



# Covid-19 School Response Plan

## September 2020- July 2021

### St. Mark's Boys National School

\*\*This is a working document that will be updated throughout the year as further public advice is received.

\*\*\*[Updated 11/02/2021 with revisions](#) formally ratified by Board of Management.

\*\*\*\*[Updated 30/08/2021 with revisions](#) formally ratified by the Board of Management.

#### 1. 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. Mark's Boys National School.

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 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**
  - a. School Building**
  - b. Signage**
- 3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**
- 4. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative(s)**
- 5. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**
- 6. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus**
  - a. Wash your Hands Frequently**
  - b. Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitiser**
  - c. Avoid Touching your Eyes, Nose and Mouth**
  - d. Physical Distancing**
  - e. Practice Respiratory Hygiene**
  - f. Do**
  - g. Do Not**
  - h. People at Very High Risk (Extremely Vulnerable)**
- 7. Managing the Risk of Spread of Covid-19**
- 8. Control Measures**
  - a. Return to Work Form**
  - b. Induction Training**
  - c. Induction Training – On-line Video**
  - d. Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
  - e. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - f. Wearing of Gloves**
  - g. Cleaning**
  - h. Access to the School Building / Contact Log**
  - i. First Aid / Emergency Procedure**
- 9. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19**
- 10. Staff Duties**
- 11. Covid related absence management**
- 12. 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](http://www.Gov.ie), [www.dbei.ie](http://www.dbei.ie), [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie), [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie); [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie);

## 2. St. Mark's Boys 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. Mark's Boys 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 Representatives; Allyson Moore and Aisling Finn.

Signed: *Johanna Carroll*

Date: 30/08/2021

### 3. 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.

#### *a. School Buildings*

Before re-opening St. Mark's Boys National School for all staff and pupils on **September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021** the following items have been completed;

- The water system has been flushed at all outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
- School equipment has been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
- Bin collections and other essential services never ceased operations in St. Mark's and are running as normal.

#### *b. Signage*

St. Mark's Boys National School will display child friendly educational posters about Covid-19 and handwashing etiquette and respiratory hygiene for pupils and staff in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets. Floor decals have been placed on the floor to guide the direct traffic to keep to the left if moving around the building. These are spaced to ensure adequate social distancing and act as a visual reminder of the amount of physical distance that must be kept between people.

### 4. 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 from the Principal and will be emailed to all staff.

This RTW form should only be completed **at least 3 days** prior to any proposed date of return to the workplace and emailed to the Principal.

Staff are not required to complete a RTW form after every absence but they must email and confirm that the details in the pre-return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

### 5. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative

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 Return to Work Safely protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint a Lead Worker Representative 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.
- 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 with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- 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 workers who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

Names of Lead Worker representatives:	Contact details
Aisling Finn & Allyson Moore	aislingstmarks@gmail.com & allystmarks@gmail.com

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.

## Infection Prevention Control Measures

### To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools;

- Advise staff and pupils 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 pupils 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 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.

## 6. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. We have looked at the potential risks regarding Covid-19 and we have created a risk assessment document to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in St. Mark’s Boys National School. A hard copy of this risk assessment can be found in our Health and Safety Policy located in the Principals office.

We have amended our Fire Safety and First Aid procedures in our Health and Safety Statement in line with the changes in our working environment in the upcoming school year.

## 7. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus

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

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 who have been identified by the HSE as contact of a person with COVID19 not to attend schools and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement.
- Ensure that staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
- 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, 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. Mark's Boys National School will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

## 8. Managing the risk of spread of COVID-19

### a. *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>

### b. *Hand Hygiene and Hand Sanitisers*

Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of a hand sanitisers (when hands are clean).

Hand sanitisers 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.

Hand sanitising units are available at all entry and exit points and in each room in St. Mark's Boys National School.

[Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.](#)

### c. *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.

### d. *Physical Distancing*

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace. In St. Marks's Boys National School, we have changed our procedures and routines within the school to ensure that there is as much physical distancing as is possible in our building. We will apply physical distancing in a practical and sensible way.

**Physical Distancing will be achieved in two ways: -**

**Increasing Separation.** This will be achieved by re-configuring the classrooms to maximise physical distancing. Each class will be referred to as a bubble and we will ensure that there is as little contact as possible between children in different bubbles.

Class bubbles	Staff
Oilean Croga	Sharon, Marie- Ellen, Ailbhe
Seomra Seoda	Hannah Hoban, Julia, Nicole
Junior Infants	Mary Bowen, Ally
Tír na nÓg	Aisling Donovan, Lorraine, Rachael
Senior Infants	Julie McCarthy
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> class	Ornagh Feehan, Aoife Downey
Inis Geal	Grace Buttimer, Kathy, Luke
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> class	Deirdre Meade, Kate Collins
Inis Free	Marylou Darcy, Fionnuala Carey, Antoinette, Orla
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> class	Aisling Finn & Kate Nyhan, Siobhan
SET	Mark Carroll

**Decreasing Interaction.** This will be achieved by decreasing the potential for children from different bubbles/ classes to interact. Prescribed entrances and exits are in operation for all the classes on their return on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Children will be directed by their teachers and staff on **Wednesday September 1<sup>st</sup>** and guided to their new class lines.

Bubbles will have different lunch-time access to the playground and **limited** class bubbles will be mixing on yard. We will make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times.

We have also created a timetable for staggered drop off and collection times.

Class	Drop Off time	Collection Time
Junior Infants	No earlier than 8.45am	1.40 (when full day commences)
Tír na nÓg	No earlier than 8.45am	1.40 (Infants) 2.30 (for all other children)
Senior Infants, Seomra Séoda & Oílean Cróga	9am	1.50 (Infants) 2.30 (all other children)
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> class	No earlier than 8.45am	2.30

<b>Inis Geal</b>	No earlier than 8.45am	2.40
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup> class</b>	No earlier than 8.45am	2.40
<b>5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup> class</b>	No earlier than 8.45am	2.45
<b>Inis Free</b>	No earlier than 8.45am	2.45

### ***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.

CO2 monitors are to be delivered to the school in the coming weeks and these shall in the first instance be placed in mainstream classrooms with the highest level of activity and traffic. Staff will regularly check the status of CO2 in their classroom and ventilate the room as and when required.

#### ***e. 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 Covid-19.

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.

#### ***f. 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.

#### ***g. 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.



#### ***h. 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:

The list of people in very high risk groups 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. Staff 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.

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.

## **9. 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. Please see new circulars pertaining to this below:*

*For Teachers and SNA's; [https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0049\\_2020.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0049_2020.pdf)*

*For Ancillary staff; [https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0054\\_2020.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0054_2020.pdf)*

The following control measures have been put in place:

**a. Return to Work Form**

Staff will be required to complete a RTW form at least 3 days prior to **initial** return to school (see section 2 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.

**b. Induction Training**

All staff will undertake and complete **school led** Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building **during our Croke Park meeting on 31/08/2021. (See appendix for slides)**

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.

**c. Induction Training for Return to School**

The Department has prepared short induction training for schools **which new employees can also engage with.**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dd7fb-induction-training-for-reopening-schools/#primary-school-induction>

**d. 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.

Guidance documentation and Information posters will be available at various locations within the school facility. Information posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school facility including offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilet areas. Such are intended to inform but also remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations within the school building and available in each classroom.

**e. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The use of a face covering is essential to stop the spread of Covid-19. All staff in St. Mark's Boys National School will be provided with and have access to disposable masks daily that they need to wear at all times when on the grounds of St. Mark's. These masks are surgical grade face masks EU standard EN14683, 3 ply disposable masks as per Department of Education guidelines.

In cases where a mask is causing distress to a pupil, staff are permitted to wear only a visor but are asked to keep as much distance as possible between them and the child in question and a definite 2 metres from any other member of staff. In the case of intimate care, a visor **can** be worn in conjunction with a mask. In the

case of **limited visor use for the above reasons**, it is the staff members own responsibility to ensure their visor is wiped clean with disinfectant at the end of each day and stored safely in their folder for the next day's use if necessary.

PPE such as gloves or aprons will not be required to be worn within the school building according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of staff, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

Such include roles where:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. This will be updated in line with advice from the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre) Should aprons need to be utilised for any intimate care reasons they can be located in the staff room with the first aid equipment.

Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment, they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Any disposable PPE equipment should be put into a refuse bin with a lid after use. These are located in all classrooms. When dealing with a suspected case the PPE used should be disposed of in the dedicated bin in the isolation area.

#### *f. Wearing of Gloves:*

**The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by pupils or staff is not appropriate.** It 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. However, there will be gloves available in the first aid area of the staff room for hygiene reasons such as of dispensing of food, first aid, intimate care and suspected cases of Covid-19.

Gloves are available in the First Aid shelf in the staff room, spare supplies are on the shelves in Staff room 2 and they can also be found as part of a Covid-19 pack located in each zone to deal with cases that may need to isolated. (see section 10)

#### *g. Cleaning*

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within the school have been 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 by all members of staff.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area/ bubble. 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. If a staff member will be moving between bubbles it is imperative that they clean and disinfect their area before leaving the bubble to move elsewhere.

All handles and surfaces in classrooms need to be disinfected daily. **Michael Scanlon**, our cleaner will have a schedule for days when he will clean tables but daily cleaning and disinfection is required to be carried out by all staff in the areas in which you work. Each Friday a deep clean of the whole school will be done with a

misting device. You will be required to ensure the pupils boxes of belongings will be placed under the table and chairs will be placed on top of tables so that the greatest surface area can be covered by the device.

There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility. It is imperative that waste bins are only used for waste items and no tissues end up in the recycling bins. The compost bins in the classrooms are only for use for pencil parings. All food and food waste from lunches must be taken home every day by the children.

**Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.) and store it away on the shelves in the staffroom. Items should not be left on the draining board. After using any communal area such as the staff room or parents room staff should ensure that the area they used is cleaned disinfected. All food items should be kept in staff's own lunchbox/Tupperware box/tin box and kept on shelves in the staff room. Fridge should be kept in an orderly fashion and items disposed of when necessary, cleaned out and composted/recycled or placed in the rubbish bin.**

***h. Access to the school building /contact log***

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. No unplanned visits/meetings shall be allowed to take place and nobody shall be allowed access to the building unless it has been pre-approved by the Principal/ Deputy Principal. Meetings should they need to take place can happen as much as is practically possible via phone or online means, zoom calls etc. Parents will need to make appointments with teachers and communication should be maintained via email or through the school phone.

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 will be maintained. Staff will sign in and out on entry and exit each day. Temperature may need to be recorded by staff and pupils on entry and exit.

The school will maintain a log of staff and students contacts. As we have created class bubbles, our timetable allows for **limited staff members to interact beyond their allocated bubble in so far as is possible**. As such it is imperative that we stick to our timetables as much as is practicably possible to ensure our bubbles can remain intact and safe from any cross contamination should a suspected case arise in the school. **When staff interact it is crucial that they wear their masks at all times especially in the case of prolonged meetings etc. unless the can safely sit at an appropriate distance or during staff breaks.**

In addition, a visitor contact log is available to visitors to fill in who have been preapproved to enter the building.

***i. First Aid/emergency procedure***

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in St. Mark's Boys National School.

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

Contact the Principal, Deputy Principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident.

<b>Staff trained in First Aid</b>
Aisling Finn
Allyson Moore

## 9. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

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.

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. The following outlines how St. Mark's Boys National School will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of work.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building. 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 has been put in place. The designated isolation areas are behind a closed doors and away from other staff and pupils.

Designated Isolation Area
Under canopy outside staff entrance

### Isolation route

There is external access to [this area](#) from the carpark.

Designated Isolation Area access
Via designated (class) external doors through carpark.

If a suspected case is being brought to the isolation [area](#) they should exit at the pupils designated exit point from the main building, if they are not in their classroom they should use the nearest possible exit point.

### Materials needed

In zones pre-exit	In isolation areas	Post suspected Covid-19 case
<p>-A box will be available in each zone for the purposes of bringing a pupil or staff member to the isolation area. The box will contain the following;</p> <p>-disposable masks for pupils (suspected case only for exiting purposes) disposable masks for supervising staff (can also be found in staff packs) <b>masks must be utilised immediately prior to exit strategy.</b></p> <p>-disposable gloves if needed</p> <p>-pack of tissues if needed</p>	<p>-Disposable masks</p> <p>-Tissues for suspected case</p> <p>-Bin with bag</p> <p>-Hand sanitiser</p> <p>-Gloves for supervising adult</p>	<p>-Disposable Masks and gloves for cleaning and sanitisation</p> <p>-new bag for bin</p> <p>-any materials in the room that were potentially exposed to droplets to be disposed of.</p> <p>-Bleach/ Disinfectant</p> <p>-Misting unit</p> <p>-All materials in isolation room to be restocked</p>

If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in St. Mark's Boys National School, the following procedures are to be implemented:

- An adult (class teacher if available) will ask the teacher in the closest classroom to supervise their class.
- The Principal may be called for if the Teacher is unsure of the situation.
- The child will be asked to put on a disposable mask **ONLY** when they have left their classroom and are in the corridor out of view of their class so as not to alarm and upset them or the other children. We must be mindful that we are not GP's and we cannot deem that a child or staff member has Covid-19 but we are ensuring that by following this plan we are not only upholding the health and safety of our whole school community but also the dignity of the child.
- **The member of staff will then put on their visor over their disposable mask. There will be disposable masks in every zone for this purpose for the pupils. All staff will be wearing a disposable mask. Their visor should be stored safely in their staff folder.** (see above; boxes available in zones) **Staff may wear gloves when escorting the child to the isolation area. All PPE used when bringing the child to the Isolation Room should be placed in the bin in the Isolation Room before returning to your class after the child has been collected. Remove your gloves first and dispose of in the bin, then remove the mask paying attention not to touch the mouth piece. Keep your visor on until you return to the main building and sanitise your hands on entry to the main building. Disinfect your visor, wash your hands and put on a new mask.**
- The staff member escorting the pupil will take their mobile phone with them.
- They will tell the child that they are going to the 'waiting area' to be collected by their parents/guardians. At no time should we be alarming the children or placing any undue stress or anxiety on the child. We must ensure that we act normal but maintain our 2-metre physical distance.
- They will follow the isolation route; this is to exit the building at the pupils designated entrance/exit point or the nearest possible exit if this is closer. Once outside the main building, proceed to the carpark to enter the isolation room/ waiting area.
- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately.
- Once you reach the isolation area or 'waiting area' ask the child to take a seat. The child should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Children will be wearing masks at this stage but they can be provided with tissues should they need them. These are to be disposed of in the bin in the isolation room immediately.
- The supervising adult will then make contact with Joan, Johanna or Jan to inform them of the situation and to make the child's parents/ guardians aware that their son needs to be collected and brought to their GP.
- 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.
- Appropriate cleaning of the work areas involved as well as the exit route will be carried out.

- Following the incident any areas the person with a suspected case of Covid-19 was in that day will be deep cleaned and sanitised with the misting unit. It is important to report the exit route used to ensure all areas can be cleaned as efficiently as possible.
- **Discretion is paramount concerning individuals who may need to be taken to the 'waiting area' as this could create fear and anxiety among the school community. Staff are asked to maintain the utmost professionalism and maintain the confidentiality of individuals who may need to be sent home. Again we are not healthcare professionals and until a GP or the HSE informs the school that an individual has been diagnosed or is a 'suspected case' we shall not be inferring our own diagnoses on them.**

If a staff member displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in St. Mark's Boys National School, the following procedures are to be implemented:

- Staff members who appear to have symptoms should mask up and go directly to the isolation area if they cannot immediately go to their vehicle using the closest possible exit.
- They should phone Joan, Johanna or Jan to inform them that they have left the building.
- An assessment will be made whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home (staff member).
- If they cannot immediately go home, we shall facilitate them by calling their doctor.
- If the person is well enough to go home, but unable to drive themselves it will be arranged for them to be transported home by a family member as soon as possible and they will be advised to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.

**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.**

## 11. 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. 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. 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.
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid19.
- Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances [or attend school in the event of the following](#):
  - [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.](#)

- 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 in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.

- If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work. (Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire)
- 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 practices.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

## 12. Covid related absence management

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with DES.

## 13. 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. The current provider for Employee Assistance is Spectrum. <https://mentalhealth.ie/employee-assistance-programme>