

**Liosmór Mochuda NS**

**Covid 19 Response Plan**

The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice as appropriate for primary and special schools.

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Liosmór Mochuda N.S. 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 (NPHET). 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 NPHET 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.

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.

**Liosmór Mochuda N.S 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 for Liosmór Mochuda N.S is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

• continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our staff

 • provide up to date information to our staff and pupils on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie

• display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques

 • agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan in relation to summer provision

 • inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements

 • adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education and Skills

• keep a contact log to help with contact tracing

• ensure staff and pupils engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Skills

• implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school

 • provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time

• implement cleaning in line with Department of Education and Skills advice All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative: Helen Sheehan

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

**1.School Profile**

20 pupils

2 Multi- Grade Classrooms (Junior Infants- 2nd Class + 3rd -6th Class)

1 part time Special Education Teacher

1 Teaching Principal

1 Part Time Secretary

1 Cleaner

There are two classrooms and a former computer room which will be used as a SET room this year.

The toilets are situated inside the classrooms. Children wash hands in classroom sink using warm water and soap. Children dry hands with disposable paper towels.

**2. Planning and Preparing for Return to School**

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the workplace 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.

1. ***School Buildings***

Before re-opening the board will undertake a Risk Assessment analysis.

1. ***Signage***

Liosmór Mochuda N.S. will display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

**3. 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 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 worker who will engage with the Principal/BOM.

All staff, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures

4. **Safety Statement and Risk Assessment**

Attached

**4. Assumptions**

 School will re-open for all pupils on Monday the 31st of August 2020

**4. Drop Off**

All children will enter through the main gate.

School opening time is 9.20 a.m. School supervision for bus children only at 9.00 a.m.

Parents are not to congregate at the gate.

Parents are asked to ‘drop and go’. Please say your ‘goodbyes’ in the car. Parents are asked to remain in cars, where possible, and to socially distance from other parents.

If a parent arrives before 9.20 a.m they may wait in their car or further down the path if they are walking with a child.

Junior and Senior Infants are to be collected at the gate at 2:00 pm.

Junior room will exit first at 3.00 p.m, followed by senior room.

**5. Break times**

The Junior and Senior Room will use different areas of the yard during playtime.

Junior Room will use the lower playground for break and lunch times. Entry and exit of playground will take place via the main front door.

Senior Room will use the upper playground for break and lunch times. Entry and exit of playground will take place via the main front door.

**6. Changes to Classroom and School Layout**

The children and their teachers will work in Class Bubbles. A Class Bubble is a grouping which stays apart from other classes as much as possible. The Class Bubbles will be the Junior Room and Senior Room. The aim of the system within the school is that class groupings mix only with their own class bubble from arrival at school in the morning until the children go home at the end of the school day.

The portacabin will be used to store items deemed unnecessary at this time. The computer room will now become a SET room.

**7. Special Education Teacher**

Special Education Teacher can rotate between areas/classes but this will be minimized where possible. When rotation occurs, agreed sanitising routines will be observed.

* The tables and chairs in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different pupils or small groups attending.

**8. Junior Infants to Second Class**

It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors so there is no requirement for children from Junior Infants to Second Class to maintain a physical distance within their Class Bubble.

 **Third Class to Sixth Class**

Children from Third Class to Sixth Class will be seated in **1 metre** distance apart in their classrooms.

**10. Lunches**

Parents must make sure that children bring their lunches to school to avoid adults having come to the school during the day. Please remind your children not to share their food or drinks with other children.

All lunchboxes must fit in bag to allow free movement of hands for regular sanitizing

If a child forgets their lunch there will be a box outside the front door for the parent to leave the lunchbox.

The school will not provide cutlery for children.

**11. 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 (which includes the DELTA variant).

Common symptoms of Coronavirus include:

* a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).
* a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
* shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
* loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
* Fatigue
* Aches and Pains

Other uncommon symptoms of Coronavirus include:

·         sore throat

·         headaches

·         runny or stuffy noses

·         feeling sick or vomiting

·         diarrhoea

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](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/common-cold.html) and [flu](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/flu/flu-symptoms-and-diagnosis.html).

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), [self-isolate](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/self-isolation/how-to-self-isolate.html) (stay in your room) and phone your family doctor straight away to see if you need [a free COVID-19 test](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/how-to-get-tested.html).

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

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE [Website](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html). Symptoms may be subject to change so regular review of the HSE Website is advised. If you **do not** have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (Coronavirus) test at a [COVID-19 walk-in test centre](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/testing/covid-19-walk-in-test-centres.html).

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in 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 COVID-19 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. A contact log will be initiated for contract tracing purposes.

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.

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

 **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.

**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

1. **Books, Copies, Pencils, etc.**

Children must have their own pencils, colours, sharpeners, rubbers, rulers etc. Children will have a desk tidy provided by the school to store their school stationery. This will be kept in school. Children must have a separate supply of stationery at home.

Sharing stationery will not be permitted.

No toys, teddy bears, blankets from home are permitted.

All pupils must store their textbooks and copies in a clear box provided by the school. The box will be kept under the desk, on the floor. Each child will be provided with a supply of sanitising wipes (kept in box).

1. **Photocopying.**

Any staff member who uses the photocopier should clean it down after use with the wipes provided.

1. **Assemblies**

Weekly School Assemblies will not take place.

1. **Visiting Teachers/Coaches**

Visiting Teachers/Coaches will be postponed until further notice.

**12. Parent Teacher Meetings**

Parents are asked to email or phone the school if they have any queries and not to enter the school building unless it has been pre-arranged. Parent Teacher Meetings may take place via phone or be postponed. The situation will be assessed closer to the time. Parent link nights will be postponed until further notice.

**13. 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 and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of Covid-19
* Not return or attend school if they have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstances.
* 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 three days before returning to work.
* 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 publ**ic** health authorities and comply with same.

**13.The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid. Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment, they will apply standard precautions as per usual.

1. Masks

Guidelines state that face coverings are not suitable for children under the age of 13.

Staff members are required to wear face coverings.

1. Gloves

There is no need for children to wear gloves. They are considered inappropriate under the guidelines. Staff members do not need to wear disposable gloves unless they are looking after a pupil’s intimate care needs, administering First Aid or cleaning.

**14.Hygiene and Cleaning**

* We ask that children wash their hands at home before leaving for school.
* On arrival there will be hand sanitiser available at front door-children may use hand sanitiser or wash their hands with water and soap. If their hands are visibly dirty they must be washed before they can use sanitizer.
* Children will be washing hands/sanitising regularly – on arrival at school, after playing outside, before eating or drinking, after using the toilet and after coughing or sneezing.
* Desks will be cleaned daily and before children eat.
* Additional cleaning will be carried out on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

**15.Illness and Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19**

First Aid/emergency procedure: The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in Liosmór Mochuda NS. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 Contact the principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident

Where there is a suspected case of COVID-19 in a school the school will follow these guidelines:

* Bring the person to the designated isolation area (SET room)
* Contact parents/guardians in the event of a suspected case.
* Facilitate the person remaining in isolation if they cannot go home immediately.
* Supporting the making of arrangements for transport home or if they are too unwell to go home to contact 999 or 112 to advise it is a COVID-19 suspected case.
* Carrying out an assessment of the incident to determine follow up actions.
* Arrangements for the appropriate cleaning of the isolation and work areas. Where there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 amongst school staff or pupils, schools need to maintain both staff and pupil confidentiality at all times and must follow the instructions of HSE Public Health.

**17.COVID-19 Related Absence Management**

COVID-19 related absences will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

Teacher Absence and Substitution

Sequence for covering all teacher absences:

1. Supply panel if the school is part of a supply panel cluster arrangement,

2. School’s own panel of regular substitutes,

3. National substitute service,

4. If no substitute is available from above options then schools use SET teacher to cover the absence.

5. Administrative Principal if applicable

6. Local arrangements that facilitate the pupils to be supervised in a manner that does not involve them being split between existing classes in classrooms

**18,Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE’s Health Promotion Team.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention.

The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum Life under the logo of ‘Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile’.

A free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and staff members are encouraged to make use of the service when the need arises.

\*It is important for parents and for those who provide education to accept that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. Some level of risk of infection is unavoidable as a part of a normal childhood. It is important that parents have a clear understanding of the benefits and risks of education and that it is not possible to guarantee that infection can be prevented in any setting either in a childcare centre, school or in a home.