



# Scartleigh National School

SALEEN, CLOYNE, CO. CORK.

021 4652094  
secretary@scartleigh.com  
www.scartleigh.com

## Covid-19 School Response Plan Scartleigh National School

## ● 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 Scartleigh NS.

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)**
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7. **Control Measures**
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  - c. **Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
  - d. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - e. **Wearing of Gloves**
  - f. **Cleaning**
  - g. **Access to the School Building / Contact Log**
  - h. **First Aid / Emergency Procedure**
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](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);

## 1. Scartleigh NS 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

Scartleigh NS is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education 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) Francis O' Rourke

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ● 2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School

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

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

### a) School Buildings:

Before reopening schools for the 2020/21 school year we have processes in place to include the following:

- Arrangements to keep up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates;
- Arrangements to pass on this information in a timely manner to staff, pupils, parents and others as required;
- Ensured that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education
- Provided staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form
- Identified a Lead Worker representative and assistant
- Displayed posters and other signage throughout the school to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19
- Made the necessary changes to the school or classroom layout to support the redesign of classrooms to support physical distancing
- Removed unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment;
- Updated the health and safety risk assessment
- Made necessary arrangements to limit access to the school to necessary visitors and maintain records of contacts to the school
- Reviewed the school buildings to check the following:
  - the water system has been flushed at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
  - school equipment and mechanical ventilation has been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
  - bin collections and other essential services have resumed.

### b. Signage:

In our school signage and posters are displayed throughout, outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID19, how to support good hand and respiratory hygiene, reminders to maintain physical distancing as well as signs and arrows reminding us how we move through the school safely

eg. **Keep to the right at all times on stairs and corridors. To facilitate this, classes should always be in single file.**

## ● 3. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete an updated **Pre-Return to School Questionnaire COVID-19**.

The **Pre-Return to School Questionnaire COVID-19** will be completed and returned 3 days before returning to work.

The principal will also 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.

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 will be updated with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

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

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**.

This will be updated in line with public health advice.

### **People at very high risk (extremely vulnerable):**

The list of people in very high-risk group include people who:

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

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

### ● **4. 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 representative is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows

- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- 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 the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- 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 the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required; ☐ Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan 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
Francis O' Rourke – Lead Worker Representative Anne McCarthy – Deputy Lead Worker Representative Majella Clohosey - Deputy Lead Worker Representative Catriona Sheehan – Deputy Lead Worker Representative	Scartleigh NS, 021 - 4652094

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.

● **5. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment.

The school has reviewed its 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.

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

- Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
  - Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days
- Children who are generally unwell

## ● 6. 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

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.

### How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into our school:

Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms

- staff and pupils that have symptoms are advised **not** to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;
- staff and pupils are advised **not** to attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a contact for person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;
- staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school are advised to bring this to the attention of the principal promptly;
- staff and pupils know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- visitors to the school during the day are allowed only by prior arrangement and will be received at a specific contact point;
- Physical distancing (of 2m) will be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools.

Scartleigh NS will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils and visitors in a timely manner.

#### **a. Wash your Hands Frequently:**

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

Scartleigh NS promotes good hygiene and displays posters throughout the school on how to wash your hands. The school follow the HSE guidelines on hand washing:

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

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

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

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

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

Hand sanitiser dispensers are deployed at exit and entry points of the school and classrooms and care is taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risks of falls.

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

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

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

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

When hand rubs/gels are being used, care is taken to ensure that pupils do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic.

### ***Frequency of Hand Hygiene:***

Pupils and staff are expected to perform the following hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing/being outdoors;
- When your hands are physically dirty;
- When you cough or sneeze.
- It is very important to avoid touching your face.

### **c. Avoid Touching Eyes, Nose and Mouth:**

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:**

Where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m. We should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down. Physical Distancing is being done in our school in two ways, increasing separation and decreasing interaction. This has been done by changing the classroom layout and also how we move around the school.

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the workplace.

- Children who are old enough will be expected to socially distance from their peers and adults in school and on the playground/field at all times.
- Children will sit 1m apart where possible, or will sit with the same small group of children every day and will work as a pod.
- When children enter their class/bubble, they will be expected to go straight to their table and nowhere else in the room.
- Children will put their hand up if they need an adult's support; they will not get out of their seats.

### **e. Practice Respiratory Hygiene**

We also need to follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then disposing of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin. Small pedal bins are available in each room for the safe disposal of this waste only. They will be emptied and cleaned daily. Posters are displayed in each room in both buildings reminding everyone to follow good respiratory hygiene. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.

### **f. Staff Kit:**

Each member of staff will receive a personal PPE kit. It will consist of 1 face visor and 2 reusable face masks. Staff are asked where possible to wear a mask at all times. All staff will also receive an equipped First Aid bum bag and a high vis top. Staff are asked to **always** wear the high-vis top and first aid bum bag when out on yard. Staff are responsible for ensuring their own bum bag is stocked. Stock can be obtained from the first aid presses or Fran.

### **g. Classroom Kit:**



Each class will have the following PPE/Cleaning equipment:

- hand sanitizer,
- liquid soap,
- sanitising/disinfecting spray in a spray bottle,
- sanitising/disinfectant solution,
- disinfectant wipes,
- 10 litre pedal bin and bin bags to dispose of any respiratory waste eg tissues etc.
- Dunk bucket: this bin is to contain fresh disinfectant solution daily (filled up every morning) and used as a dunking bucket to ensure everyday contaminated items are cleaned. The Daily Dunk.

#### **h. Classroom Layout:**

All our classrooms have been reconfigured to facilitate social distancing. Please note the layout of the classroom you work in. It is the responsibility of teachers in each classroom to ensure that this layout is maintained.

- Classes are being referred to as Bubbles. Bubbles will not mix, either in the school building or on yard so for example, each individual 6<sup>th</sup> class must have their own space on yard etc.
- Within each class we have Pods. Pods are basically groups made up of 4-8 pupils. The teacher will make out the seating arrangements and Pods for the children before school starts on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August and place the name of each child where they will sit. This seating arrangement must remain the same whilst Covid-19 measures are ongoing. Pods can work together in groups in the classroom. Pods and bubbles are very important to ensure the number of contacts a pupil or member of staff has is kept as low as possible should Covid-19 occur in our school.

#### **i. Ventilation:**

The following practical measures for the deployment of good ventilation practices are to be implemented in Scartleigh NS:

Windows are to 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. It is worth noting that windows do not need to be open as wide in windy/colder weather in order to achieve the same level of airflow into the classroom. This will assist in managing comfort levels in classrooms during periods of colder weather.

#### **j. School Movement-Corridors and Stairs:**

It is important that both staff and pupils maintain physical distancing when moving throughout the school ie corridors and stairs. To this end you must keep to the right when on any stairs or corridor in both buildings. Signs and arrows will guide and remind you. **Classes should always be in single file to facilitate this.** Staff will stay in their own building and not mix between buildings in as far as is possible. There will be some exceptions to this.

Pupils who need movement breaks/walks may do so once they are accompanied by a teacher or an SNA.

Staff must wipe door handles as they pass through.

#### **k. School Drop Off and Collection:**

Teachers/SNA's be in their rooms at 8.40am.

Pupils will arrive into school using a staggered system.

Pupils with surnames between certain letters will be asked to arrive and leave school at different times.

Letters	Drop-Off	Collection
a-g	8.40am	2.40pm

h-m	8.45am	2.45pm
n-s	8.50am	2.55pm
t-z	8.55am	2.55pm

### **Entry & Exit Points:**

Pupils will enter and exit the school building via the door nearest to their classroom.

All pupils must stay to the right on corridors and be in single file.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Entry/Exit point to be used</b>
M JP, M Aoife, M Amy, M Luke, M Catriona	Main entrance in the new building.
M Fiachra, M Roisin, M Lisa, M Seamus	Side entrance at the end of the corridor in the new building.
M Ailish, M Nessa, M Mary, M Eimear	These classes will enter via the gate at the end of their gardens.
M Una, M Gobnait, M Marie, M Aine C, M Eoin	Main entrance in the old building.
M Ciara, M Sharon	Side entrance in the old building (next to their rooms).
M Sean, M Jillian	Side entrance in the old building (next to their rooms & facing the main road).

### **I. Homework and Books**

On return to school the focus for pupils and staff is on wellbeing. Homework journals will not be used this year. We will use Aladdin Connect and Google Classroom to send out homework.

### **m. Covid-19 Tracker App:**

COVID Tracker app is a free and easy-to-use mobile phone app that will:

- alert you if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)
- keep other app users safe by alerting them if you test positive for COVID-19
- give you advice on what to do if you have symptoms

You can download the free app from Apple's AppStore or the GooglePlay Store.

### **● 7. Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

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

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

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

~~Staff should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.~~

The following control measures have been put in place:

a. **Return to Work Form:**

Staff will be required to complete an updated RTW form at least 3 days prior to any return to the school facility. 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 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.

c. **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.

Information posters are 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 facility and should be available in each classroom.

d. **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

The updated advice from HPSC to the Department of Education has recommended that face coverings should 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. The Department has accepted this recommendation. Accordingly, **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.**

PPE will also need to be used at certain work activities or work areas. These might include such roles where:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised as people in very high risk groups, or may be living with those who are in the very high risk category.
- Administering First Aid
- Parent Teacher Meetings

**Face Coverings/Masks/ Visors**

Cloth face coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact.

In childcare and educational settings, the implementation of mandatory face-coverings usage is challenging, as it is known that children will have lower tolerance and ability to use the face covering by teachers and staff caring for very young children may cause undue stress to the children.

At the moment, it is not recommended that children attending primary school wear face coverings. We await further guidance from the Department of Education and NPHE.

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.

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

Cloth face coverings should not be worn by any of the following groups:

- Primary school children
- Any person that has trouble breathing;
- Any person that is unconscious or incapacitated;
- Any person that is unable to remove it without assistance;
- Any person that has special needs to who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivities.

All Staff wearing face coverings should be reminded to not touch the face covering and to wash or sanitise their hands (using hand sanitiser) before putting on and after taking off the face covering

Face covering should not be worn if they are wet. A wet face covering may make it difficult to breath.

**e. 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. Gloves will be worn in the administering of First Aid to children.

**f. Cleaning:**

We have two cleaners in the school. Mary is in the new building as you know and Karen will be in the old building. Both cleaners will be in school for a time during the school day and again after the children have gone home.

**Cleaning Classrooms** – Both teachers and SNA's have a shared responsibility to ensure their classroom is clean and sanitized.

The cleaning/sanitization of the room will need to be carried out twice daily:

1. Before or at small break and again
2. Before or at big break.

**This is a list of what will be cleaned/sanitized twice daily:**

- Desks – pupils, teacher and SNA.
- Main door handles, toilet door handles, press handles, switches, window handles.
- Remote controls and all IT equipment.
- Tissue waste from pupils or adults are disposed of using the pedal bin. This will be double bagged and safely disposed by the cleaners after school.
- Class dunk bucket will be filled with fresh sanitising/disinfectant solution each morning.
- Teachers and SNA's together will compile their own cleaning list of toys, equipment, resources which will need to be cleaned after use.

**g. Access to the school building /contact log:**

Access to school building is by main entrance ONLY (Teresa's Office). You will need to sign the contract tracing form on arrival at the office. Please use your own pen to sign in.

If you wish to communicate with teachers you can do so by emailing, Aladdin Connect or phone.

There will be NO face-to-face meetings for the moment.

**h. First Aid/emergency procedure:**

The standard First Aid/Emergency Procedure shall continue to apply in Scartleigh NS.

- In an emergency or in the case of a serious incident, we will call for an ambulance or the fire brigade 112/999. All staff will have their own First Aid bum bags.

- **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 Scartleigh NS will deal with a suspected case that may arise in our school.

**Isolation Areas:** Two designated areas have been identified in our school.

**Senior School:** Wheelchair accessible toilet on the ground floor has been adapted.

**Junior School:** The chill out room next to M Seans room has been adapted.

**Note:** Classrooms in An Cuan have designated isolation areas within their quiet rooms.

The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 has been considered and should this happen we will isolate areas in the Halla in the Senior Building and isolate an SEN room in the Junior Building. If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in Scartleigh NS the following are the procedures must be followed:

- M. Denise or M. Níamh must be informed
- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians will be contacted collect their child immediately. The child will be escorted to the isolation room.
- The pupil/ Staff member who is accompanying the suspected case to the designated isolation area must keep at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also make sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times.
- The member of staff accompanying the pupil to the isolation room will be the class teacher or the SEN teacher assigned to that room for cover.

Remember that the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room.

- The child will put on a face mask on entering the isolation room. The staff member will already be wearing a mask.
- When parent/guardian arrives to the school the child will be brought outside to their parents. Parents must ring their doctor who will advise them further.
- The isolation room will then be thoroughly sanitised and dried before it can be open for use again.

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.

- **9. Special Educational Needs**

#### **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 is 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 will 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 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.

## **10. 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.
- Complete the updated RTW form before they return to work.
- Must inform the principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- Coordinate and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
- Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
- Self-isolate 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.
- Not return to or attend school if they:
  - have symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances.
  - 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.
- If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- Staff must 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.

- **11.Covid related absence management**

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

- **14..Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

Promoting the wellbeing of our school community is a fundamental element of Scartleigh National School' overall plan to support a successful return to school as we continue to manage the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Department of Education has provided guidance for schools on the overall approach recommended to support the wellbeing of school communities at this time:

It is called : Supporting the Wellbeing of School Communities as Schools Reopen: Guidance for Schools and you can find it at this link - <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/0722b-wellbeing-resources/>

We are all working together as an incredible team to ensure we look after our well-being. We have a wonderful nurturing environment and staff. If at any time you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed please speak to Denise, Niamh, the Lead or Deputy Worker Representative or any of the management team.

**The Employee Assistance Programme is now managed by Spectrum Life. The number is 01 5180356.**

**Please find below some tips to help us promote our wellbeing and self-care:**

**A Sense of Safety** Feeling safe helps to reduce the impact of stress and anxiety. The less stressed we are, the more we are able to think, plan, engage and learn. Think about what you need to ensure that you feel physically safe, as well as psychologically and emotionally safe.

**Slow Down to Catch Up** It will take time for both staff and students to adjust to being back in the school environment and be ready and available to fully engage with teaching and learning. It is important that staff are given time to 'catch up' with colleagues and students so that everyone can settle into a new routine and feel ready to engage. This should help all of the school community to feel more secure in the days and weeks on return to school and gives everyone time to settle in after a long break. Focusing on wellbeing and giving time for all to settle in so that they are ready for learning will yield positive outcomes in the longer term and will likely reduce stress.

**A Sense of Calm** Promoting a sense of calm ensures that we have the ability to become peaceful in mind and body. Being able to relax and stay composed helps us to focus and concentrate on what we need to do. The following can help promote a sense of calm. Take time to Relax: Try to take time each day to pay attention to your body and what it is telling you. Try to recognise when your body and mind are stressed. If you are feeling stressed or anxious, take a few deep breaths and concentrate on letting go of your worries even for a short time. Ask for help.

**A Sense of Self and Community-efficacy Self-efficacy** is the belief that you can do what you need to do, deal with challenges and handle tough times. Community efficacy is the belief that the school community you belong to can do what it needs to do to thrive and take care of its members. As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, some people may feel a lack of control and may doubt their ability to solve problems and handle ordinary day-to-day challenges. The following can help promote a sense of efficacy in self and community.

- Identify what you can and cannot control.
- Focus on the present and use your strengths.
- Acknowledge your own personal achievements.
- Participate in team work in your planning, where possible.

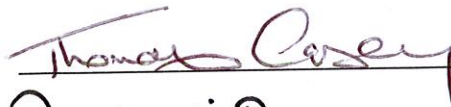
This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 28/08/2020.

This policy was amended and ratified by the board of management on the 30/08/2021.

This is a living document and subject to change.

This policy will be reviewed in two months.

Chairperson: Thomas Casey



30/08/2021

Principal: Denise O' Donovan



30/08/2021