

## **Addendum to Code of Behaviour Policy during Covid-19**

### **Rationale**

In light of the need for students to be more mindful of attending school during the current Covid-19 climate, this amendment to the Code of Behaviour Policy is required so that students will be aware of specific rules on their return to school. Our guiding principle when making any changes or adjustments to this policy is to be able to keep all of our students, families and staff safe.

These amendments will be communicated to students, parents and staff. This addendum has been updated in light of the clarifications sought from the Department of Education (September 2020).

### **Note to Parents/Guardians:**

Parents/guardians are required to observe and respect all social distancing protocols in relation to any contact with the school. This includes maintaining a two metre distance to other families when dropping off or collecting their children from the school and any contact with the school. All visits to the school are required to be made in advance through the school office.

### **Behaviour Expectations**

Our school requires every member of the school community to observe and respect the principles of social distancing, cough and sneeze etiquette and make every effort to minimise risk to oneself and others.

This requires us to modify some of our behaviours which include;

- amended expectations about breaks, including where students may or may not congregate
- clear rules about coughing or spitting at or towards any other person
- clear rules for students at home about conduct in relation to remote education
- identify any reasonable adjustments that need to be made for students with more challenging behaviour.

### **Use of face coverings in Post Primary schools**

Wearing of face coverings is a requirement in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board schools funded by the Department of Education. Staff and students, at post-primary level, are required to wear a face covering. The exemptions to this are set out below.

## **Cloth face coverings**

Cloth face coverings are recommended for staff and students. 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.

Face coverings must not contain any slogans/logos/images that may cause upset or be deemed offensive to any member of the school community.

## **Visors**

Cloth face coverings are more effective than visors. In the limited circumstances where a cloth face covering cannot be worn clear visors must be considered. The alternate use of a clear visor can also be considered when a staff member is interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.

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

## **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 a visor
- any person who is unable to remove the cloth face-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.

In circumstances where a medical certificate is not provided that person (staff or student) will be refused entry to the school.

## **Directions for effective use of face coverings**

- Information should be provided by schools on the proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings. Advice on how to use face coverings properly can be found here.

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

All staff (and students, where applicable), should be aware that they should wash or sanitise hands (using a hand sanitiser) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a face covering.

Face coverings should be stored in a designated space, for example, in an individually labelled container or bag.

Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.

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

Whilst staff and students may wish to utilise their own face covering on a day-to-day basis, schools should have a stock of additional disposable or multi-use face coverings (or if appropriate, visors) for staff and students in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day or where required on an ongoing basis.

### **Use of medical grade face coverings**

Schools should consider the specific circumstances where the use of medical face masks (to EU Standard EN 14683) may be more appropriate for staff as part of their risk assessment for employees returning to work (for example where staff by necessity need to be in close and continued proximity with students with intimate care needs such as SNAs).

### **Students using school transport**

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

### **School Routines and Procedures**

All members of the school community have to be mindful of the following;

- following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- following instructions on who students can socialise with at school
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles

- use of toilets

### Hygiene and Health Expectations

- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- not wear any items such as jewelry, 'fake nails', etc that has the potential to impede adequate hand hygiene
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- tell an adult if you are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus

### Wellbeing and Social and Emotional Learning

Our school will provide a safe and pleasant environment and spend a considerable amount of time liaising with students on promoting their wellbeing. This will include;

- Curriculum changes to support students during SPHE, PE and CSPE classes
- Additional time devoted to in-class discussions on general wellbeing and development
- Additional supports that students can access outside of classroom if required

### Students are expected to:

- Arrive to and depart from school premises at the agreed time
- Proceed to the designated classroom without delay
- Follow instructions from staff members on movement throughout the school campus
- Ask for permission to go to the toilet
- Wash hands thoroughly before entering school premises and while in school, wash their hands for at least 20 seconds more often than usual with soap and water or hand sanitiser
- Remain in their designated seating within the classroom during classes
- Keep a safe distance from other students and refrain from physical contact with their peers
- Maintain healthy practise when coughing or sneezing, cover any cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching the mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- Adhere to rules in relation to toilet visits and pre-arranged playtime activities.
- Refrain from spitting or coughing at or towards other students and members of staff
- Maintain responsibility for their own equipment e.g. stationery and water bottles and ensure that these are not shared with other students

- Tell a member of staff if they are unwell and are exhibiting signs of Coronavirus.

The school will explain these rules clearly to students at the start of the year and remind them periodically. Class teachers will ensure that the rules are displayed in classrooms and that they are explained to Students.

### **Sanctions for unsafe behaviour during the Covid-19 pandemic**

Incidents which involve students who deliberately fail to comply with instructions including, but not limited to those on the following list, will be addressed in line with sanctions of our current Codes of Behaviour policy. These include;

- failure to wear a face covering or failure to wear it properly as per HSE advice and Return to School Protocol
- failure to comply with requests from staff to practice social distancing
- failure to practice procedures aimed at reducing risk (including but not limited to following on way corridor system, wiping down work stations, adequately sanitising and washing hands)
- behaving inappropriately which causes offence or concern to other students and members of staff through pranks or fake coughs/sneezes
- spitting or coughing at other students or members of staff
- spreading unfounded rumours or stories that a student / students or members of staff have tested positive for Covid-19.