

Meán Scoil Mhuire Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Covid-19 is a new illness that can affect a person's lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal.

Legislation¹ under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires health surveillance to be carried out based on risk assessment. Employers are required to undertake a risk assessment with regard to Covid-19 and potential workplace exposure where the nature of work poses an occupational exposure health risk to Covid-19.

This risk assessment is designed to identify suitable control measures to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 infection. Risk assessments need to be regularly reviewed and updated and be based on the current best practice in relation to infection prevention and control.

What is the risk?

Spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus

Key Challenge: A key challenge for schools during this pandemic is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for students/students and where teachers feel able to engage with students in a way that supports their learning.

Transmission: Being a respiratory virus, Covid-19 is transmitted through respiratory droplets, with person-to-person contact appearing to be the main method of transmission. The virus can also survive on contaminated surfaces, possibly for up to several days. Both symptomatic and asymptomatic transmission (when a person is displaying no symptoms) occurs.

Vaccination: Vaccines became available in January 2021 on a phased basis as dictated by the HSE.

Who Might be harmed? Trustees, Board of Management, Principal, Deputy Principal(s) Teachers, Staff, Students, Visitors, Contractors, Parents / Guardians.

Action by who? Principal on behalf of the Board of Management.

¹ List of relevant Legislation

- Regulation 10 of S.I. No. 619/2001 - Safety, Health and Welfare At Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations, 2001
- Regulation 12 of S.I. No. 78/2001 - Safety, Health and Welfare At Work (Carcinogens) Regulations, 2001 .
- Regulation 20 of S.I. No. 386/2006 - Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- Regulation 131 of S.I. No. 299/2007 - Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (Control of Noise at Work)
- Regulation 141 of S.I. No. 299/2007 - Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (Control of Vibrations at Work)

Action by When? Action required to be completed by Mid-August 2020

Covid-19 - Primary Symptoms: Fever (higher temperature of 38 degrees C. (100.4 degrees F.) or above - Cough which can be any kind of cough, not just a dry cough - shortness of breath or breathing difficulties - loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

Human Health Risk: mild, moderate, severe or fatal. Older adults, or those with underlying medical conditions appear to be at a higher risk of developing more serious complications from Covid-19 illness.

This Risk Assessment has been prepared in response to the emerging risks associated with Covid-19 pandemic.

Note: Staff, parents and students (as age appropriate) should understanding the benefits and risks of education and social interaction and that it is not possible to guarantee that infection can be prevented in any setting either in an education centre, at home or in any other setting where people interact with other people.

Risk	Controls implemented to mitigate against Risk of Spreading Covid-19
Risk of Covid-19 spreading in the School environment	<p>The risk is of spread of infection exists in all interpersonal interactions such as student-student, teacher -teacher, and teacher-student and is not limited to the classroom and requires to be managed in all settings within Meán Scoil Mhuire. This risk is mitigated through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gel sanitisers located at entrances and exits- Display of Covid-19 Information Signage throughout the school- Covid-19 Induction Training for all staff- encouraging good hand hygiene technique, respiratory hygiene and social distancing- the implementation of a Covid-19 Policy,- provision of Covid-19 presentations for staff, students, parents and guardians.- Prohibiting of social physical contact, no hand to hand greetings / hugs.- Promotion of awareness of Covid-19 and it's symptoms among staff, parents / guardians and students with age appropriate posters, email/text communications- Heightened awareness by staff, parents / guardians, and children (age appropriate) on how to protect themselves and each other as well as how to recognise and report symptoms of Covid-19 infection- The exclusion of staff, student, visitors and contractors who

<p>Risk of Covid-19 spreading in the School environment</p>	<p>are ill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirement that staff/students who experience symptoms of Covid-19 or other acute infectious disease are not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation. - Requirement that staff members are not to present for work if they have been identified by HSE as a Contact of a person with Covid-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement. - Requirement that staff members / students who develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of their teacher / SNA promptly and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation - Advice to parents / guardians not to bring their children to school if the child has symptoms of a viral respiratory infection or if there is someone in the household suspected or known to have Covid-19. - Advice to parents / guardians not to bring their children to school if they have been identified as Covid-19 contacts - Advice to parents / guardians that the school reserves the right to decline entry to students who appear to have fever or respiratory tract infection. - Ensuring students (as appropriate) are aware of the reason why they should not attend if they have respiratory symptoms. - Ensure students are aware that if they develop signs or symptoms of Covid-19 when at school to let their teacher know - Ensuring everyone who entering the school / classroom performs hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser. - Teachers required to maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m when dealing with students. - Teachers taking measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down - Class space reconfigured to maximise physical distancing (where possible) - Avoidance of situations that require people to sit or stand in direct physical contact with other people is to be avoided. - teacher's desk (where possible) to be placed at least 1m and where possible 2m away from student's desks. - Where students need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (for example to access a shared resource) this is to be organised to the greatest extent possible so as to minimise congregation around the point of access to the shared resource. - Students and teachers are to avoid sharing of personal items such as pens and other writing materials, tablets and phones
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<p>Risk of Covid-19 spreading in the School environment</p>	<p>to the greatest extent possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All teachers, other staff and students are to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth etc.) - Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets the contact surfaces of the devices are cleaned by user before use and when finished with the keyboard or device and hand hygiene to be encouraged. - In the event of sub-groups being required within a class for group work, to the greatest extent possible the same students will generally be in the same group, although movement between groups may be necessary in the event it is necessary to address tensions between students. - Where possible students will remain in the classroom and teachers will move between rooms - When students have to move to an elective subject they are required to move quickly into the new class and are required to be seated with members of their class cohort, observing as much physical distancing as possible. - Hand washing and/or sanitising is required when moving between classes by both teacher and students. - Students and teachers required to maintain 2 metres physical distance outside of classroom - Request for social distancing between people congregating at school gates - Students required to go straight to their classroom upon arrival at school - Physical distancing of 2 metres requirements between staff members within the staff room and when not engaged in teaching. - Implementation of a 'No Hand shaking policy'. - Requirement to avoid gathering within the school at the beginning or end of the school day. - Protocol in place in the event a student or teacher should develop symptoms of Covid-19 during the school day. - Communication of risks to teachers, staff, students, parents / guardians. - Advice to teachers, staff, students, parents / guardians of the need to stay at home if showing symptoms of Covid-19 or if in contact with other with symptoms of Covid-19 - Regular cleaning and sanitiser of workplace and communal equipment - Use of PPE (gloves/masks) provided when dealing with and isolating Covid-19 suspected symptomatic person. - Sanitisation of shared equipment/ areas.
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<p>Risk of Covid-19 spreading in the School environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased cleaning and disinfecting of high-risk objects and surfaces schedule, such as door handles, handrails, light switches, reception area, toilets, communal areas etc. - Appointment of Covid-19 Lead Worker representative(s). - Appointment of Covid-19 Manager - Assemblies within the school together with other community events, meetings / activities have been cancelled. Staff meeting to be held online. - Contractors' deliveries organised and monitored - School to conduct online meetings in place of face to face meetings where possible - Where face to face meetings are absolutely necessary, the length of the meeting and the numbers attending the meeting are kept to a minimum - Walking on the right-hand side of corridors within the school to aid traffic flow and avoid contact with others - Informal gatherings on corridors / stairs when entering, moving about or exiting the school are prohibited - Unnecessary gatherings of staff at the beginning and termination of the school's day - Students located in their base classroom and only required to move classrooms for selected subjects - Students required to be seated together when required to move to a different classroom to assist class segregation of class grouping / 'class bubble'. Students required to wear PE Uniform on days they have PE as changing room not in use. - Classroom reconfigured to maximise physical distancing - Additional available spaces are being sought in the community - Students required to wear face coverings in classrooms / situations where recommended social distancing is not possible - Visitors are required to make an appointment prior to visiting the school - Staff and students have been instructed to observe social distancing at all times including when using lockers etc. - Staff have been instructed to observe social distancing requirement when in the staff room - Employees required to clean and sanitise their workstations / areas at the commencement and at the termination periods of their working day / teaching period including any equipment, used etc. - All official business trips and face-to-face interactions been reduced to the absolute minimum - First Aid responders in the school to be trained on infection
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	<p>prevention and control principles, including performance of hand hygiene and appropriate use of personal protective equipment when delivering first aid as soon as practicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flushing of the school water systems has taken place to prevent any potential for Legionnaires' disease
Risk of Covid-19 to vulnerable high-risk persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wearing of Non-medical masks – The wearing of non-medical masks may reduce the transmission of Covid-19 from individuals who may be infected with Covid-19 virus (i.e. asymptomatic) - Remote teaching learning facilities may be implemented in the event of staff being required to work from home
Students with Special Educational Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrangements in place with parents/guardians regarding the necessity for highlighting awareness of signs, symptoms or changes which might suggest illness / Covid-19 infections so as to ensure students do not attend school where symptoms are present. - Teachers and staff awareness of the signs, symptoms or changes which might suggest illness / Covid-19 infections so as to ensure teachers do not attend school where symptoms are present. - Assistance with hand hygiene for students who may be unable to wash their hands themselves. - Cleaning student's aids and appliance and/ or medical equipment etc. - Teachers and staff using facial coverings / face visors and other required PPE equipment in circumstances where physical distancing is not possible. - Teachers and staff performing regular hand hygiene when working between different students.
Working at Home of Vulnerable / High Risk Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrangements in place with parents/guardians regarding the necessity for highlighting awareness of signs, symptoms or changes which might suggest illness / Covid-19 infections so as to ensure students do not attend school where symptoms are present. - Teachers and staff awareness of the signs, symptoms or

	<p>changes which might suggest illness / Covid-19 infections so as to ensure teachers do not attend school where symptoms are present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers and staff using facial coverings / face visors and other required PPE equipment in circumstances where physical distancing is not possible.
Risk of hand sanitisers solutions being ingested - toxic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students advised on the dangers of accidentally ingesting of hand sanitisers
Risks of slips or falls due to spillage of hand sanitisers at dispenser locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risk of falls.
Risks associated with visitors to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors to the school are not permitted without prior arrangement with a specific contact point (for example the school office) and are subject to the same controls that apply to staff, students and contractors entering the school. - Physical distancing of 2 metres to be maintained with visitors (where possible) - Visits are arranged to ensure that congregation of parents in waiting areas is by invited them to remain in their car until the teacher is ready to meet them (depending on space available). - Implementation of alternative means of communication other than face to face meetings
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Late sign-in record procedure amended so staff member stamps student's diary and note time of arrival in the office record to avoid unnecessary contact. Screen / glass windows and counter in place in the reception area.
Canteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical distancing is required to be maintained while using the canteen facilities. - A queue management system will be implemented along with social distancing marking. - All students and staff using the canteen facilities are required to clean their hand when entering and leaving the canteen area. - Canteen fittings /furniture rearranged to ensure social distancing. - A queue management system has been put in place in the canteen - An online card payment and ordering system have been implemented

Hallways / Stairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirement for staff and students when passing another person in a corridor or stairwell, that they are required to avoid any physical contact or participation in informal group discussions. - In the event of a narrow corridor one person to use it at a time where possible - Walk on the right-hand side of corridors when moving around the school
Administration / Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Screen / glass windows and counter in place in the reception area. Office staff required to observe social distancing requirements. Administration staff located in different offices.
Yard / Outside Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students and staff are required to adhere to relevant social distancing requirements when engaging or returning from break times. - Students and staff required to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities - Minimising the sharing of equipment and requiring its cleaning before and after use.
Specialised Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are encouraged to have their own equipment required for specialised subjects - Shared electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards are required to be cleaned before and after use in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. - Where practical each pupil should have dedicated schoolbooks - Textbooks that are shared to be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. - Hand washing facilities have been implemented instead of hand sanitisers in classrooms / labs etc., where an open flame may exist, in order to mitigate against the risk of injury / burns to staff or student.
Lifts (Where applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where practicable only one person to use lift at a time (unless user requires assistance)
School / Sporting Related Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervisors should observe students for symptoms, and they should ask parents to declare that their children are symptom free. - Social (Physical) distancing, hand hygiene and good respiratory etiquette should be observed by all (students, parents, coaches and spectators). - Conducting an up to date risk assessment in relation to the particular activity or sport so as to identify what additional

	<p>measures are required to reduce / mitigate the risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirement that no person (student, parent, coach or spectator) should attend an event if unwell or any members of their household are unwell with symptoms consistent with Covid-19. - Households to bring their own household members to the event and not share transport to or from the venue - Requirement that parents and students wait in the car or outside the venue until just before the beginning of a practice, warm-up, or game, instead of congregating with other children prior to the start. - Appointment of Covid-19 officer at events - Requirement for good hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette. - Avoiding the sharing of water-bottles. Each student is required to bring their own water-bottle clearly labelled with their name - Requirement to maintain social distancing of 2 metres where possible when students are not playing such as when watching from the side-line etc. - Cleaning and disinfecting of any shared equipment before, during and after all sessions/activities - Completion of contact tracing log at events where possible (Students, teachers, coaches, trainers, parents / guardians etc.)
Choir/Music Practices / Performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-Check at entrance – person belonging to a risk group / contact with infected persons, / symptomatic - Keeping the minimum distancing rule for wind ensembles to reduce the risk to very low. - Avoiding the draining of condensation in instruments onto the floor - Disposing of all draining in a collection container or absorbent blotting paper. - Wind players should not blow through the instruments to clean them. - Wind instruments to be cleaned in separate rooms away from the teaching or rehearsal setting where possible. - In the event of contact with condensation or with the interior of the instrument (e.g., horn), great care must be taken to ensure a thorough hand hygiene protocol is followed - Educators and pupils are advised to wear mouth-nose protection in individual lessons, when they are not playing. - Wind ensembles - Wind ensembles can have different numbers of players depending on their instrumentation. The number of players must always correspond to the currently applicable regulations on group sizes. - Even with smaller ensembles, a minimum distance of 2

	<p>meters/6 ½ feet should be maintained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rehearsal rooms to be as large as possible and to be thoroughly and regularly aired out every 15 minutes. - In the summer season, weather permitting the question of playing outdoors to be considered. - Face and nose protection to be worn during individual lessons when students are singing. <p>In order to reduce the risk of infection from aerosols in the choral setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General risk reduction is the personal entrance screening - Mouth and nose protection can be worn. - Singing in very large rooms, such as concert halls or church sanctuaries, appears to be most favourable. - Regular airing out of the room approximately every 15 minutes, - Reduced periods for rehearsal scheduling, - Choirs required to observe the general spacing rule for social distancing, - Choir required to wear face masks even on choir break - No hand contact or contact with surfaces by choir when on break (e.g., by sharing music, etc.). - Requirements for thorough hand washing before and after choir practice - Students and teachers to avoid touching the face and rubbing the eyes during choir practice - Sneezing and coughing should be avoided, if possible, and caught in the crook of the elbow / tissue.
Poor Hand Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information provided to staff and students as to why hand hygiene is so important, when to wash their hands and how to wash their hands. - The promotion of good hand hygiene and the display Hand Hygiene Posters throughout the school. - Provision for hand hygiene through hand washing or the use of a hand sanitiser. - Provision of hand sanitiser dispensers at entry and exit points of schools and classrooms. - Provision of access to hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands for example gardening or certain sporting activities as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands. - Provision of social distancing when using hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins so as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitiser. - Hand washing basins – decommissioning of certain hand washing basins so as to ensure social distancing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of adequate hand washing facilities to meet the needs of the school population - Location of foot operated pedal bins near wash basins for disposing of paper towels - Topping up of hand sanitisers, soap dispenser so as to encourage school population to use them - The provision of Hand dryer and paper towels are provided for the drying of hand following washing - Displaying of posters adjacent to washing facilities demonstrating hand washing techniques
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Toilets, wash hand basins and surrounding areas cleaned daily and whenever there is visible soiling. - Cleaning staff inspection of toilets and hand washing facilities at regular intervals
Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleaning staff received updated information and training in relation to cleaning and sanitising areas in relation to Covid-19 virus. - Cleaning schedules have been increased in relation to the cleaning of high use areas / surfaces in the school - Employees and students are required to clean and sanitise shared equipment at the commencement and termination of its use.