

Health and Safety Control of COVID-19 Policy for students

*Presentation Secondary School
Ballingarry*

Introduction

Under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Ballingarry as employer is required to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees of the school. The employer is further required to manage and conduct the school in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that individuals at the place of work who are not employees, such as students, parents/guardians, visitors to the school, are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare.

This policy is influenced by the need to minimise the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into the school community and to prevent its spread. Although it is acknowledged that no single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19 transmission, adherence to this policy will contribute to the reduction of that risk of transmission.

In accordance with this policy students are expected to comply with the standards of behaviour set out in this policy or as directed by the school to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19. The COVID-19 control measures are consistent with current advice from the HSE, the Health and Safety Authority, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Foreign Affairs and, as such, may be subject to change. Students and parents/guardians will be notified of any changes to the control measures.

Students are expected to comply with all directions from school staff in relation to the school's COVID-19 control measures. Any failure or refusal to comply with this policy or to follow instructions of school staff should be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Parents/guardians are required to supply the school with a phone number/s of available person/s who can be contacted at all times and who will be available to collect a student from the school should the need arise.

1. Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to symptoms of cold or flu. The most common symptoms

are:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath
- loss of sense of smell or taste

More information regarding the most up-to-date signs and symptoms of COVID-19 is available on the HSE website, <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>.

Last updated: 19 August 2020 at 12.01am

If you have any common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you should [self-isolate](#) and phone your GP straight away to [get a coronavirus test](#).

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- [a fever \(high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above\)](#)
- [a cough](#) - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- [shortness of breath](#) or breathing difficulties
- [loss or change to 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

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of [cold](#) and [flu](#).

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

2. **Standards of Behaviour expected of students to help prevent the introduction or spread of COVID - 19 in the school**

Students are expected to comply with any control measures directed by the school to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19, including, but not limited to:

- maintaining a social-distance of at least 1 metre and where possible, 2 metres, from other students and staff;
- All students at post-primary level, are required to wear a face covering subject to a limited number of exceptions set out in relevant Department of Education guidance. Face coverings must not contain any slogans/logos/images that may cause upset or be deemed offensive to any member of the school community.
- performing hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser on entering the school.
- repeating hand-hygiene at regular intervals throughout the school day and when directed by school staff;
- maintaining good respiratory-hygiene. In this regard students should:
 - cover nose/mouth with a tissue when coughing/sneezing and dispose of used tissue in waste bin and perform hand hygiene
 - cough or sneeze into the inner elbow (upper sleeve) rather than into the hand, if no tissues are available.
 - keep contaminated hands away from the eyes and nose
 - carry out hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials
 - not spit or deliberately cough or sneeze at or towards any other person in the school
- not sharing materials or stationery, such as pens, calculators, rulers, *etc.* with other students;
- not attending school for 14 days after returning from travel out of the country in line with Government guidelines for travel;
- not attending school if displaying COVID-19 like symptoms and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- not attending school where tested positive for COVID-19 and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- not attending school if identified by the HSE as a person who has been in contact with another person who has contracted COVID-19 and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice;
- not attending school if a member of the student's household is displaying COVID-19 symptoms and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- telling a teacher or other member of staff where a student feels unwell at school. In that regard
 - the student will require to be collected from the school as soon as possible by a parent/guardian or a person designated by the parent/guardian for such purpose.
 - parents must ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details so that they can be contacted by the school if required.

- complying with any other such directions as advised by the DES and/or HSE and communicated to the school community.

Students should be aware that the above is a non-exhaustive list. Students are expected to follow all instructions from staff which aim to prevent the introduction COVID-19 into the school and minimise its spread.

3. Failure to comply with the standards of behaviour

Failure by a student to comply with the standards of behaviour expected to help prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 will constitute a breach of the Code of Behaviour of Presentation Secondary School, Ballingarry and s/he may be subject to sanction up to and including suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any actions or sanctions taken in respect of alleged breaches of the code of behaviour will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the school's code of behaviour, the requirements of the NEWB Guidelines on Developing a Code of Behaviour and relevant requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Sanctions will be proportionate to the nature, seriousness and context of the behaviour.

A student engaging in aggressive, threatening or unacceptable behaviour that creates or increases the risk of COVID-19 infection for staff, other students or visitors to the school may be removed from class and, if necessary, from the school premises with immediate effect, pending any further action to be taken in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Kathleen Ryan (Chairperson : BoM)

Angela Cahill (Principal)

Date: 21/09/2020

Update to Presentation Secondary School - Code of Behaviour

Given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff and students is paramount. We are adopting a shared collaborative approach in which we all have a responsibility to ensure the safety of one another.

We have taken some additional measures within the school community to ensure the safest possible learning and working environment for our students and staff. Presentation Secondary School Ballingarry will continue to be guided throughout this pandemic by NPHET and the DES.

At all times students are expected to comply fully with all directives as explained and outlined to them by management and staff, including but not limited to the notices displayed throughout the school.

Given the evolving nature of this pandemic, the demands and expectations will change in accordance with DES and Public Health advice.

Given the risk to health and safety – breaches with regard to non-compliance will be considered to be serious and dealt with according to the schools Code of Behaviour.

There is also an addendum to the procedures for hearing and determining Appeals that will apply during the Covid- 19 pandemic.

Use of Face coverings in Post Primary Schools:

The Department of Education and Science has issued the following clarification on the use of face coverings in post primary schools.

Wearing a face covering or mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic.

Staff, students at post primary level are required to wear a face covering.

Unless presenting a medical certificate, certifying that the person falls into a category that exempts them from wearing a face covering – staff or students will be refused entry to the school.

Exemptions:

A medical certificate to certify that a person falls into a category listed below must be provided to the school by, or on behalf of, any person (staff or student) who claims that they are covered by the exemptions below:

- ***Any person with difficulty breathing who cannot wear a cloth face covering or visor.***
- ***Any person who is unable to remove the cloth covering or visor without assistance.***
- ***Any person who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the cloth face covering or visor, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.***

Physical Distancing when a face covering cannot be worn.

The view is that there will be a very small number who are covered by the limited exceptions who cannot wear a face covering or visor. The arrangements in place for physical distancing (1m) , hand hygiene, cough etiquette and cleaning will apply and be strictly observed.

Students using school transport:

All students on the post primary transport scheme are required to wear face coverings subject to the exemptions above.