**St. Peter Apostle Junior National School**



**Return to work – Covid-19 Response Plan**

**Policy Summary Details**

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| **Policy Title:** | Return to work – Covid-19 Response Plan |
| **Written/Reviewed:** | August 2021 |

# Return to work – Covid-19 Response Plan

# 1.Rationale for the Covid-19 Response plan

Guided by the Department of Education’s Covid-19 Response plan, in this document we outline the specific measures that are being taken to reopen St. Peter Apostle Junior National School during the Covid-19 Global Pandemic.

## 1.1 Underlying Principles of this Plan

* The school has a responsibility to make effort to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of all members of our school community – children, parents and staff. This plan has been formulated to better ensure that the school can exercise that duty of care.
* Assuming it is in keeping with public health advice and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills, it is preferable for all children to return to school for all five days of the school week and for a full school day. This plan has been formulated to achieve that aim.
* 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.
* As well as co-operation, the flexibility and goodwill of all will be required to ensure the plan can be implemented.

## 1.2 Assumptions

* All children return to school and classes operate within a bubble system
* The school will have staggered drop off and pick up times
* The school has staggered and segregated yard times.
* Hand sanitiser will be available at all entry points and in all class and special education rooms

## 1.3 Staff Returning to Work -RTW form

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work (*vide* Appendix 1). Following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays the school will request staff (in writing) to confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged

# 2. Preparation for return to school

## 2.1 Additional Human Resources

* Lead Worker Representative – Martha Young
* Assistant Lead Worker Representative- Lorraine Doyle

## 2.2 Signage

Signage outlining the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 (including the Delta Variant) as well as signage to support good hand and respiratory hygiene will be displayed across the school.

## 2.3 Health and safety risk assessment

A health and safety risk assessment will be conducted to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. Emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences will be reviewed considering any new risks that arise due to the school’s COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school's existing emergency procedures will be documented as addendums and into the school’s safety statement.

## 2.4 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. All visitors are required to complete a contact tracing log.

# 3. Induction training (to be completed by new staff)

All new 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 as required.

# 4. Staggered drop off and collection times

To reduce the human traffic flow we are staggering drop off and pick up times as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Junior Infants**  **Please go to your allocated lines at your allocated times** | | | | | | |
| **Class** | **Start** | **Finish** | **Line number** | | | |
| Ms. Barry | 8:50 am | 13:30 pm | 5 | | | |
| Ms. McNulty (Ms. Boland) | 8:50 am | 13:30 pm | 1 | | | |
| Ms. Anderson | 8:50 am | 13:30 pm | 6 | | | |
| Ms. Rushe and Ms. McMenamin | 8:50 am | 13:30 pm | 7 | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Senior Infants**  **Please go to your allocated lines at your allocated times** | | | | | | |
| **Class** | **Start** | **Finish** | | **Line number** | | |
| Ms. Dunne | 8:50 am | 13:30 pm | | 20 | | |
| Ms. Hughes | 8:50 am | 13:30 pm | | 15 | | |
| Ms. Young | 8:50 am | 13.30 pm | | 21 | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **First Class**  **Please go to your allocated lines at your allocated times** | | | | | | |
| **Class** | **Start** | **Finish** | | | **Line number** | |
| Ms. Waters | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | 16 | |
| Ms. Goodwin | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | 14 | |
| Ms. O’Leary (Ms. McCormack) | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | 10 | |
| Ms. Naylor | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | 19 | |
|  | | | | | | |
| **Second Class**  **Please go to your allocated lines at your allocated times** | | | | | | |
| **Class** | **Start** | **Finish** | | | | **Line number** |
| Ms. McIntyre | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | | 11 |
| Ms. Whiriskey | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | | 12 |
| Mr. O’Sullivan | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | | 9 |
| Mr. Kiernan | 9:00 am | 14:40 pm | | | | 13 |

## Morning drop off

* When dropping or collecting children from school, parents are asked go to their children’ allocated line at their allocated time.
* Parents are asked to not arrive early.
* **When waiting for their child’s class teacher, parents are asked to please maintain a 2-metre distance from others**
* If parents have children on different start times, they may arrive at the latest allocated time and both/all children can access their class at this later time

## 4.2 Collection of children during the school day

If an adult must collect a child during the school day, the following arrangements will apply:

* When the adult arrives at the school, they should check in with Lorraine at the main door. If the parent remains outside the building waiting, they will not have to fill in the very detailed Contact Log.
* If the adult enters the building and meet/interact/chat to any staff member, they will have to fill in the detailed CONTACT LOG at reception.
* Lorraine will ring the class teacher and ask for the child to be brought up to the office where he/she can then be collected by his/her parent.
* The office staff will sign the child out.
* No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.
* All adults are expected to adhere to the 2-metre social distance rule in the school.
* Staff will not be able to engage in conversation with the adult when collecting the pupil. If the adult wishes to discuss the matter, an appointment can be arranged to facilitate a phone conversation - time can be agreed upon or a message can be e-mailed to the school office at [info@stpeterapostlejns.ie](mailto:info@stpeterapostlejns.ie)

# 5. Yard breaks

## 5.1 Staggered and segregated yard times

* The main yard at the front of the school will be divided into four yards using cones. These yards will be called yard 1, yard 2, yard 3 and yard 4. The infant yard will serve as our fifth yard (Yard 5). Each class has been allocated a time and route that should be taken when it is time for their yard.
* If your yard happens to have equipment in it, the equipment will be out of bounds, as it is unfair to the classes who do not happen to have equipment on their yard.
* Each class group will remain in their own mini yard for the duration of the breaks. Please check the corridor is free before bringing your class to yard. At the end of each yard, each class will line up in their own mini yard and will return to the class tracing (in reverse) the route taken on the way out.
* Unfortunately, owing to time and space constraints, each class will be guaranteed only one 25-minute outdoor break each day.
* Encourage children to use the toilet in their own room before going to yard. If a child needs to use the toilet he/she will have to use the toilet in his/her own classroom.
* A smaller break can be taken based on each class teachers’ judgement as to when the children may need it. This break will most likely be an indoor break, but may be an outdoor break if the teacher books a free slot outdoors (see final point)
* Supervision is currently being worked out. It is likely that you will be out with your class more than once a week. As PE is one of the subjects that is being championed for our return (and the hall will be out of bounds)- we would ask you to consider your time slot on the yard as a PE slot. That way children will not lose out on teaching time when you go for your break after the outdoor session. This way, your break and the children’s break will align.
* It will be possible to book additional slots outside once Junior Infants settle into their full day.

## 5.2 Yard Supervision

* A class teacher will always be on yard supervision duty.
* Depending on yard – SNA(s) may also be on the yard assisting with supervision.
* The principal will also supervise yards, when available.

# 6. Classrooms and Bubbles

It is stated in The Response Plan that younger children (JI to 2nd) are unlikely to maintain physical distancing. Therefore, physical distancing of 1 metre is **not** a prerequisite for opening St. Peter Apostle Junior National School.

Reference is made in the Response Plan to Class Bubbles and Pods. Class Bubbles refer to class groups. Pods refer to smaller groupings within class groups. If it is recognised that physical distancing is unlikely to be maintained in a Junior School, it is probably not feasible/practical to try and implement Pods.

The following measures will be implemented and adhered to:

* 1. **Class Bubbles**
* Each class will operate as a class bubble. This means that each class mixes only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning to departure at the end of the day.
* The three classes in the Butterfly suite shall be an exception to this rule. This is because the children in the suite share important resources such as the sensory room and OT equipment which cannot be cleaned after every single use. Additionally, it cannot be predicted when the children may need to avail of these resources. The three classes in the suite will however operate as one bubble.
* The Early Start morning and evening group who share the same room will also operate as one bubble. Again, there is not enough time to clean all the equipment between classes and the turnaround time is technically the lunch break for the teachers and childcare workers.

# 7. Special Education, SETs and SNAs

Staff members (particularly Special Education Teachers and SNAs) can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to ensure our support teachers will work as far as possible, within the confines of a bubble.

* Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
* The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending.

# 8. Absence

## 8.1 Teacher Absence and Substitution

* If a teacher is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher for the class by applying to the panel that serves our school and/or outside that panel.
* If a substitute teacher is not available, it is not appropriate for the class to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes. In such circumstances, the special education teacher who has been assigned to that class may take the class for the day.
* If it is not possible to find a teacher to cover for the absent teacher (e.g. all the SETs are either covering or absent themselves) it will not be possible for the class to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

## 8.2 Children who should not attend school

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

* Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
* Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
* Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
* Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
* Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
* Children who have returned home after travel, in such instances please consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
* Children who are generally unwelland who are displaying these common symptoms of Covid-19:
* High temperature 38°C +
* A new cough
* Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
* Loss/change to sense of smell or taste
* Fatigue
* Aches and pains
* Children who are feeling unwell and displaying these less common symptoms of Covid-19:
* Sore throat
* Headaches
* Runny or stuffy noses
* Feeling sick or vomiting
* Diarrhea

## 8.4 The criteria listed above also apply to staff.

All staff should abide by the criteria and guidance listed in section 8.3 Staff are made aware of an encouraged to download the Covid-19 tracker App

## 8.5 Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school

Where there is a case of extended absenteeism due to Covid-19 parents must furnish the school with a letter from medical practitioner to this effect. The school will endeavour to support the child’s learning at home through work packs and by sharing activities with

# 9. Impact of COVID 19 on certain school activities

**9.1 School Choir**

* Paused for the moment

**9.2 Violin**

* Paused for the moment

**9.3 Integration/Reverse Integration**

* Departmental advice is that integration can resume

**9.4 Assembly**

* Delivered through Zoom

**9.5 Swimming**

* Paused for the moment

**9.6 Shared Equipment**

* It will be the teachers’ responsibility to select the toys that he/she would like cleaned. These toys will need to be either plastic or wooden.
* Children will be provided with their own labelled tub of modelling material (e.g. playdough).
* Each child will have a tray containing their own personal equipment e.g. pencil, scissors, glue stick etc.
* Electronic Devices if shared must be cleaned between uses (using an antibacterial wipe)
* Sports Equipment should not be shared unless it is cleaned between uses.

## 9.7 Hall and PE Lessons

* The Hall may not be used for Assemblies or PE as the hall will be a thoroughfare for classes to access the yard every 25 minutes, additionally a section of the hall will be used to house a temporary staffroom.
* Physical Education lessons will take place outside when the weather allows.
* Staff members and pupils may take additional breaks outside by booking any free yards.
* The use of go noodle and exercise tutorials to facilitate indoor movement breaks is encouraged

## 9.8 Extra-curricular Activities

The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities will be explored. However, it would not be recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time. Once public health advice changes on this issue, our practice will adapt.

## 9.9 Corridors

Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions. However, to assist the flow of traffic and to avoid the need to touch surfaces the following measures shall be implemented:

* Centre doors to be kept open on hook at all times
* Children will go straight to their classrooms from the yard and will not congregate in the corridors or hallways.
* While we will all be delighted to see each other again, hand shaking and hugging will not be allowed

# 10. Additional Measures aimed at safeguarding our school community

## 10.1 Ventilation -Doors and Windows

* Where practical, all internal doors will be left open to minimise hand contact with common surfaces.
* To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible, and will be opened while children are taking breaks in the playground.
* Windows should be opened when children are engaging in choral activities such as singing/chanting etc.
* As per DES guidance windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use. This guidance should be followed once it does not cause discomfort e.g. during cold weather.

## 10.2 CO2 monitors

* The Department of Education has arranged for the provision of a number of portable CO2 monitors for schools to use if they wish. The use of CO2 monitors can provide a useful general indication that areas/rooms within a building may not be adequately ventilated and can enable occupants to become familiar with the impact that activities, outdoor weather and window openings have on levels of good ventilation within a room. This information can be used to inform strategies for improving ventilation.
* Once received the CO2 monitors will be placed in classrooms with that house the largest classes in the school.

## 10.3 Toilets

* There is a boys’ toilet and a girls’ toilet in every mainstream class and in most SET classes. Additional soap dispensers, sanitizer gel and hand paper towels have been installed in these settings.

## 10.4 Lunches

* Lunches are provided to all children in Junior Infants to Second class.
* Parents and guardians of children in the Butterfly Suite and Early Start must make sure that children bring their lunches to school to avoid adults having to come to the school during the day. Please remind your children not to share their food or drinks with other children.
* Children will eat their lunches at their desks, as per our usual practice.

## 10.5. Personal Equipment

* To avoid cross contamination, we ask that children do not bring a school bag to school with them to school
* Each child will be given their own personal box where they can store their own pencils, colours etc. All of these items (pencils, colours, boxes) will be provided by the school.

## 10.6 Shared Equipment

* By necessity, some classroom equipment needs to be shared including tablets, laptops and the equipment used for structured activities. Cleaning of such shared equipment with wipes or other cleaning products will take place before and after their use to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

## 10.7 Homework

* To avoid cross contamination teachers will not give homework that involves bringing copies and books home and bringing them back into school the next day. Each stream will make individual arrangements with parents for how homework shall be facilitated.

## 10.8 Uniforms/Tracksuits

* There is no guidance or advice to say that school uniforms or tracksuits should be washed every day, and this is probably not practical for most families.
* We ask however, that where possible, children wear their tracksuits to school. This is because children find rolling up tracksuits sleeves to be easier than opening buttons on cuffs etc. Additionally, where possible we ask that children wear Velcro shoes.
* As a school we strongly advise that children should wear their school uniforms or tracksuits **only for school related activities.**  Uniforms or tracksuits should be taken off straight after the child arrives home from school for the day. They should not be worn in after-school facilities, shops, during after-school activities, etc.

# 11. Code of Behaviour

The code of behavior has been updated.

All parents/guardians as part of enrolment procedures in St. Peter Apostle JNS are required to agree to and sign the school’s Code of Behaviour. In line with Departmental guidelines we have adapted our code of behaviour to include the following measures:

* If a child is purposely breaking our Covid-19 protection rules, he/she will be sent home immediately. If these behaviours are repeated it will result in a suspension of between 1-3 days.
* If your child is in an emotional or distressed state, we will need you to collect your child and take him/her home.
* An updated copy of the Code of Behaviour will be circulated in due course.

# 12. Office

* A contactless payment system has been set up to minimise the amount of cash that needs to be handled. Parents/Guardians are asked to co-operate in helping to keep school staff safe by arranging for contactless payments through the school office.
* Children should not be sent to the Lorraine’s Office to deliver messages.
* As far as possible, staff members should not enter the Lorraine’s Office area and should speak with Lorraine through the hatch or at a distance.
* Only office staff will be permitted to use/answer the office phone which should be wiped after every use.

# 13. Photocopying

* Staff members who uses the photocopier should sanitize their hand before use.
* After use, the photocopier should be wiped down with the wipes provided.
* All photocopied material should be taken with you
* No queuing at the photocopier

# 14. ICT

* A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICTs.
* Devices should be cleaned after use and before they are returned to the charging trolley.

# 15. Visiting Teachers/Coaches

* The possibility of facilitating extra-curricular activities such as dance, violin will be explored after Halloween.
* Currently, is not recommended that children from different bubbles would participate in extra-curricular activities at the same time, for example, “after school” clubs.

# 16. Substitute Teachers and SNAs

* A copy of the Covid-19 Response Plan will be provided to each substitute teacher/SNA.
* Substitutes will be required to complete a Return to the Workplace form before they enter a classroom and will be asked to confirm that they have engaged in the online Induction training.

# 17. Work Experience

## 17.1 Pre-arranged agreements regarding work experience

* Those who have been booked into complete teaching practice/SNA training will go ahead with their training if it is being pursued by their colleges

## 17.2 New Requests for Work Experience

* All new requests for work experience will be declined for the foreseeable future.

# 18. Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Parent/Teacher Meetings will take place via phone/ Zoom. We will assess the situation closer to the time.

# 19. Staffroom

* 1. **Staffroom changes**
* Please note that the staffroom will be out of bounds in the morning. If you would like to make tea or coffee, please ensure that there is only one person in the kitchen at a time.
* To accommodate groups at lunch breaks, we will have two communal spaces. One will be the staffroom which can take approx. 7 people. Additionally, we will also use the hall to create a second space.
  1. **Utensils**
* Staff are asked to bring their own utensils i.e. cutlery, plates, bowls, cups etc for their own personal use. These must be taken home and washed at home. Cups with lids are advised for hot drinks

# 20. Teaching and Learning

* As a staff, we are very aware that the children have been away from school since March 12th. We appreciate the time and effort that went into Home Learning, and we recognise the challenges that Home Learning presented for all families.
* Each child will be in a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure you that staff will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2020/2021 school year.
* The Department of Education and Skills has published Curriculum guidelines for us, and we ask you to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during the return to school.

# 21. Supporting the Learning of Children who Cannot Attend School

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time due to Covid-19 and/or he/she is a in a very high risk group, please furnish the school with a letter from a medical professional to this effect. We will endeavour to support the child’s learning at home through work packs and sharing activities with parents/guardians.

The majority of parents have already provided an email address at which the school can contact them to support Home Learning. This will be especially important if the school, or parts of the school have to close due to HSE advice. Parents and guardians, if you have not already done so, please email info@stpeterapostlejns.ie and you will be added to the Contact List for Home Learning.

# 22. Wellbeing of the School Community

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of all our pupils and staff. These are promoting:

• 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

Our usual practice is to provide support to pupils based on what is known as the Continuum of Support. This tiered system provides Whole School and Classroom Support for all pupils, additional School Support for some pupils, and School Support plus extra-targeted intervention for a few pupils with complex needs.

# 23. The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## 23.1 Full PPE

Staff members are not required to wear full PPE. However, 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. This might include roles such as:

* Assisting with intimate care needs
* Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
* Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised
* Where staff are in high-risk groups or may be living with those who are in the very high-risk category.
* When staff members must move between classrooms to support children with learning needs.

## 23.2 Masks

* The children are not required to wear masks or face coverings.
* Staff, including teachers at both primary and post primary levels, who cannot maintain a 2m distance from students or other staff will be required to wear face coverings.
* All SNAs will be required to wear face coverings, or in certain situations clear visors, in the classroom.
* Other staff, e.g. bus escorts, who have close contact with students will be required to wear face coverings.
* The school shall have a stock of masks/visors available to staff members
* Medical grade masks (in the EN14683 category) shall be provided/are available to all SNAs and teachers in special classes and staff who need to be in continued close proximity to pupils who have intimate care needs

## 23.3 Gloves

* There is no need for the children to wear disposable gloves. They are considered inappropriate under the guidelines.
* Staff members do not need to wear disposable gloves unless they are looking after a pupil’s intimate care needs or administering First Aid.
* There will be an emphasis on hand hygiene rather than on the wearing of disposable gloves.

# 24. Hygiene and Cleaning

## 24.1 Respiratory hygiene

* Good respiratory hygiene will be observed such as covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing. Then disposing of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.
* These practices will enable us to protect those around us from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.

## 24.2 Hand hygiene

* Handwashing is the best defence. Liquid soap (in wall mounted dispensers) will be provided in all classrooms.
* Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message. 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.
* When entering and exiting vehicles
* When entering and exiting school buildings
* In addition, all classrooms will be provided with hand sanitiser.
* Hand sanitiser will not be stored or used near heat or naked flames.
* Teachers will be asked to monitor when the dispensers in his/her room requires refilling. All classrooms will have ample refills which should be stored safely and out of the reach of the children.
* Every access point to the school will have a hand sanitiser dispenser. All children, staff and visitors coming into the school will be required to use them. Additionally, there will be hand sanitiser and dispensers in communal areas (such as the staffroom/toilets) or beside shared equipment (the photocopier, release buttons and keypads). Tony and cleaning staff will be asked to monitor all the dispensers in the communal areas.
* All teachers will have a supply of disinfectant sprays and antibacterial wipes in their classroom
* There will be paper towel for children to dry their hands – the paper towel will be housed in a dispenser in each classroom. Each teacher will have a stock of paper towel.
* When teachers run low on of any of the items listed above additional supplies will be ordered.
* Hand hygiene will be promoted and encouraged, and parents/guardians are asked to support the school in reinforcing this message.

## 24.3 Hygiene and cleaning in the school

* In accordance with the DES guidelines, the school cleaning team will thoroughly clean the school at the end of each day. Particular attention will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities
* Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day
* Waste will be collected regularly from offices and other areas within the school.
* Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)

# 25. Illness and Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

## 25.1 Knowing the signs and symptoms of Covid-19

We love to see all of our children at school every day. However, under the current circumstances, parents/guardians **must keep children at home** if they display any Covid-19 Symptoms and contact their GP to arrange a test. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>

**Common symptoms of Covid-19:**

* High temperature 38°C +
* A new cough
* Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
* Loss/change to sense of smell or taste
* Fatigue
* Aches and pains

**Less common symptoms of Covid-19:**

* Children who are feeling unwell and displaying these less common symptoms of Covid-19:
* Sore throat
* Headaches
* Runny or stuffy noses
* Feeling sick or vomiting
* Diarrhea

Children and staff **must not attend school** if they display any of the above symptoms.

## 25.2 Isolation procedures

A designated isolation area has been created in the principal’s office. A second one has been created in Ms. Flynn’s room.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, the following procedures will be implemented:

* The pupil will be accompanied to the isolation area. A distance of 2 metres will be maintained. If this is not possible, the person accompanying the child must wear a face covering.
* If a pupil has a suspected case, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by telephone. To help us in this regard, parents and guardians are asked to make sure that their contact details are kept up to date at all times.
* Staff members who are symptomatic should immediately inform the Principal/Deputy Principal and go to the isolation area.
* A face covering will be provided to the staff member/child who is symptomatic.
* The staff member or child who is symptomatic should avoid touching people, surfaces, and objects.
* If the staff member/child is well enough to go home, arrangements will be made for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible.
* Public transport of any kind should not be used to travel home.
* Anyone who is symptomatic is advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms.
* If the staff member/child is too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
* The isolation area and work areas will be thoroughly cleaned in line with the guidelines.
* 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.
* Staff, parents and pupils should cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.
* **Staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.**

**25.3 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 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.
* New staff 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.
* Follow the HSE guidance if they are identified as a close contact.
* If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
* 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 publichealth authorities and comply with same.

Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in their school

Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health

It is important to remember than any of us can get sick or unwell, and if we do, we need understanding and support from those around us. It is essential that anyone who feels unwell makes that known to the Principal/Deputy Principal as soon as possible.

## 25.3 The Covid-19 tracker App

The school encourages staff to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

The school principal with assistance from school staff is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

# 26. COVID-19 Related Absence Management

Covid-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

# 27. Teacher or SNA Absence and Substitution

If a teacher/SNA is unable to attend school, every effort will be made to secure a substitute teacher/SNA for the class/pupil. If a substitute teacher/SNA is not available, it is not appropriate for the class/pupil to be divided into groups and accommodated in other classes. In such circumstances, it may not be possible for the class/pupil to attend on that day. If that is the case, as much notice as possible will be given to parents.

# 28. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

* 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’.
* A free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and staff members are encouraged to make use of the service when the need arises.

This plan has been ratified by the Board of Management of St. Peter Apostle Junior National School

Signed:

A picture containing application

Description automatically generated Date: August, 2021

Vivion Powney (Chairperson of the BOM)

Signed:

Text

Description automatically generated Date: August, 2021

Laura Hannon (Principal)

# Appendix 1

# Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19

This questionnaire must be completed by staff at least 3 days in advance of returning to work.

If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to work.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Name of principal: | Laura Hannon |
| Name of school: | St. Peter Apostle Junior National School |
| Date: |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Questions** | **YES** | **NO** |
| 1. | Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, difficulty breathing, loss or change in your sense of smell or taste now or in the past 14 days? |  |  |
| 2. | Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days? |  |  |
| 3 | Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test? |  |  |
| 4 | In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19? |  |  |
| 5 | Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time? |  |  |
| 6 | Have you been advised to restrict your movements at this time? |  |  |
| 7 | Have you been advised to cocoon at this time? Note: if you’re at very high risk (extremely vulnerable) from COVID-19 you may be advised to cocoon. |  |  |

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test. Please note: The organisation is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed:

Date: