

St. Cronan`s Junior National School
Updated COVID Response Plan
February 2021.

Introduction

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in St. Cronan`s Junior National School.

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government`s “Work Safety Protocol” previously referred to as the ‘Return to Work Safely Protocol’, the Department of Education and Skills plan for school reopening and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHE continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may also change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and re-opening of our schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of management, staff, pupils and parents.

This document aims to provide details of:

1. COVID-19 School Policy
2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School
3. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative(s)
4. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment
5. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus
6. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)
7. Control Measures
8. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19
9. Staff Duties
10. Covid related absence management
11. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, 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 so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.

Note: The plan is a live working 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;

1. St. Cronan`s Junior National School COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others.

COVID 19 Policy Statement

St. Cronan`s Junior National School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan in relation to summer provision
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education and Skills
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and pupils engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Skills
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education and Skills advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s):

Dave Pepper,
Dawn Sherlock,
Tracey Daley,
Gráinne Duffy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government.

Details for the reopening of the school facility and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

School Buildings

Before re-opening schools in the new school year schools are reminded 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.

Signage

St. Cronan`s JNS will display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene. The following is a link to the dedicated area of the Health Protection and Surveillance Centre (HPSC) website where there are a number of posters, including those appropriate for primary school pupils, located.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/posters/>

St. Cronan`s JNS will display relevant posters in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets.

3. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representatives

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and the School Leadership.

The [Work Safety](#) protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint Lead Worker Representatives to carry out a specific role.

The role of the worker representatives is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows:

- Work collaboratively with the employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19.

- 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.
- In conjunction with school management promote good hygiene practices 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 implementing infection prevention control measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the work safety protocol and current public health advice.
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - Conduct regular reviews of safety measures
 - Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them.
- Consult with school management on the COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of the isolation area and a safe route to that area.
 - Following any incident, assess with school management any follow up action that is required
 - Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace
- Make representations 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 and control measures or the adherence to such control measures by staff, parents/guardians, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact the lead worker(s) who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

Name(s) of Lead Worker representative:	Contact details
Dave Pepper	Dave.pepper@stcronansjns.ie
Dawn Sherlock	Dawn.sherlock@stcronansjns.ie
Tracey Daly	Tracey.daly@stcronansjns.ie
Gráinne Duffy	Grainne.duffy@stcronansjns.ie

All staff, parents/guardians, 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.

4. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A reviewed risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is attached at **Appendix 1**.

St. Cronan`s Junior National School has reviewed the 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.

5. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus

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.

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

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

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of cold and flu.

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- A fever (high temperature – 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- A new cough – this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- Loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you`ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

If you have any common symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), self-isolate (stay in your room) and phone your family doctor straight away to see if you need a COVID-19 test.

Other people in your household will need to restrict their movements (stay at home).

Getting an early diagnosis means, you can get the help you need and take steps to avoid spreading the virus, if you have it.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a school is to minimise the risk of introduction of the disease into the school setting in the first place.

This can be achieved through the following measures:

- Promote awareness of COVID-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other acute infectious diseases **not to attend school**, to phone their GP and follow the HSE guidance on self-isolation.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils **not to 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
- Ensure that staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
 - Advise staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly
 - Ensure that staff and pupils know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (details at Section 7)
- Everyone entering the school building should be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
- Visitors to school during the day should be by **prior arrangement** and should be received at a specific contact point.
 - 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
 - Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

Staff, pupils and visitors should at all times adhere to the up to date advice and instructions of the public health authorities in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

Updated advice from the HSE is available on its website – <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools. St. Cronan`s JNS will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff (by email), pupils and visitors (website updates) in a timely manner.

The Department has been working closely with the HSE and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) to develop health advice which has been tailored to the needs of schools in order to support schools in planning for reopening.

The advice will continue to be updated in line with public health advice generally and will inform the development of more detailed guidance for schools by the Department of Education.

<https://www.education.ie/en/covid-19/interim-recommendations-for-the-reopening-of-schools-and-educationalfacilities.pdf>

Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19

Wash your hands frequently

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19.

Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

For advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link will be helpful:

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

Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers

Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of hand sanitisers (when hands are clean) and wash hand basins whenever hand hygiene is required but also for soiled hands.

Hand sanitisers, alcohol based, are more readily deployed in school settings to avoid disruption to teaching and learning and to avoid congestion of staff and pupils waiting to use hand washing facilities.

They will be available at entry and exit points and in each classroom.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities are provided in all toilets, class sink areas and staffroom.

Pupils should not have independent use of containers of alcohol gel.

Frequency of Hand Hygiene

- On arrival at school
- Before eating or drinking
- After using the toilet
- After outdoor play
- When hands are physically dirty
- When one coughs or sneezes

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.

Practice 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.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid19.

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly and regularly can help stop the spread of the virus. It is, therefore, crucial that all staff adhere to this advice and adopt the following practices as strictly as possible.

Do

- Wash your hands properly and often
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Do Not

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.

Physical distancing

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace. It is also recognised that it is **not always possible** for staff to maintain physical distance from pupils. However, **where possible**, staff should maintain a physical distance of 1m or 2m. Staff should avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting/crouching down. It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distance indoors. Therefore achieving this recommendation in the first four years of primary is not a pre-requisite to reopen our school.

The risk of infection is reduced in our school by structuring the pupils and their teachers into “Bubbles” (i.e. a class group stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The aim of the system within the school is that the class grouping mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until departures at the end of the school day.

Sharing educational material between “Bubbles” should be avoided/minimised where possible.

Staff members who move from class “Bubble” to other class “Bubbles” should be limited as much as possible.

Additional Measures to decrease interaction include:

- Limit interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and shared areas
- Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) should be discouraged
- Staff and pupils should avoid sharing of personal items
- Encourage pupils to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (e.g. putting pencils in the mouth)
- Where teaching and learning involves the use of keyboards/tablets, the contact surface of the device should be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged.

School drop off/collection

Aim of any arrangements is to avoid congregation of people around the school so that physical distancing of 2m where possible can be respected.

St. Cronan`s Junior National School have staggered drop off times in the morning. (See our logistics plan on our school website www.stcronansjns.ie)

Staff

A physical distance of 2m is recommended when staff are not engaged in teaching such as the staffroom and arriving to work.

Staff meetings should be held in small groups or remotely

Physical distancing will apply in the staffroom....times for use are staggered and each person timetabled.

Yard

The risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

It is not possible to maintain physical distancing when pupils in primary play together outdoors.

Yard times are staggered so each year group has its own time slot.

Ventilation

Ventilation of the school will be in line with guidance set out in accordance with public health advice as detailed in "Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools"

6. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

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 copy is attached also at **Appendix 2**.

A RTW form should only 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.

The Principal will provide details of the **Induction Training** for completion by staff 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):

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are defined as being at very high risk.

The HSE has set out these groups, which include people, who:

- are over 70 years of age - even if you're 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
 - severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, [severe asthma](#), pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and [severe COPD](#)
- have a condition that means you 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 you are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Staffs who are in this group should self-declare on the Return to Work form if they believe that they are at very high risk. Details of the leave arrangements that will apply will be updated by the Department of Education and Skills www.education.ie . If the Board/Principal is unsure whether or not staff fall into the very high-risk category, advice will be sought from the Occupational Health Service. <https://www.medmark.ie/what-we-do/covid-19.html>

7. Control Measures

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, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors as far as possible within the school .

These control measures are outlined in this document.

The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

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

Staff, in particular, 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.

The following control measures have been put in place:

i. Return to Work Form

Staff will be required to complete a RTW prior to any return to the school facility (see section 6 above). The purpose of the RTW form is to get confirmation from staff that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has no symptoms of Covid-19 and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.

ii. Induction Training

All 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 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.

iii. Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

It is crucial that all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices. (See Section 5 above)

iv. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Department has published “Guidance to Primary and Special Schools on PPE consumables and equipment” on www.gov.ie/backtoschool

PPE equipment will be available through the Supply Arrangement including:

- Hand sanitiser dispensers;
- Hand sanitiser liquid;
- Hand soap;
- Disposable Paper Towels;
- Wipes;

- Gloves;
- Face masks
- Face visors;
- Aprons; and
- Detergents etc.

Face Coverings/Face Visors/Masks

The Interim Guidance for the use of face-coverings in childcare and educational settings provided by the HPSC on 6th August 2020 makes the following recommendations for **use of face-coverings** in childcare and educational settings:

“It is not recommended that children attending primary school or preschool/childcare settings wear face-coverings.”

It is now a requirement for face coverings to be worn by staff members where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff, parents, essential visitors or pupils.

For information on the proper use, removal and washing of cloth face coverings please view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6ZqdpLSqw>

“In certain situations the use of clear visors should be considered, for example staff interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties”.

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 should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Wearing of Gloves:

The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate. But may be necessary for cleaning, intimate care settings and when administering first aid. 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.

Gloves are to be used when dealing with a suspected case of COVID 19 or in the normal circumstances when administering first aid or cleaning an area in which a child has been ill.

A Perspex screen in the reception hatch will be used for staff to maintain a physical distance of 2m from other staff or pupils.

v. Cleaning

The HPSC advice for cleaning in the school is followed.

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school will be made.

Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces shall be conducted, in particular, toilets, lifts, door handles and kitchens. Cleaning will be performed regularly and whenever facilities or surfaces are visibly dirty.

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 shall not be available for use by staff or pupils due to the increased risk associated with communal shower facilities and areas. This shall be reviewed in line with government guidance.

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

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

The room/areas should be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.

Room not to be reused until it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry. Special attention to be paid to frequently touched surfaces, the backs of chairs, door handles etc.

vi. Access to the school building /contact log

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

Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents/guardians 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 the school to support as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice

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. In addition see visitor contact log at **Appendix 3**.

vii. First Aid/emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in St. Cronan`s JNS.

In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999

Contact the principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident.

viii. Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities

The Department will work with stakeholders to provide more detailed advice on certain schools 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 ensuring that the room is well-ventilated and the distance between performers is maintained.

Sport Activities

Schools should refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07253-return-to-sport-protocols/>

Shared Equipment

Toys

All toys should be cleaned on a regular basis for example weekly. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.

Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.

When purchasing toys choose ones that are easy to clean and disinfect (when necessary).

If cloth or soft toys are used they should be machine washable.

Jigsaws, puzzles and toys that young pupils to those with special educational needs may be inclined to put into their mouths should be capable of being washed and disinfected.

All play equipment should be checked for signs of damage for example breaks or cracks. If they cannot be repaired or cleaned they should be discarded.

Clean toys and equipment should be stored in a clean container or clean cupboard. The manufacturer's instructions should always be followed.

At this time soft modelling materials and play dough where used should be for individual use only.

Cleaning Procedure for Toys

- Wash the toy in warm soapy water, using a brush to get into crevices.
- Rinse the toy in clean water.
- Thoroughly dry the toy.
- Some hard plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher.
- Toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up should be wiped with a damp cloth and dried.
- In some situations toys/equipment may need to be disinfected following cleaning for example: toys/equipment that pupils place in their mouths. Toys/equipment that have been soiled with blood or body fluids or toys where a case of COVID-19 has been identified.
- If disinfection is required: A chlorine releasing disinfectant should be used diluted to a concentration of 1,000ppm available chlorine. The item should be rinsed and dried thoroughly.

Art – Where possible pupils should be encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies.

Electronics – Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between use and consideration could be 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 pupils and if sharing is required, the instruments should be cleaned between uses.

Library Policy – Where practical pupils 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. Pupils should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Shared Sports Equipment – Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

ix. Additional considerations for those with Special Educational Needs

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or appropriate to implement. The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection and where symptoms are present children should not attend school.

Similarly staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or

symptoms of respiratory illness.

Hand hygiene

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.

Equipment

Some children may have care needs (physical or behavioural) which requires the use of aids and appliances and/or medical equipment for example toileting aids, moving and handling equipment, respiratory equipment. Where cleaning of aids and appliances is carried out in the school it is recommended that a cleaning schedule is provided, detailing when and how the equipment is cleaned and the cleaning products to be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

The following points can guide the development of such cleaning schedule:

- Equipment used to deliver care should be visibly clean;
- Care equipment should be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. Cleaning is generally achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water.
- Equipment that is used on different children must be cleaned and, if required, disinfected immediately after use and before use by another child e.g. toileting aids;
- If equipment is soiled with body fluids:
 - First clean thoroughly with detergent and water;
 - Then disinfect by wiping with a freshly prepared solution of disinfectant;
 - Rinse with water and dry.

8. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. The following outlines how St. Cronan's JNS will deal with a suspected case that may arise [in a school setting](#).

A designated isolation area is identified within the school building. It is the "Den". The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 should be considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases put in place. The 2nd designation area is prefab 31. The designated isolation areas are both behind a closed door and away from other staff and pupils.

The following are available in the isolation rooms:

Tissues, hand sanitiser, disinfectant wipes, gloves, masks, Waste bags, Aprons, Bins.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in St. Cronan's JNS the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately

- Isolate the person and have a procedure 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
 - If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m, a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin.
- If a member of staff the person presenting with symptoms should be wearing a mask. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
- Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
- Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their 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, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved. (Details at Section 6 (v) above)

The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. **The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff confidentiality is essential at all times. Staff are encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contract tracing purposes.**

9. 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 order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Adhere to the School Covid-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- ii. Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- iii. Make themselves aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.

- iv. Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid-19.
- v. Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
 - Not to return to work or attend school in the event of the following:
 - Identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - If they live with someone who has the virus
 - If they have travelled outside of Ireland: in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow the latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- vi. If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- vii. Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- viii. 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.
- ix. Must complete Covid-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- x. Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- xi. Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
 - Cooperate with any public health personnel and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.
 - Undergo any COVID-19 testing that may be required as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.

10. Covid related absence management

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

Pupils: The “ Return to Educational Facility Parental Declaration Form” must be completed following a pupils absence regardless of the reason for that absence e.g. school holidays/illness etc. The form is available on www.hspc.ie

10. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Board of Management aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff (physical, mental, spiritual etc.) both at work, whether in the school facility or at home and outside of work. The Board of Management is mindful that the support and promotion of staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people’s personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.

The Board of Management aims to foster a culture and work environment that support healthy behaviours and staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to staff as well as organising suitable support programmes, initiatives and events.

These are challenging times for everyone. Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the principal.

Employee Assistance Service and Wellbeing Programme

Support for school and 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 (EAS) and the Occupational Health Service. EAS is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of "Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile".

The EAS is a self-referral service where department employees have access to a dedicated freephone 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.

Appendix 1:

St Cronan's JNS Swords Covid-19 Risk Assessment

This document provides the school community with clear and actionable guidance for safe operations through the prevention, control and early detection of COVID-19 in our school.

For information regarding the most up to date signs and symptoms of COVID-19 please visit the HSE website.

<https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

Risk	Who is at risk?	Risk Level	Control Measures	Who is responsible?	New risk Level
1.Lack of awareness of new requirements/responsibilities	Staff LWRs Students Parents Visitors Cleaners Contractors	High	-Awareness of Covid-19 promoted through posters and signage throughout school -‘Safety at Work’ forms completed by all staff -‘Return to School’ forms to be completed by parents for all pupils prior to returning to school after being off sick (or school closure) -No access to school other than by pre-arranged appointment for parents/visitors -Contact tracing log at entrance to school for all visitors -2m distancing practiced with visitors -2m practiced between staff where possible -Hand sanitisation stations at all entrances/exits to school -Staff/students aware of need to report feeling unwell to supervisor	Staff LWRs Students Parents Visitors Cleaners Contractors	Low
2.Someone develops symptoms of COVID-	Staff LWRs	High	-If student develops symptoms of COVID-19 they will be brought to designated isolation room	Staff LWRs	Medium

19 in school	Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors		(the Den), accompanied by teacher whilst parents contacted without delay. Parents will be advised to have child tested for COVID-19. -If Staff member/visitor develops symptoms of COVID-19 they will notify principal/deputy and go home without delay and are required to arrange testing for COVID-19. -If school advised that staff member/student has tested positive for COVID-19, principal/deputy will contact HSE. -If staff member/student tests positive for COVID-19, the class affected will be sent home for 14 days in line with HSE guidelines, the other household members do not have to isolate unless their family member goes on to develop symptoms.	Students Parents Visitors Contractors	
3. Spread of COVID-19	Staff LWRs Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors	High	-Ventilation: where possible all spaces will be ventilated by leaving windows and doors open at regular intervals as per government guidelines. -Shared spaces in school : Maximum room occupancy will be signed on staffroom, computer room, library doors and staff toilets. -Staff/visitors to school by appointment only. (call/email advised) -Classes to operate in bubbles please see Number 5 – ‘Physical Distancing’ in this plan -Teachers/visitors to wear face coverings to minimize spread of infection -Movement by students within the school minimized as much as is possible	Staff LWRs Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors	Medium

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SET assigned to classes to minimize movement (2 SET per stream) -SNA assigned to same child/children to minimize contact with others in different classes -Markings on yard where children have to line up -Assemblies will not take place until further notice -Sharing of materials and work areas to be minimised – (see Number 12 – ‘Curriculum, Equipment, Resources’ in this plan -Increased cleaning schedule (see Number 6) 		
4. Hand Hygiene	<p>Staff LWRs Students Parents Visitors Contractors</p>	high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hand sanitizing stations at all entrances to school, including classrooms -Students taught how to wash hands correctly see link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsgLivAD2FE -Students needing help with hand washing will be assisted by teachers/SNAs -Hand Hygiene practiced: On arrival at school, before eating/drinking and going out/coming back in from yard, after toileting, when hands are physically dirty and after coughing/sneezing. -Hand sanitiser in every room -Liquid soap dispensers beside every hand wash basin -Paper towels instead of cloth towels -Tissue waste in separate bin -Staff to bring in own cup with lid for tea-break 	<p>Staff LWRs Students Parents Visitors Contractors</p>	Medium

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students must not share drinks bottles/lunch -Students taught correct sneeze/cough etiquette -Teachers will avoid, as much as possible, the handling/correcting of children's books/copies, and will sanitise/wash hands before/after doing so 		
5.Physical Distancing (avoiding close contact)	<p>Staff LWRs Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors</p>		<p>Physical Measures in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All to walk on the left hand side of the corridor and keep 2m distance where possible. <p>Distancing Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staggered drop off/pick up times -Staggered yard times/break times for students and staff -SET to supervise yard for own stream only -Tea break on corridors maintaining 2m distancing for staff -Separate entrance/exit doors assigned to classrooms to avoid crowding/queuing where practicable -Yard divided up into coloured zones to enable collection of students by parents (as per schedule given to parents) -Each class will exist as a 'bubble' and not mix with other classes inside school -Staff to wear face coverings -Staff should maintain 2m from students where practicable -Photocopying should be sent to office 3 days in advance of being required for use, maintain 2m 	<p>Staff LWRs Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors</p>	Low

			<p>distancing at corridor copier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In instances where physical distancing is not possible (bus escorting, special education teaching) masks must be properly worn, hand washing and hygiene practices must be followed and good ventilation maintained such as keeping bus windows partially open (see number 3 and 4) 		
6. Cleaning and Maintenance	Staff LWRs Cleaners	High	<p>General Cleaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Regular daily cleaning of staffroom and all toilet blocks; toilet doors, door handles, tables, taps, etc. -Cleaning materials provided for every class, staff to clean own desk/work areas. -Children’s desks to be cleaned daily -Bins emptied daily -Staff responsible for reporting any issues with equipment/cleaning to LWRs promptly. <p>Contract Cleaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deep clean undertaken before return to school -Additional cleaning regime to take place daily -Deep clean of any areas where we’ve had a suspected case, for example classroom and isolation room 	Staff LWRs Cleaners	Low
7. Drop off/Pick up (large gatherings on school grounds)	Staff LWRs Students Parents	High	<p>Physical Measures in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students to line up at own classroom door/numberline in yard (as per schedule given to parents) at beginning/end of school day. -Classes lining up in yard will be met by class 	Staff LWRs Students Parents	Medium

			<p>teacher in morning, and brought to yard to be met by parents at designated zones for each class, at home time.</p> <p>-No access to school by parents without prior arrangement, students enter in class groups.</p>		
8. Staff/Students more vulnerable to infection	<p>Staff LWRs Students Parents</p>	High	<p>Staff:</p> <p>-‘Very high risk’ staff must continue to follow shielding measures as per HSE guidelines, and those staff members with a ‘very high risk’ household member should follow HSE guidelines on same</p> <p>-‘High Risk’ must follow HSE guidelines on protecting yourself from COVID-19</p> <p>See link for details on both categories https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html</p> <p>-where feasible staff who are fit to work remotely will liaise remotely with “very high risk” pupil/s who cannot attend school.</p> <p>Students:</p> <p>-‘Very high risk’ students will be supported by school at home as per DES guidelines, siblings of ‘very high risk’ children can also be supported from home where appropriate.</p> <p>-‘High risk’ students should follow own doctors advice and can be supported at home where necessary.</p>	<p>Staff LWRs Students Parents</p>	Medium

9. Contractors and Visitors (not adhering to school protocols)	Visitors Contractors	High	-Contractors/Visitors advised of school's safety protocols -Signage/Safety Posters displayed throughout school on COVID-19 safety measures	Staff LWRs Visitors Contractors	Low
10. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)- (Insufficient Supplies/Not worn by staff/visitors)	Staff LWRs Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors	High	-Face coverings worn by all staff and visitors/contractors where 2m distancing cannot be maintained -Clear visors available for staff where appropriate -Gloves used only for giving of first aid and cleaning (regular handwashing advised instead) Supervision of suspected case of COVID-19: -medical face coverings must be worn by staff member assisting with suspected case -medical face covering should be given to person displaying symptoms but not for pupils under 12. -If contact with child/adult necessary disposable apron and gloves should be worn by assisting staff member.	Staff LWRs Students Parents Cleaners Visitors Contractors	Low
11. Communication (Staff/parents not aware of school protocols or changing protocols)	Staff LWRs Students Parents	High	-Internal communication channels will be used regularly to reassure, inform and support employees in a constantly changing situation. (Staff are expected to check emails regularly) -4 Lead Worker Representatives are responsible for maintaining controls and for communicating any issues to the Principal/Deputy -Regular communication with parents via	Staff LWRs Students Parents	Low

			<p>website/text of controls in place, requirements and information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Signage throughout school with information regarding practices and procedures relating to COVID-19 -Parents discouraged from gathering on school grounds and informed about policies on COVID-19. 		
<p>12. Curriculum, Equipment, Resources- (sharing of equipment increases risk of spread of COVID-19)</p>	<p>Staff LWRs Students</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Children should have their own labeled box for belongings (pencils/colours/rubber etc) as requested on the booklist. -Focus on SPHE, PE and Well-Being, with core subjects as per DES guidelines -Teacher will keep distance from children and work from behind them where practicable <p>Toys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Toys cleaned weekly in warm, soapy water -If a toy is visibly dirty or contaminated, it is removed immediately then cleaned and disinfected -Electronic toys should be wiped with disinfectant wipes -Surfaces wiped down after Aistear or playtime <p>Teaching Equipment and Manipulatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Equipment should be wiped down/washed in soapy water after use <p>SET and SNA practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SET assigned to specific stream (2 per stream) -SET will supervise classes where necessary and 	<p>Staff LWRs Students</p>	<p>Low</p>

			<p>in place of class teacher where substitute teacher cannot be found.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-SET will withdraw students for additional support (students to sanitize hands before entering LS room and re-entering own classroom)-SET room surfaces and equipment to be cleaned after each session.- SNA to be assigned to specific classroom where practicable		
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As school reopens and issues become evident this risk assessment will be revised.

Appendix 2 Return to Work Form

This form 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: _____

Name of Principal: _____ 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 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: _____

Appendix 3: Contact log

Name of School			School Contact Person	
Address of School			For Queries only: Phone No	
			Email	
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	
	Reason for Visit			
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

