



Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of St. Columba's College

1st March 2021

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This is a living document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from www.gov.ie, www.dbei.ie, www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie, www.education.ie or agreements with education partners as appropriate for post primary schools.

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1) **Introduction**

The Government published the plan for the next phases of return to in-school provision for students at both primary and post-primary level In February 2021.

This Covid-19 policy has been developed in line with public health advice issued by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and in compliance with the “Return to Work Safely Protocols” developed by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Health with guidance documents provided by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). Each workplace is required to have a COVID-19 Response Plan. In addition to being places of learning, schools are also places of work. This document sets out the information that St. Columba’s College needs to implement a School COVID-19 Response Plan, including a COVID-19 policy, lead worker representatives (LWRs) and a process to deal with a suspected case of COVID-19.

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and helpful guidance for the safe operation of St. Columba’s College through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19. It provides key messages to minimise the risk of COVID-19 for staff, students, families and the wider community while recognising the importance of education for the health and wellbeing of students and society as a whole.

This document focuses on the practical steps which will be taken in St. Columba’s College to minimise the risk of infection while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. The documentation in this booklet is supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe reopening of schools and educational facilities.

One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning. This document identifies the steps schools can take to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself in the event that COVID-19 is introduced to the school.

The Department has worked intensively with the education partners to develop consistent plans, advice, protocols and guidance for schools, including the School COVID-19 Response plan. There is a suite of documentation available to support schools to reopen safely and fully including guidance on learning, school programmes and wellbeing for the 2020/21 school year. There is also information on funding, staffing and resources to schools to support COVID-19 measures. All of the documents will be available at www.gov.ie/backtoschool

In addition, the Department has a communication plan for school phased reopening which focuses on ensuring that schools, school communities and all stakeholders will have the relevant information to support the reopening and continued operation of schools. There is a particular focus on supporting parents and students through the appropriate use of media channels, through schools themselves and on **gov.ie**

2) What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?

A COVID-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

The COVID-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol', the Department of Education plan for school reopening that will aim to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the phased reopening of schools complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department. Doing so minimises the risk to students, staff and others. The response plan supports the sustainable reopening of school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and students while promoting the educational and development needs of the children 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.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and phased reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, students and parents.

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

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

3) School COVID-19 Policy

A COVID-19 policy outlines the commitment of the school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the chairperson and principal of the BOM and brought to the attention of the staff, students, parents and others. Schools must have a revised COVID-19 policy in place prior to the phased reopening of schools from 1st March 2021. St. Columba's College's COVID-19 policy can be found at **Appendix 1**.

4) Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The BOM aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff and students. The return to the workplace must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education.

Details for the safe reopening of the schools and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

Before the phased reopening of schools from March 2021 each school will need to have

processes in place to include the following:

- Means of keeping up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates;
- Means of passing on this information in a timely manner to staff, students, parents and others as required;
- Ensured that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education (**details at Section 4.1**);
- Provided staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form (**details at Section 4.2**);
- Identified a Lead Worker representative (**details at Section 4.3**);
- Displayed posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 (**details at Section 4.4**);
- Made the necessary changes to the school layout to support the redesign of classrooms to support physical distancing (**details at Section 4.5**);
- Removed unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school but take into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment;
- Updated the health and safety risk assessment (**details at Section 4.6**);
- Made necessary arrangements to restrict access to the school and maintain records of contacts to the school (**details at 4.7**);
- Reviewed the school buildings to check the following:
 - Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
 - Has school equipment and mechanical ventilation been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
 - Have bin collections and other essential services resumed.

There are checklists in place to assist schools on the details of what is needed for these arrangements in the appendices of this plan.

4.1) Induction Training

All staff will have undertaken and completed COVID-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. Links to the DES Induction Training were emailed to all staff. 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 with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal who is supported in this role by the BOM.

Details of the training is available at: www.gov.ie/backtoschool/

A national information campaign to support parents and students will happen in advance of schools reopening on issues such as COVID-19 awareness and to help minimise the risk of introduction and spread of the virus in schools.

4.2 Procedure for Returning to School for staff and Students

a) Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW) for Staff

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available electronically or from the principal. A hard copy is attached also at **Appendix 2**.

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Schools should request staff to confirm that the details in the Return to Work Form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

On receipt of the completed form the principal will provide details of the **Induction Training** for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at **very high risk**.

People at very high risk (extremely vulnerable):

The list of people in very high risk groups include people who:

- are over 70 years of age – even if fit and well
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- have severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, which will be in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, will be updated by the Department of Education following consultation with management bodies and unions and a circular will issue to all schools.

Reminder to anyone attending school that has travelled abroad:

Government policy, which is based on official public health advice, continues to advise against non-essential travel overseas for everyone. It is a requirement for anyone coming into Ireland to restrict their movements for 14 days, and this includes school staff, parents and children or other students coming from abroad to attend school in Ireland. Restricting your movements means staying indoors in one location and avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible.

b) Procedure for Returning to School for Students

All students must take responsibility in declaring to their parent/guardian any development of symptoms of COVID-19 as listed below (***details at section 5.1***).

A 'Return to School Parental Declaration Form' (**Appendix 11**) must be completed by a parent/guardian and presented to the school before the students return. Should a student come to school feeling unwell and later has a diagnosis of Covid19, it would have a detrimental effect, not only to the other students and staff at the school but also put the lives of others in the wider community at risk due to cross contamination. In the event that a student develops symptoms or feels unwell during the school day, the protocols outlined below (***details at section 8***) will be followed.

4.3) Lead Worker Representatives

The protocol provides for the appointment of two Lead Worker Representatives (LWRs) in each workplace. The LWRs will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

This section sets out how the provisions will operate in respect of schools. These arrangements will operate for the 2020/21 school year and will be kept under review.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies with the Board of Management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared obligation in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

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, students or others, they should

contact the LWR who will engage with school management.

The role of LWR is separate to that of the Safety Representative under the health and safety legislation. However, the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and students being exposed to COVID-19;
- Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- Monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 response plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, students or other s/he should contact the LWR/s who will engage with the Principal.

Names of Lead Worker Representatives:	Contact details:
Ms. Bernardine Orr	borr@stcolumbasstranorlar.ie
Mr. Shaun Boyce	sboyce@stcolumbasstranorlar.ie

All staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors have a responsibility, both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

Full details of the arrangements which apply for the LWR in post primary schools is set out at **Appendix 3**.

4.4) Signage

Schools will be required to display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene. The Department will provide printed posters to schools with age appropriate key health messages – hand washing, sneeze and cough etiquette etc.

Please see link below to these posters which will allow schools who may wish to have an additional supply of posters available. Any such supply can be sourced locally.

www.gov.ie/backtoschool

Schools can then arrange to display the posters in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets.

4.5) Making Changes to School Layout

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Further information on how physical distancing is used in the school environment is found at **Section 5.4** below including a link to the “*Framework to maintain Physical Distancing in the Classroom in Post Primary Schools with a full return of all students for the 2020/21 School Year*”.

4.6) Health and Safety Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is attached at **Appendix 4**.

It is important that schools review their emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the school’s COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the schools existing emergency procedures should be documented and incorporated into the school’s safety statement.

Schools should also review their existing risk assessments to consider any new risks that arise due to the school’s COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school’s current risk assessments is also documented and is incorporated into the school’s statement.

First Aid/emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure shall continue to apply in schools. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, schools should call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

4.7) Access to School and Contact Log

Access to the school building will be in line with agreed school procedures.

Arrangement 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. The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools and centres for education to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities should be maintained. The school should maintain a log of staff and students contacts. A sample contact log is available at **Appendix 5**.

5) Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student - student, teacher - teacher and teacher- student, and must be managed in all settings.

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID -19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, students, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, students, parents and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

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

How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into schools:

Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms (**details at Section 5.1**);

- Advise staff and students that have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;

- Advise staff and students to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a test
- Advise staff and students not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
 - 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.
- Advise staff and students that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly;
- Ensure that staff and students know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (**details at Section 8**);
- Advise staff and students to 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;
- Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contract point;
- Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

5.1) 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:

- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ High temperature
- ✓ Difficulty breathing
- ✓ Loss or change in your sense of smell or taste

5.2) Respiratory Hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

5.3) Hand Hygiene

Staff and students should understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.

Schools should promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the schools on how to wash your hands. Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins needs to be managed so as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.

There is a requirement for access to hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands, for example playing outside or certain sporting activities as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands.

Hand sanitiser dispensers can be deployed more readily at exit and entry points of schools and classrooms and care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitizer spills to prevent risks of falls.

Warm water is preferable to hot or cold water for hand washing but if the plumbing system only supplies cold water, a soap that emulsifies easily in cold water should be used.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities should be provided in all toilets, kitchens and any food preparation areas.

Hand washing facilities should be maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels should be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them.

Hot air dryers are an acceptable alternative for hand drying but must be regularly maintained. There is no evidence that hand dryers are associated with increased risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing should be placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities and can be laminated or placed in a plastic sleeve.

Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (when hands look clean).

Evidence of effectiveness is best for alcohol based hand rubs but non-alcohol based hand rubs can be used too.

When hand rubs/gels are being used in school, care is taken to ensure that students do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic. Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.

Frequency of Hand Hygiene

Students and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- On entering the various school buildings;
- On entering and exiting of all rooms
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing outdoors;
- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.

The Department has established a drawdown framework to enable schools purchase hand-sanitisers and any other necessary PPE supplies for use in the school.

5.4) Physical Distancing

Physical distancing can be usefully applied in a post primary school setting allowing for some flexibility when needed. It must be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Care should be taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at time.

It is also recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from students and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the student.

However, where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1 m distance and where possible 2m. They should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

- Increasing separation
- Decreasing interaction

Increasing separation

Taking into consideration the (i) location; (ii) physical layout (iii) available space within the school; and (iv) student numbers; school management in St. Columba's College has made a number of decisions on the most appropriate reconfigurations / operational changes necessary to maintain physical distancing.

School management were guided in their decisions by the DES's '*Framework to maintain Physical Distancing in the Classroom in Post Primary Schools with a full return of all Students for the 2020/21 School Year*'. The Framework sets out a suite of available measures that must be implemented at individual school level to the greatest possible extent.

The college has adopted the following suite of measures to increase physical distancing:

1. Reconfigure class spaces to maximise physical distancing;
2. Utilised and reconfigured all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing;
3. Reviewed Timetables;
4. Reconfigured Classes;
5. Considered Use of Live Streaming within the School.

Decreasing interaction

The college has adopted a common-sense approach in recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between students.

The school management has attempted to have physical distancing of 2m where possible or at least maintaining 1m between desks or between individual students or staff. Where possible and practical, classes have been planned to minimise movement during the day. Year Group have been assigned base classrooms in various zones in the college. The teachers will move between classes, thus decreasing interaction on the corridors. Students will be assigned a seat in their base classroom. Staff and students will be provided with disinfectant wipes to frequently clean their work spaces.

Where students have an elective subject they will move quickly into the new class by external means and will be seated with members of their class cohort, observing as much physical distance as possible.

Hand washing and/or sanitising will be required when moving between classes by teachers and students.

Physical distancing between the teacher and class will be observed.

Interaction will be limit on arrival, departure and in hallways and other shared areas.

Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) will be discouraged.

Where students need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it will be organised to the greatest degree possible to minimise congregation at the shared resource.

Staff and students will avoid sharing of personal items.

Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device will be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged.

Face Marks

It is a requirement that masks be worn by staff and students in all indoor spaces.

As classes will be set up for 1 metre distancing, masks will be required in most classes. Therefore, it would be important that the student carries a comfortable cloth face mask with them on return to school.

It is essential for those wearing a cloth face covering to understand that the purpose is not to protect themselves but to reduce onward transmission and the benefit is reliant on wearing the covering appropriately.

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

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.

The following are some practical considerations in relation to face masks:

- All staff and students wearing face coverings will be reminded to not touch the face covering and to wash or sanitise their hands (using a hand sanitiser) before putting on and after taking off the face covering.
- Information will be provided on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings
- All teachers and staff will be aware that they should wash or sanitise hands (using a hand sanitiser) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a face covering.
- Face coverings should be stored by in a sealable plastic bag each student when not being worn
- 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.
- The college will have additional disposable face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff for purchase in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day.
- The use of a visor as an alternative may be considered where a staff member or student is unable to wear a cloth face covering for medical or other reasons. These will be considered on a case by case basis.

Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school

Staff

A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as the staff room and arriving to work.

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

Staff meetings will be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing as deemed appropriate.

A 'no hand shaking' policy will be implemented.

Gathering at the beginning or end of the school day will be minimised.

Canteen

Physical distancing will be applied in canteen facilities. The seating capacity in the canteen has

been reduced significantly to increase physical distancing.

Staggered breaks have been introduced to increase physical distancing in the canteen. Senior students (Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Applied, 5th Year and 6th Years) will get a morning break at 10.25 and a lunch break at 12.40 while Junior students will get their morning break at 11.05 and lunch break at 1.40pm.

A queue management system is in place to reduce social interaction and must be adhered to.

Students will be required to clean their hands before and after entering the canteen area.

School drop off/collection

Students should maintain physical distancing of 2m where possible at dropping off/collecting point as they arrive to/depart from school.

Walking to school is encouraged as much as possible.

To avoid congregation of people at the school gates or other areas, students will be allowed access to their classroom from 8.30am. Students will have access to canteen facilities from 8.05 am but should go to their designated learning space/classroom as quickly as possible once classrooms are opened.

Classes will finish at 4pm for Senior students while classes will finish at 4.05pm for Junior students.

Corridors and Stairwells

One-way systems on the corridors and separate entry/exit doors are in operation to increase physical distancing. 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.

Ventilation

The Department has published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice '*Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools*' The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that 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. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

5.5) Use of PPE in Schools

It is a requirement that masks be worn by staff and students in all indoor spaces in accordance to current occupational and public health guidance. For a limited number of staff, additional PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. These might include roles such as:

- Performing intimate care
- 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 in the list of those categorised as people in very high risk groups, or may be living with people who are in a very high risk category.

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they will apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Medical Grade Masks

Schools will provide medical grade masks in the EN14683 category to all SNAs and teachers that need to be in close and continued proximity with pupils with intimate care needs, including School Bus Escorts.

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

Gloves

The use of disposable gloves in the school by students or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for matters such as cleaning or intimate care settings. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves.

Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

6) Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities

The Department will work with stakeholders to provide more detailed advice on school activities in advance of school reopening.

Choir/Music Performance

Choir practices/performances and music practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher level of risk and special consideration should be given to how they are held.

Sport Activities

Schools should refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport.

Shared Equipment

Art – Students will be encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies where possible.

Electronics – Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards will be cleaned between use and consideration is being given to the use of wipeable covers for electronics to facilitate cleaning.

Musical Equipment/Instruments – To the greatest extent possible, instruments should not be shared between students.

Sharing resources/class book sets – Where practical students should have their own books. Textbooks that are shared should be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Students will be encouraged to perform

hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Shared Sports Equipment– equipment sharing will be minimised and will be cleaned between uses by different people.

7) **Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools**

The Department of Education have provided additional funding to schools to support the enhanced cleaning required to minimise the risks of COVID-19.

The specific advice in relation to school cleaning is set out in the HPSC advice and has been covered in the induction training. This advice sets out the cleaning regime required to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19.

Particular care of the hygiene arrangements for hand washing and toilet facilities is carefully considered.

Each school setting is cleaned at **least once per day**. Additional cleaning, if required, will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink, water fountains, coffee/tea machines and toilet facilities.

When students are moving between classrooms consideration is given to appropriate cleaning products being provided to enable them to wipe down their desk, chair and surface before leaving the room.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building.

Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

Shower facilities will not be available for use by staff or students due to the increased risk associated with communal shower facilities and areas. This shall be reviewed in line with government guidance. Students will be required to be in full uniform when attending school. However, to avoid students from having to use the changing rooms, students will be permitted to wear their PE gear to school on the day they are timetabled for PE (this is for PE day only)

Staff must supply and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.).

Cleaning/Disinfecting rooms where a student/staff member with suspected COVID-19 was present

The rooms will be cleaned as soon as possible.

Once the room is vacated the room should not be reused until it has been thoroughly cleaned

and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.

Disinfection only works on things that are clean. Therefore, when disinfection is required it is always in addition to cleaning.

Person/s assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and household gloves and a plastic apron should be worn.

Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine based product (household bleach).

Special attention will be paid to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.

Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.

8) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

Staff or students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The following outlines how St. Columba's College will deal with a suspected case that may arise in the school setting.

A designated isolation area has been selected within the school building (formerly the SNA Office). The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of COVID-19 has been considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases put in place. The designated isolation area is behind a closed door and away from other staff and students.

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

- If the person with the suspected case is a student, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately;
- The person will be isolated and a procedure will be in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the 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;
- As the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne, physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room;
- If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a student should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;
- He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
- It will be assessed whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home (staff) or be brought home by parents (student) and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home;
- Students presenting with symptoms will be facilitated by remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice will 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 a staff member is not well enough to go home, arrangements for them to be transported home by a family member will be made, as soon as possible. They will be advised to inform their general practitioner 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, 999 or 112 will be contacted to inform them that the sick person is a COVID-19 suspect;
- An assessment will be carried out of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
- Arrangements for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved will be made– (**details at Section 7**)

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 student confidentiality is essential at all times. School staff should be encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contract tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

9) Staff Duties

Staff has 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 COVID19 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 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 hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Coordinate practices 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.
- Not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
 - if they are identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19

- if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.
- 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
- Adhere to the procedure outlined above if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility.
- Keep themselves informed of the updated advice of the public health 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

10) COVID- 19 related absence management

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

11) Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective self-care. 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 individual staff members 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'.

The EAS is a self-referral service where employees have access to a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc. The service is also available via SMS, WhatsApp, e-mail, live chat and call back request. All points of contact for the service are qualified, accredited and experienced mental health professionals. Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home).

The EAS also provides advice and support to managers and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace.

A bespoke wellbeing portal and app is available which offers access to podcasts, blogs, live chats and videos on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition. E-Learning programmes across mental health, sleep and a range of wellbeing topics are also available. In addition online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided. As part of the services provided by Spectrum.Life, a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. Spectrum.Life also provides a series of webinars and presentations to promote wellbeing in schools.

APPENDIX 1



COVID-19 Policy Statement

St. Columba's College is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our students. 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 students 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, two worker representatives who are easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and students 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 students 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 Representatives, who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____

Principal

APPENDIX 2



St. Columba's College, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal.

Phone (074) 9131246 Fax (074) 9132528

Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19 (March 2021)

This questionnaire must be completed by staff 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 School: St. Columba's College, Stranorlar

Name of Principal: Tom Rowan

	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 awaiting the result 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 and have not been advised to restrict my movements.

Please note: The school 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 this data will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3

Lead Worker Representative – Post primary Schools

The COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol is designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The Protocol was developed following discussion and agreement between the Government, Trade Unions and Employers at the Labour Employer Economic Forum.

The Protocol provides for the appointment of two Lead Worker Representatives (LWRs) in the school. The LWRs will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

The purpose of this section is to set out the provisions in respect of the LWRs in schools. These arrangements will operate for the 2020/21 school year and will be kept under review by the parties.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- the COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol;
- the Guidance and FAQs for Public Service Employers during COVID-19;
- COVID-19 Response Plan for Post primary Schools (available on the Department of Education website).

1. Collaborative Approach

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies with the Board of Management/ Education and Training Board and school management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared obligation in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

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, students or others, they should contact the LWR who will engage with school management.

2. Role of the Lead Worker Representative

The role of LWR is separate to that of the Safety Representative under the health and safety legislation. However, the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and students being exposed to COVID-19;
- Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- Monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

3. What can a Lead Worker Representative Do?

The LWR may consult with, and make representations to, school management on any issue of concern in relation to COVID-19. These include issues in relation to:

- Cleaning protocols and their implementation
- Physical Distancing
- Configuration/re-configuration of the school facilities, including classrooms, corridors, halls, open areas, entry and exit points, school grounds etc.
- Implementation of one-way systems in the school to ensure social distancing including when entering and exiting the school
- Hand Hygiene facilities including their location and whether they are stocked and maintained
- Hand sanitising
- Staff awareness around hand hygiene in the school
- Respiratory hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- At Risk Groups
- Visitors/Contractors

4. Does a LWR have any legal responsibilities?

No. A Lead Worker Representative does not have any duties in relation to COVID-19 other than those that apply to employees generally. In other words, the LWR is not responsible for the control measures within an organisation, which remains the employer's responsibility.

5. Lead Worker Representative(s)

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative.

In schools with more than 40 staff, a second Lead Worker Representative will be appointed.

6. Selection of Lead Worker Representatives

The school staff are entitled to select staff members for the LWR positions. The LWRs represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role and must be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts. In this regard, where a school has two LWRs, the roles should be spread between teaching and non-teaching staff where feasible e.g. where there is a significant number of non-teaching staff in the school and one or more expressions of interest are received from that cohort (this will be discussed further between the parties).

The process for the selection and appointment of the LWRs is that management will seek expressions of interest from all staff in the first instance. A template email for this purpose is attached. If an election is necessary, all school staff have a vote to select the LWR(s).

The LWRs will, following selection by the school staff, be formally appointed by the BoM. The LWRs will be required to confirm, prior to taking up the role, that they have been provided with and have completed the requisite training and that they are fully aware of the requirements of the role.

7. Supports for the Lead Worker Representatives

The LWRs shall be entitled to:

- Be provided with information and training in respect of their role;
- Be consulted by school management on the control measures being put in place by the school to minimise the risk of being exposed to COVID-19;
- Regular communication with school management on issues related to COVID-19;
- Be informed of changes in practice arising from COVID-19 response measures;
- Have access to any risk assessments prepared or carried out in relation to COVID-19 and to details of incidents of suspected COVID-19 cases that have been notified to the HSE, where they occurred and any actions taken.
- Be provided with the necessary facilities to enable them to consult with employees or prepare any submissions or reports. These might include access to a meeting room, photocopier, communications and equipment.

Where the LWR is a teacher, the LWR will receive protected time of 2 hours per week from

timetable to enable them to carry out their duties in that role. In the rare instances where the appointment of a teacher selected for the LWR would cause curricular/timetabling difficulties which cannot be resolved, school management will examine internal and external possibilities to enable the teacher's appointment as LWR. Where the matter cannot be resolved, management will set out the reasons why this is the case. In this circumstance, an alternative individual must be appointed as LWR.

Where the LWR is an SNA, 66 of the "72 hours" will be utilised by the LWR to carry out their duties in that role.

Where the LWR is a Secretary or Caretaker, a re-prioritisation of duties by school management should be carried out to afford the staff member sufficient time to carry out their duties in that role within the scope of their normal contracted hours.

8. Procedure for dealing with issues that arise

Where a COVID-19 control concern is identified by the LWRs (or is notified to the LWRs by a staff member), the LWRs should bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWRs and the Principal as a matter of urgency. Staff should be informed of the outcome. It is envisaged that issues will be resolved at school level to the maximum extent possible.

If agreement cannot be reached, the LWRs should notify the Board of Management (Chairperson in the first instance)/ Education and Training Board head office of the issue. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the BoM. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

If, having exhausted the process above, a serious issue of concern remains outstanding, the LWRs may have recourse to the [Health and Safety Authority](#).

9. Glossary of Terms

- **COVID-19 Response Plan:** plan designed to support the staff and BOM in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. The plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment. COVID-19 Response Plans for Post Primary Schools are available on the Department's website.
- **Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF):** the forum for high level dialogue between Government, Trade Union and Employer representatives on matters of strategic national importance - involves the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Government & Employers.
- **Return to Work Protocol:** national protocol designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

- **Safety Representative:** Section 25 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act
- 2005 sets out the selection and role of the Safety Representative in the workplace. The rights of the Safety Representative are set out in legislation. (Note: A Safety Representative has rights and not duties under the 2005 Act). This role is separate to the LWR under COVID-19, but the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

Appendix 4



COVID-19 Risk Assessment

Hazards	Is the hazard present? Y/N	What is the risk?	Risk rating H=High M=Medium L=Low	Controls (When all controls are in place risk will be reduced)	Is this control in place?	Action to list/outstanding controls	Person responsible	Signature and date when action completed
COVID-19	N	Illness	H	School Covid19 Response Plan in place in line with Department of Education guidance and the Return to Work Safely Protocol and public health advice		Follow public health guidance from HSE re hygiene and respiratory etiquette	Principal	
						Complete School COVID-19 Policy Statement	Principal	
						Return to Work Forms received and reviewed	Principal	
						Undertake Induction Training	All staff	
						Maintain log of staff, student and visitors	D/Ps and Admin Staff	
						Complete checklists as required: School Management How to deal with a suspected case	Principal and D/Ps	
						Physical distancing requirements including reconfiguration of classrooms, canteen, locker areas and movement on corridors	Senior Management, Reopening Aide, LWRs	
						Provision of PPE and cleaning	Principal and Cleaning Staff	

If there is one or more High Risk (H) actions needed, then the risk of injury could be high and immediate action should be taken. Medium Risk (M) actions should be dealt with as soon as possible. Low Risk (L) actions should be dealt with as soon as practicable.

Risk Assessment carried out by: _____ Date: / /

Appendix 5



Contact Tracing Form



Name of School	St. Columba's College		School Contact Person	Mr. Tom Rowan
Address of School	Stranorlar		For Queries only: Phone No	(074) 9131246
	Lifford Co. Donegal		Email	admin@stcolumbasstranorlar.ie
Name of Visitor	Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Date of Visit	___/___/___	Time	Entry to school ___ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>	Exit from School ___ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>
	Visitor Status	Contractor <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Please complete: _____	
Contact details of visitor	Company Name (if applicable)			
	Address			
	Contact No.	Email Address		
Who the visitor met (separate line required for each person the visitor met)				
Name of Person visited				Length of time spent with each person in the school



Appendix 6

Checklist for School Management

This checklist supports planning and preparation, control measures and induction needed to support a safe return to school for students, staff, parents and others.

For completion by the agreed person with overall responsibility of managing the implementation of the COVID-19 Response plan. This is likely to be the Principal (with supports as agreed with the Department).

Planning and Systems

1. Is there a system in place to keep up to date with the latest advice from Government and DES, to ensure that advice is made available in a timely manner to staff and students and to adjust your plans and procedures in line with that advice?
2. Have you appointed staff member/s to the LWR position (detailed at Section 4.3 above) in accordance with the agreed protocol?
3. Have you advised staff as to has been appointed to the position of LWR?
4. Have you prepared a school COVID-19 response plan and made it available to staff and students?
5. Have you a system in place to provide staff and students with information and guidance on the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and what is expected of them?
6. Have you displayed the COVID-19 posters in suitable locations highlighting the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?
7. Have you told staff and students of the purpose of the COVID-19 contact log?
8. Have you a COVID-19 contact log in place to support HSE tracing efforts if required?
9. Have you informed staff on the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and what is expected of them, and provided a system for them to raise issues or concerns and to have them responded to?
10. Have you reviewed and updated risk assessments in line with Department advice to take account of any controls to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?
11. Have you updated emergency plans, in particular to take account of the COVID response plan?

Staff

12. Have you made available to each staff member a COVID-19 return-to-work form to be completed and returned before they return to the workplace? (**Template attached**)
13. Have you requested confirmation that the details in the Return to Work Form remain unchanged following periods of closure such as school holidays.
14. Are you aware of staff members who are at very high risk under the HSE guidance on people most at risk (HSE guidance on people most at-risk) and advised them of the DES agreed arrangements for management of those staff?
15. Have you advised staff and students they must stay at home if sick or if they have any [symptoms of COVID-19](#)?
16. Have you advised staff and students not to return to or attend school if they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.

17. Have you advised staff and students not to return or attend school 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.
18. Have you told staff and students what to do and what to expect if they start to develop symptoms of COVID-19 in school, including where the isolation area is?
19. Have you advised staff and pupils to 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;
20. Have you advised staff of the availability of the supports of the occupational health and wellbeing programme through Spectrum Life?
21. Has a lead worker representative been identified (in line with the process agreed with the DES and education partners) and detailed at Section 4.3 of this plan to help advise staff and to monitor compliance with COVID-19 control measures in the school and taken measures to ensure all staff know who the representative is?

Training and Induction

22. Have you advised staff and students to view the Department of Education's training materials which are available online?
23. Have you taken the necessary steps to update your school induction / familiarisation training to include all information relating to COVID-19?
24. Have first aiders, if available, been given updated training on infection prevention and control re hand hygiene and use of PPE as appropriate? *(It is intended that training will be provided as part of the DES online training programme).*

Buildings / Equipment

25. If you have mechanical ventilation does it need cleaning or maintenance before the school reopens?
26. Does your water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionnaire's Disease?
27. Have you visually checked, or had an appropriate person check, all equipment in the school for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again?
28. Have you arranged for the school including all equipment, desks, benches, doors and frequently touched surfaces points, been thoroughly cleaned before reopening?

Control Measures in Place

Hand / respiratory hygiene

29. Have you accessed supplies of hand sanitizers and any necessary PPE equipment in line with the HPSC health guidance relating to the reopening of schools, from the national framework provided by the Department?
30. Are there hand washing/hand sanitising stations in place to accommodate staff, students and visitors adhering to hand hygiene measures in accordance with Department guidance?
31. Have arrangements been made for staff and students to have regular access to hand-

washing/hand sanitising facilities as appropriate?

32. Are hand sanitisers easily available and accessible for all staff, students and visitors – e.g.
33. in each classroom and at entry and exit points to school buildings?

34. Have you made arrangements to ensure hand hygiene facilities are regularly checked and well-stocked?

35. Does the alcohol-based hand sanitiser have at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the active ingredient?

36. Have you informed staff and students about the importance of hand washing?

37. Have you arranged for staff and students to view how to wash their hands (with soap and water for at least 20 seconds) and dry them correctly through the use of the HSE video resource?

38. Have you shown staff and students how to use hand sanitiser correctly and where hand-

39. sanitising stations are located?

40. Have you displayed posters on how to wash hands correctly in appropriate locations?

41. Have you told staff and students when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:

- ✓ before and after eating and preparing food
- ✓ after coughing or sneezing
- ✓ after using the toilet
- ✓ where hands are dirty
- ✓ before and after wearing gloves
- ✓ when entering and exiting vehicles
- ✓ before and after being on public transport
- ✓ before leaving home
- ✓ when arriving/leaving the school /other sites
- ✓ after each class
- ✓ when entering and exiting school buildings
- ✓ after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
- ✓ if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms

42. Have you told staff and students of the importance of good respiratory measures to limit the spread of the virus, including?

- avoid touching the face, eyes, nose and mouth
- cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue
- dispose of tissues in a covered bin

Physical Distancing:

43. Have you identified all available school space to be used to maximise physical distancing?

44. Have you reviewed the templates provided by the Department of Education which show options for revised layout of school rooms to meet physical distancing requirements?

45. Have you arranged to revise the layout of the rooms and furniture as per the Department guidelines?

46. Have you arranged in each room that the teacher's desk should be at least 1m (and where possible 2m) away from student desks?

47. Have you arranged in each room that students would be, at least 1m and (where possible 2m) away from each other?

48. Have you where possible and practicable assigned students to main class cohorts to minimise the risk of infection from COVID-19?

49. Have you arranged the timetable to facilitate double classes where possible and practicable?

50. Have you advised staff and students that when students are moving to an elective subject

they would, where practicable be seated with members of their main class cohort?

51. Have you made arrangements to limit interaction on arrival and departure from school and in other shared areas?
52. Have you encouraged walking or cycling to school as much as possible?
53. Have you made arrangements, in so far as possible, to open additional access points to school to reduce congestion?
54. Can you provide a one system for entering and exiting the school, where practical?
55. Have you arranged for staff meetings to be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing?
56. Have you taken steps to minimise rotation of staff between classes where possible?
57. Have you a system to regularly remind staff and students to maintain physical distancing?
58. Have you advised staff and students not to shake hands and to avoid any physical contact?
59. Have you stopped all non-essential travel for school activities?
60. Have you advised staff of the Department's guidance to achieve good ventilation?
61. Have you checked any mechanical ventilation systems to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air is used?

Visitors to Schools

62. Have you identified the activities that involve interacting with essential visitors to schools, made arrangements to minimise the number of such visitors and put in place measures to prevent physical contact, as far as possible?
63. Are there arrangements in place to inform essential visitors to schools of the measures to help prevent the spread of infection?
64. Have you a system in place for all visitors who do need to come to the school to make appointment, arrange to contact a central point and to record their visit using the contact tracing log?

Appendix 7

Checklist for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

Each main class cohort should be considered a separate group for the purpose of managing suspected cases. Each teacher/staff member will be required to manage a suspected case in line with the protocol and training.

A nominated member of the school management team will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

Isolation Area

1. Have you identified a place that can be used as an isolation area, preferably with a door that can close?
2. The isolation area does not have to be a separate room but if it is not a room it should be 2m away from others in the room.
3. Is the isolation area accessible, including to staff and students with disabilities?
4. Is the route to the isolation area accessible?
5. Have you a contingency plan for dealing with more than one suspected case of COVID-19?
6. Are the following available in the isolation area(s)?
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Disinfectant/wipes
 - Gloves/Masks
 - Waste Bags
 - Bins

Isolating a Person

7. Are procedures in place to accompany the infected person to the isolation area, along the isolation route with physical distancing from them?
8. Are staff familiar with this procedure?
9. Have others been advised to maintain a distance of at least 2m from the affected person at all times? (it is intended that this will be dealt with as part of DES online training)
10. Is there a disposable mask to wear for the affected person while in the common area and when exiting the building?

Arranging for the affected person to leave the School

11. Staff – have you established by asking them if the staff members feel well enough to travel home?
12. Student – have you immediately contacted their parents/guardians and arranged for them to collect their student? Under no circumstances can a student use public or school transport to travel home if they are a suspected case of COVID-19.
13. The affected person should be advised to avoid touching other people, surfaces and objects.
14. The affected person should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue(s) when they cough or sneeze, and to put the tissue in the bin.
15. Has transport home or to an assessment centre been arranged if the affected person has

been directed to go there by their GP?

16. Has the affected person been advised not to go to their GP's surgery or any pharmacy or hospital?
17. Has the affected person been advised they must not use public transport?
18. Has the affected person been advised to continue wearing the face mask until they reach home?

Follow up

19. Have you carried out an assessment of the incident to identify any follow-up actions needed?
20. Have you advised the LWR of the incident in accordance with the agreed protocol?
21. Are you available to provide advice and assistance if contacted by the HSE?

Cleaning

22. Have you taken the isolation area out-of-use until cleaned and disinfected?
23. Have you made arrangements to clean and disinfect any classroom space where the staff or students were located?
24. Have you arranged for cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area and any other areas involved, as soon as practical after the affected person has left the building?
25. Have the cleaners been trained in dealing with contaminated areas and supplied with the appropriate PPE?

Appendix 8

Checklist Lead Worker Representative

Checklist of questions in line with the protocol at Appendix 3 as agreed between the Department and management bodies

1. Have you been s/elected by your colleagues on the staff and have you agreed with your school principal to act as a Lead Worker Representative for your school, in accordance with the process
2. Have you been provided with information and training in relation to the role of Lead Worker Representative?
3. Are you keeping up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
4. Are you aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?
5. Do you know how the virus is spread?
6. Do you know how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?
7. Have you watched and do you understand the online training provided by the Department of Education and have you been given induction training before returning to school?
8. Have you been made aware of the control measures your school has put in place to minimise the risk of you and others being exposed to COVID-19?
9. Are you helping in keeping your fellow workers up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government?
10. Have you completed the COVID-19 return-to-work form and given it to your school?
11. Are you aware of the control measures your school has put in place to minimise the risk of you and others being exposed to COVID-19?
12. On behalf of the employer did your school principal consult with you when putting control measures in place? Control measures have been agreed centrally between the Department and education partners and will be revised as necessary. Consultation at school level should take place on any specific local arrangements necessary to implement the protocol
13. Have you a means of regular communication with the principal and where applicable any other person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan?
14. Are you co-operating with your school to make sure these control measures are maintained?
15. Have you familiarised yourself with the cleaning requirements needed to help prevent cross contamination?
16. Have you been asked to walk around and check that the control measures are in place and are being maintained?
17. Are you reporting immediately to the person with overall responsibility for the school COVID-19 plan any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects that you see?
18. Are you keeping a record of any problems, areas of non-compliance or defects and what action was taken to remedy the issue?
19. Are you familiar with what to do in the event of someone developing the symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?
20. Are you co-operating with your school in identifying an isolation area and a safe route to that area? (*Checklist for dealing with suspected case of COVID-19 available*)
21. Are you helping in the monitoring and keeping under review the management of someone developing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?

- 22.** Once the affected person has left the school, are you helping in assessing what follow-up action is needed?
- 23.** Are you helping in maintaining the staff and student contact log?
- 24.** Have you been made aware of any changes to the emergency plans or first aid procedures for your school?
- 25.** Are you making yourself available to fellow staff to listen to any COVID-19 control concerns or suggestions they may have?
- 26.** Are you raising those control concerns or suggestions with your school Principal and feeding back the response to the staff member/s who raised the issue?
- 27.** Are you aware of the availability of the Spectrum Life Wellbeing Together Programme?
- 28.** Have you been provided by the Principal/ school management with the supports to which you are entitled in your role as Lead Worker Representative?
- 29.** If you are a teacher, have you been provided with the 2 hours per week of protected time off class contact hours, as provided for in the protocol?
- 30.** If you are an SNA, have you been provided with 66 of the "72 hours", as provided for in the protocol?
- 31.** If you are a school secretary or a caretaker have your duties been re-prioritised by school management to afford you sufficient time to carry out your duties as LWR within the scope of your normal contracted hours, as provide for in the protocol?

Appendix 9

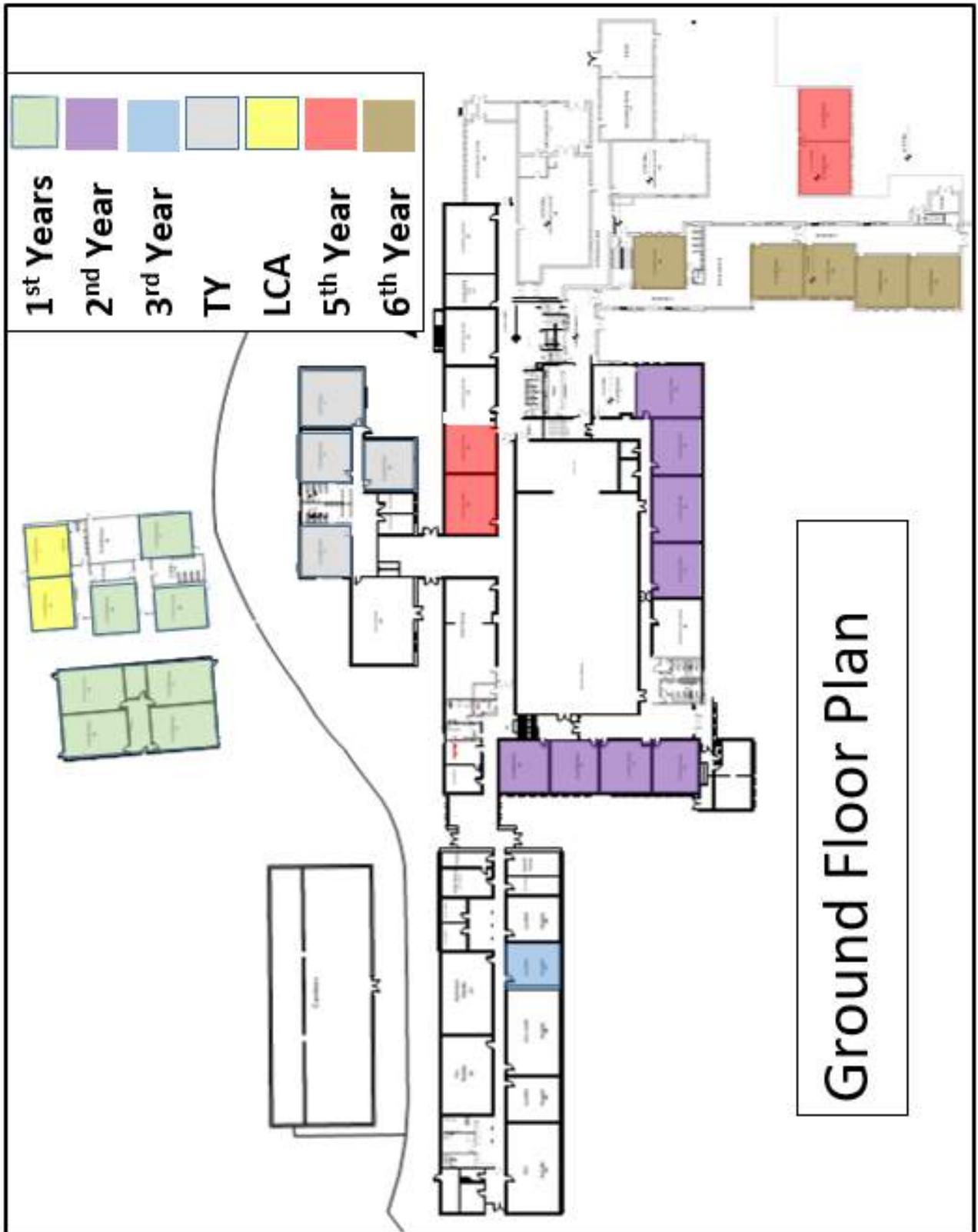
Checklist for Cleaning

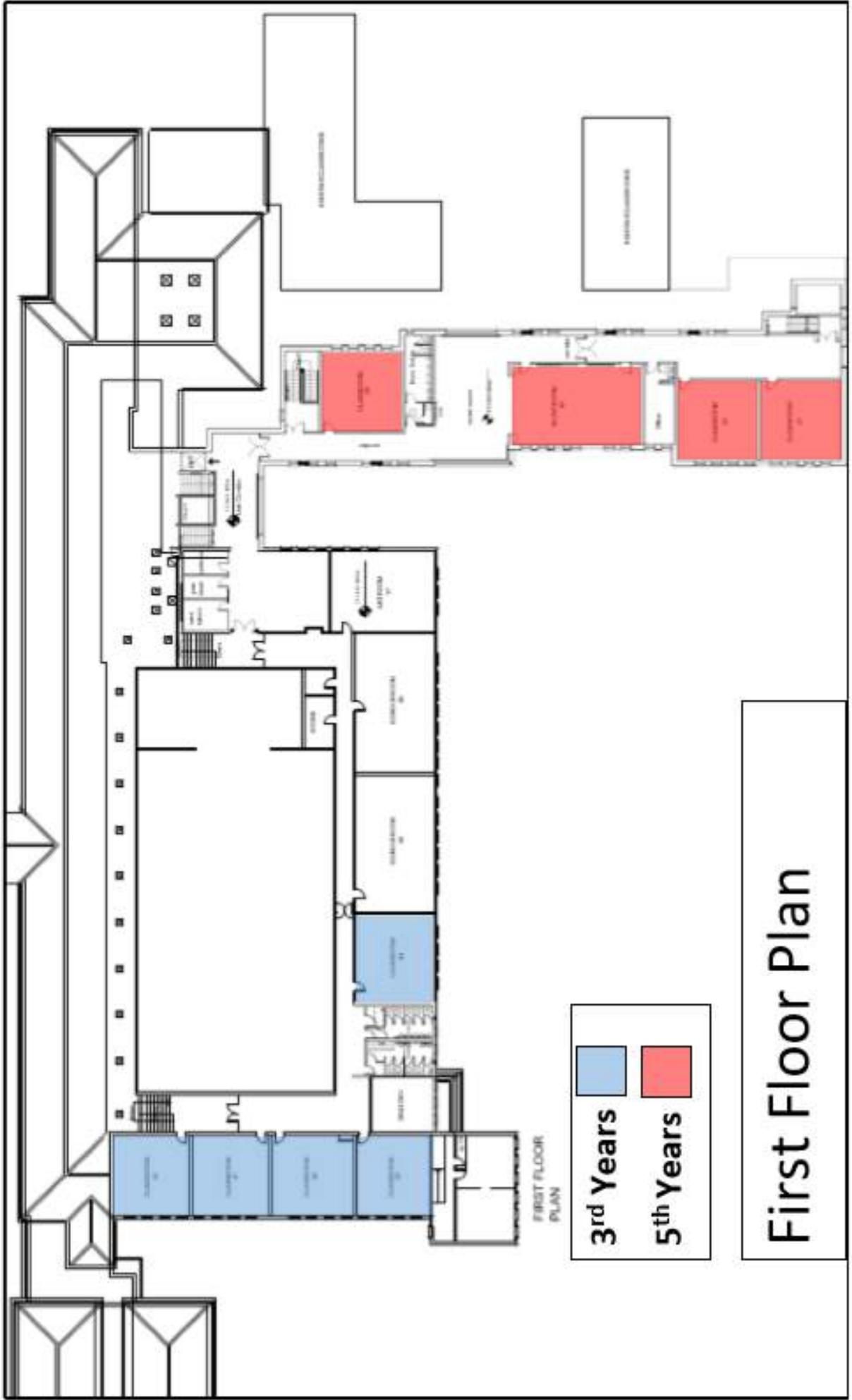
1. Have you a system in place for checking and keeping up to date with the latest public health advice from Government and the Department of Education, to ensure that advice is made available in a timely manner to staff and students and to adjust your cleaning procedures in line with that advice?
2. Have you reviewed the HPSC health advice for the safe reopening of schools, in particular **Section 5.6 Environmental Hygiene**?
3. Have you explained the need for the enhanced cleaning regime to staff and students?
4. Are you aware that cleaning is best achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water, clean cloths, mops and the mechanical action of wiping and cleaning, following by rinsing and drying?
5. Have you sufficient cleaning materials in place to support the enhanced cleaning regime?
6. Have you provided training for cleaning staff on the enhanced cleaning regime?
7. Have you made arrangements for the regular and safe emptying of bins?
8. Are you familiar with the cleaning options for school settings set out in the HPSC health advice for schools for surfaces, toilets, cleaning equipment, PPE and waste management?
9. Are you aware that each school setting should be cleaned once per day?
10. Have you in place a system for regular cleaning of the following frequently touched surfaces?
 - Door handles,
 - Hand rails
 - Water fountains
 - Coffee/Tea Machines
 - Chairs/arm rests
 - Communal eating areas
 - Sinks
 - Toilets facilities
11. Have you provided cleaning materials to staff and students so that they can clean their own desk or immediate workspace?
12. Have you advised staff that they are responsible for cleaning personal items that have been brought to work and are likely to be handled at work or during breaks? E.g. mobile phone laptop and to avoid leaving them down on communal surfaces or they will need to clean the surface after the personal item is removed.
13. Have you advised staff and students to avoid sharing items such as cups, bottles, cutlery, pens?
14. Have you put in place a written cleaning schedule to be made available to cleaning staff including:
 - Items and areas to be cleaned
 - Frequency of cleaning
 - Cleaning materials to be used
 - Equipment to be used and method of operation
15. Details of how to clean following a suspected case of COVID-19 are at **Section 7 of the Plan above**

- 16.** If disinfection of contaminated surfaces is required, is a system in place to do this following cleaning?
- 17.** If cleaning staff have been instructed to wear gloves when cleaning are they aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before and after wearing gloves?
- 18.** Have you a system in place for the disposal of cleaning cloths and used wipes in a rubbish bag? *Current HSE guidance recommends waste such as cleaning waste, tissues etc. from a person suspected of having COVID-19 should be double bagged and stored in a secure area for 72 hours before being presented for general waste collection.*
- 19.** Have you ensured there is a system in place to make sure reusable cleaning equipment including mop heads and non-disposable cloths are clean before re-use?
- 20.** Have you ensured there is a system in place to ensure that equipment such as buckets are emptied and cleaned with a fresh solution of disinfectant before re-use?

Appendix 10

Floor Plans indicating Base Classroom for Year Groups





FIRST FLOOR
PLAN

	3rd Years
	5th Years

First Floor Plan

Appendix 11



**St. Columba's College,
Stranorlar,
Co. Donegal.**

Phone (074) 9131246 Fax (074) 9132528



Return to School Parental Declaration Form

Student's Name:	Principal's Name: Mr. T. Rowan
Parents/Guardian's Name:	
Name of School: St. Columba's College	
This form is to be used when students are returning to the college after any absence.	
Declaration: I have no reason to believe that my child has infectious disease and I have followed all medical and public health guidance with respect to exclusion of my child from educational facilities. Signed: _____ Date: _____	