distancing.
* Teachers/SETs/SNAs will maintain social distance as much as is possible when working with children.
* Teachers/SETs/SNAs are required to wear face coverings when a 2 metre social distance cannot be maintained.
* Face coverings will be worn by all staff whenever a 2 metre social distance cannot be maintained.

**PE**
Physical Education will take place outside weather permitting. PE equipment is organised and stored by class bubble.

**ICT**Devices must be cleaned after use before they are returned to the charging area.

**After Schools for Infants**We are looking at the possibility of the running the After Schools for Jun and Sen Infants. We are currently looking at how it could be managed. We will keep you updated on developments.

**Physical Distancing**
All members of our school community must practise and actively promote physical distancing at school and outside of school.

All rooms have been laid out in line with Dept recommendations and all unnecessary furniture has been removed to make extra space.

Physical distancing is not required from Infants to 2nd class.

3rd/4th class is seated in pods with one metre between each pod.

5/6th class pupils have single desks with and are seated 1 metre apart.

Each bubble will have a designated yard time so pupils from different classrooms will not meet.

All adult visitors will need to make an appointment and must maintain a 2 metre distance from others and wear suitable face coverings.

**Respiratory Hygiene**

All members of our school community must practise and actively promote good respiratory hygiene at school and outside of school by:

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

**Hand Hygiene**

All members of our school community must practise and actively promote hand hygiene at school and outside of school by:

* washing their hands thoroughly with soap and water and drying them fully using paper towels.
* sanitising their hands - sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school.

Anyone entering the school building must perform hand hygiene by hand washing or using hand sanitiser provided.

Parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing good hand hygiene.

HSE guidelines on handwashing are available at: <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

**Frequency of Hand Hygiene**

Pupils and staff must perform good hand hygiene:

* on arrival at school/when entering and leaving a classroom
* when going from classroom to SET room and vice versa
* before eating or drinking
* after using the toilet
* after playing outdoors
* when their hands are physically dirty
* when they cough or sneeze
* when they arrive at home

**Parental Responsibilities**

**Drop off/pick up**

* Parents/guardians must arrive on time to drop off and collect children – please be punctual as the main gate will close at 8 45 and you will need to contact the school by phone to get entry to the school. Pupils remain the responsibility of the parents/guardians until they have arranged access to the school.
* Only parents/guardians who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 to drop off and pick up children.
* In order to protect themselves, any parent who is in a high risk category should not drop off or pick up children.
* Parents must socially distance and not congregate on or outside school grounds.
* When parents are on school grounds (by appointment) they must wear face coverings.

**Lunchboxes, Water Bottles, Books, Pens/Pencils, etc**

* Children should use their own books, pens, pencils, etc and should not share with other pupils.
* Parents must ensure that lunchboxes, water bottles, pencils/pens, etc are sanitised.
* Parents must ensure that all belongings (lunchboxes/books/copies are labelled with the child’s name as things cannot be shared.
* Please make sure your child brings enough water for the day as we will not be in a position to refill water bottles.
* Please remind your children not to share food or drinks with other children.
* School lunch will be available as usual. School lunch provider (Husseys) is following food preparation and delivery guidelines. Please call Husseys at 087 760 7379 to order/change lunches.

**Coats/Shoes**

* Ensure your child can open/close their own coat and tie their own shoes. Shoes with Velcro should be used where pupils are unable to tie their shoes.
* All pupils will hang their coats on the back of their seats.

**Returning from Abroad**

* Pupils and staff who have travelled or whose household members have travelled must not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period which commences on the date of return to Ireland.

**Pupil Unable to Attend School due to Covid-19**

* The school will provide necessary supplies and support systems to continue remote education forpupils who cannot come to school.
* In the event of another period of school closure, provision will be made for remote learning through Zoom for Education, ClassDojo and Seesaw.

**Communication**

* Communication between home and school will be through school email info@tralee-educate-together.com, individual staff emails and/or phone calls. For urgent queries please phone the school.
* Parents must make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian it will be considered a serious breach of Health and Safety.

**Parent Teacher Meetings**

* If a parent needs to meet a teacher please email the teacher or call the office to make an arrangement.
* Parents visiting for meeting with teachers should be by appointment only and should be

 facilitated in a way that observes social distancing requirements.

* Annual Parent/Teacher Meetings held in November should be arranged to ensure that congregation of parents is minimised.

**Office**

* We are in the process of setting up a contactless payment system for school payments. We ask you to hold off on making any payments to the school until we send you details and directions regarding contactless payment. We expect this system to be in place by the end of September.
* Pupils will not have access to the office, the storage areas or the photocopier.
* As far as possible, staff members should minimise their entry to the office area.
* Any staff member who uses the photocopier must clean it down after use.

**Access to the School**Parents and other visitors to the school will need to make an appointment. Anyone entering the school will be required to wear a face covering and perform hand hygiene. A distance of 2 metres must be maintained between people.

**Contact Log**A log of those entering the building will be maintained. The contact log will be kept in the secretary’s office.

**The Building
Staff Room**The staff room is now being used for storage of class materials and resources. At this time, it will not be used by staff for breaks or meetings. The photocopying machine is now located in the staffroom. Staff members will wipe it down after use.

**Corridor/Stairs**Briefly passing someone in the corridor or on the stairs is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.

**Toilets**Each bubble (class) has their own designated toilet. Only pupil at a time.

The toilets in the Stable Block (Infants/5th and 6th class) will be gender neutral. The designated toilet for these classrooms is the one nearest each room.

**Ventilation**To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as much as possible. Windows will be open while children are taking breaks in the playground.

**Cleaning**

* The school will be thoroughly cleaned by our school cleaner once a day.
* Frequently touched surfaces, for example, door handles, handrails, taps/sinks and toilets will be cleaned on a rotational basis during the school day by our school cleaner.
* All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain their own work areas.
* SET teachers will clean their own rooms after each pod of pupils leave the room.
* Waste will be collected regularly from classrooms and other areas within the school.
* Staff will clean their own lunch utensils.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Face Coverings**

* All staff members will wear face coverings, when a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.
* All staff has been provided with masks and a visor. Everyone is responsible for cleaning their own visor. Some staff may prefer to wear a mask or both a visor and mask.
* There is no requirement for pupils to wear face coverings.
* All adult visitors to school grounds must wear suitable face coverings.

**Gloves/Aprons**

* Staff members will wear gloves and aprons when administered First Aid or when taking care of pupil intimate care needs.
* Gloves and aprons will be worn if dealing with a suspected Covid-19 case.
* Pupils are not required to wear disposable gloves.

**Dealing with a Suspected Case of Covid 19**

Staff or pupils must not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. Please refer to<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>

The following outlines how Tralee Educate Together NS will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of work.

Our designated isolation room is the room beside the storage area (staff room). If there is more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 the HSCL office will be used.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in Tralee Educate Together N.S. the following are the procedures to be implemented:

* If the suspected case is a pupil, the teacher should phone the secretary to notify the LWR/Deputy LWR. If the secretary is unavailable the teacher will contact Deirdre directly. The secretary will then notify the parents to collect the pupil immediately. Parents must make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian it will be considered a serious breach of Health and Safety.
* If the suspected case is a staff member, they should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal. If well enough they should go home immediately and call their GP
* The LWR/DLWR will don the appropriate PPE.
* The LWR/DLWR will hand the symptomatic person a mask and accompany him/her to the isolation room along the designated isolation route\* keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times.
* The doors of the isolation room should be closed when in use.
* The suspected case should wear the mask until he/she exits the school grounds. 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.
* 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.
* Public transport should not be used to transport the person home.
* If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
* Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
* Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff confidentiality is essential at all times.

\*The isolation route for infants, 3rd and 4th and 5th and 6th class is directly from the classroom across the playground and into the isolation room.

1st/2nd class will enter the isolation room via the storage room/staff room. This route should be cleared in advance.

If the child is in Mary/Deirdre’s room they should enter the isolation room via the school yard.

If the child is in Jean’s room, they should enter the isolation room via the yard.

**Staff Duties**

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 of the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

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 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 TRW form before they return to work.
* Must inform the principal if there are any other circumstances relating to Covid-19, 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 hand 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 under any circumstances if they have symptoms of Covid-19.
* 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.

**Covid-19 Related Staff Absence**

Covid-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Dept of Education. Please refer to the following:<https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0049_2020.pdf>

**Teacher/SNA Absence and Substitution**In the event of a teacher or SNA absence when a substitute is unavailable (from within the school cohort or outside) parents are free to send their child to school. However, parents may wish to keep their child at home rather than have them go to another classroom. Parents will be informed if this situation ever arises.

**Lead Worker Representative (LWR) and Deputy Lead Worker Representative (DLWR)**

Deidre Clifford is the LWR and Anne Condon is the DLWR. 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 worker representative and if that person is absent contact the deputy lead worker representative who will engage with the principal/BOM.

**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: ‘Follaine Le Cheile’.

The Employee Assistance Services is available as a supportive resource for employers. The free phone confidential helpline is 1899 411 057 and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Wellbeing of the School Community**We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of the school community:

* A sense of safety
* A sense of calm
* A sense of belonging and connectedness to school
* A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy
* A sense of hope

Signed: Sinead Kelleher Date:

 (Chairperson)