

Loreto College Foxrock

Covid 19 Response Plan- Parents & Students

Introduction

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the school in putting measures in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Loreto College Foxrock. 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).

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work, and the roadmap for the full return to school, requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of management, staff, pupils and parents.

Finally, it should be noted that Loreto College Foxrock Covid 19 Response Plan is a living document and will be updated in line with public health advice and feedback from staff and parents as appropriate.

1.Covid 19 Policy Statement

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.

2.Cleaning

Over the recent weeks and months staff have been working to clear and clean the school including a whole school deep clean. In accordance with government guidelines the school will be cleaned daily with a particular focus on high traffic/volume areas throughout the day. Students and Staff will take personal responsibility to clean their own work areas, before and after use.

3. Training and Forms

Prior to returning to work all staff will undertake and complete the online Department of Education Covid-19 Induction Training. There is also an on-line guide for parents. This can be found on <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a04fc-advice-for-students-and-their-families/>. These resources are currently being prepared. **It is essential that your daughter brings the "Return to School Form" with her on the first day she returns to school. Students who do not bring the form with them will not be allowed to return to school until it is received.**

4.Parental and Visitor Access to School.

In the interest of safety, access to the school building will be restricted to students and staff only. Access to the school, for parents, for any reason, **will be strictly by prior appointment only.**

Students will be responsible for bringing their belongings to school. If you are concerned that your daughter has forgotten anything, please contact the school and we will remedy the situation, if we can.

5.Control Measures

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19 and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, students, parents/guardians and essential 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, students, 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.

5.1 Awareness of Covid 19 Symptoms

It is important that everyone knows and recognises the symptoms of COVID-19 and we will continuously promote awareness of the symptoms, with signage and reminders in class i.e. –

- *Persistent Cough*
- *Fever / High temperature*
- *Sore Throat*
- *Runny Nose*
- *Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties*
- *Loss of smell, taste or distortion of taste*
- *Flu-like Symptoms.*

No one should attend school if they have any of the symptoms of COVID-19 outlined above and parents should contact their GP.

Furthermore, no one should attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a contact for a person with COVID-19 and must follow HSE advice on restriction of movement.

5.2 Hand and Respiratory Hygiene

Regular and good hand hygiene as a key control measure to minimise the risk of spread of COVID-19 is of critical importance. Accordingly:

- ***Everyone entering the school building must perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser. Sanitising stations will be placed at all entrances.***
- ***Parents will be asked to ensure that their children are aware of how to wash their hands correctly***
- *Good hand hygiene will also be promoted in all classes.*
- *Posters displaying proper hand-washing techniques and promoting hand-washing will be placed beside all washing facilities.*

During the school day, all children in all classes will wash their hands on a regular and organised basis. There are hot water facilities and soap in all toilets, along with paper towels

for drying hands. Hand sanitiser will also be available in all classrooms. We also recommend that students **bring their own personal small hand-sanitiser and wipes to school.**

By following good respiratory hygiene, we can protect one another from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

5.3 Physical Distancing

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is a key control measure to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19. It is essential that health and safety guidelines are followed at all times.

6 Breaks and Lunch

Students must bring all they need for lunch and break to school. Canteen facilities will not be available for the foreseeable future. Students will eat their lunch in their base room. Movement at break and lunch times will be managed by the school to maximise the welfare of our students. Year heads will give clear guidance to students about this on their return to school. Protocols for break and lunch time may change as the school year progresses but will at all times be within government guidelines.

7. Outside Areas

Outdoor areas will be assigned according to year group. It is essential that students co-operate with these arrangements.

8. School Equipment

Sharing of **personal items** among students is discouraged and **each student should have her own equipment e.g. pens / pencils / etc. clearly labelled.** Pupils are encouraged to avoid behaviours that involved hand to mouth contact e.g. putting pens in their mouth.

We ask all students to have their own pencil case and pens that will stay in school and not be taken home. Students will also need white board markers for use in the classroom on personal white boards that will be provided by the school.

Textbooks and Copies

All student textbooks and copies should be covered with a plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent.

Electronics

Where students' own **devices** are being used, we ask that students have appropriate wipes / cleaning solution to wipe devices down – (applicable to 1st – 3rd Year students).

9. Drop off and Collection.

While school times will start and finish as normal each day, year groups will be assigned a designated door through which they must enter and exit the school building. If a student arrives late (after 8.50am) or needs to leave before the end of the school day, the main entrance must be used. At all times, to protect the health and safety of our school community social distancing guidelines should be adhered to by everybody while on the school campus.

Students must arrive on time for school and depart the school within 10 minutes of the end of scheduled classes, study or co-curricular activities. Study are discouraged from gathering on the school campus.

10. Free flowing and Safe movement within the school building.

Students are required to walk on the right hand side of all school corridors. As far as is practicable, movement of large groups of students will be avoided. Students must always walk with the wall to their right hand side.

11. Assemblies

Whole year group assemblies will now be replaced with a meeting of each tutor group once a week with their year head. Tutor time/assemblies will take place at 8.50am each day in the student's base classroom. It is essential that all students attend at this time to enable the recording of attendance for regular school and for health and safety records.

12. PE and Music.

These classes will be held in line with the most up to date government guidelines and will be adapted as needed. Students are permitted to wear their PE uniform on the day PE classes are scheduled.

13. Extra & Co-Curricular Activities

All extra and co-curricular activities will be organised according to the appropriate health & safety guidelines. Students will be advised of arrangements for changing for sport.

14. After School Study

After School Study will be held in the canteen to allow for social distancing. Availability will be limited. Details will follow in due course.

15. PPE

Students will be required in all shared areas of the school. Parents must provide masks for each student along with their own hand sanitiser. Students will not be allowed to attend school and class without an appropriate mask.

In line with DES guidelines students are required to wear a face mask in school when a distance of 2 meters cannot be maintained. Students will be required to wash face masks daily and to store them in a 'zip lock' plastic bag that is clearly labelled when not in use. Please follow the link below for a detailed guide on the use of facemasks. If for any reason outlined in the guidelines your daughter is unable to wear a facemask, please contact her tutor or year head immediately.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/41704-control-measures-covid-19-response-plan-for-safe-reopening-of-post-primary-schools/#use-of-ppe-in-schools>

16. Communication

Communication with parents / guardians will be ongoing throughout the school year. We would urge every parent to download the school app. The app can be downloaded searching "Loreto College Foxrock". All communications will be predominately through the app and emails if necessary.

17. Well Being

We are living through exceptional times and this impacts the wellbeing of everyone in our Loreto School community in different ways. Most pupils and their families will be looking forward to reconnecting with school and with their teachers and friends and settling back into school routine. However, we will undertake specific measures to reassure children and to support and develop each child's capacity to resiliently adapt to the new school environment. Then through our SPHE programme we will promote the following for all students

- *A sense of safety;*
- *A sense of calm;*
- *A sense of belonging and connectedness to school;*
- *A sense of resilience and efficacy; and above all*
- *A sense of hope.*

18. Teaching and Learning.

- Classes will now be of 1-hour duration. There will be a maximum of 6 class periods in the day (4 on a Wednesday).
- We have maximised the academic curriculum this year thus ensuring students will have the opportunity to catch up on any time lost.
- Students will be assigned a base classroom and each year group located in a zoned area of the school.

All of these measures help to reduce movement around the school and reduce the number of classes for which students need to carry books.

Finally, we will also build on our lock-down experience of using digital technologies to both support in-class learning and to be prepared for contingency arrangements and the continuation of learning should there be further periods of school closure through Microsoft Teams and online support.

We encourage students to do the following:

- Bring the minimum of books/copies required to and from school each day.
- Retain a fully stocked pencil case and other equipment in school and not taken home. Label all belongings.
- Sanitise on a daily basis items brought to and from school.

19. 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 Loreto College Foxrock will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of a school day.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 the following are the procedures to be implemented:

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

- *The parents of the child will be contacted and they will be notified as to whereabouts in the school their daughter is to be collected.*
- *We will facilitate the child remaining in isolation if they cannot be collected immediately.*
- *The student will be cared for by a member of our staff maintaining, where possible, social distancing at all times.*
- *Following a suspected case of COVID-19, arrangements will immediately be put in place for appropriate cleaning of the isolation and work areas affected.*

It is of utmost importance to note that - it will be up to the HSE to determine what actions are to be taken with regard to contact tracing and it will be the responsibility of the HSE to :

- *Inform any staff/parents or student who come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process;*
- *Contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID is made.*

Furthermore, it is the HSE that will advise on the appropriate action, on a case-by-case basis, that should be taken vis-a-vis the operation of the school.

NOTE: Staff and pupil confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

20. Travel Abroad

In line with guidelines any student who has travelled abroad must self isolate for 14 days on return to Ireland. Students must not attend school during this period.

It is critical that your daughter takes personal responsibility to reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19. Please talk to your daughter about the importance of adhering to the arrangements as outlined here. The code of behaviour must be adhered to and your daughter should follow health and safety instructions from staff members without hesitation. These measures arise from current advice but may be subject to change over the coming weeks and months.

