



COVID-19 Response Plan

Introduction

This plan has been amended on 25th September to take account of actions taken following risk assessments and other adjustments. This plan was further amended by the Board of Management of Mount Seskin Community College on 29th September 2020 to include Health and Safety Controls (behaviours) for students. See Covid 19 Health & Safety Policy.

Additional Amendments (Feb. 2021). In advance of the phased re-opening of schools beginning on Monday 22nd February and in light of Risk Assessments carried out on 16th Feb 2021 in consultation with the LWRs and recent government advice issued to schools, this policy was further amended on 16th February 2021 and approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on 11th March 2021.

This is a school specific Response Plan drawn from the comprehensive range of material contained in the:

COVID-19 Response Plan for safe reopening of post primary schools From Department of Education and Skills Published at: 28 July 2020 and Last updated 17 August 2020.
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/4d555-introduction-covid-19-response-plan-for-safe-reopeningof-post-primary-schools/> and other official forums that inform public health advice and the reopening of schools.

COVID-19 Response Plan for safe and sustainable operation of post primary schools From Department of Education and Skills Published February 2021.

This Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Dublin Dun Laoghaire ETB in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Mount Seskin Community College. 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) and the Department of Education.

The Plan includes additional advice and actions drawn up in February 2021 and guided by the Covid 19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of Post Primary Schools.

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the **phased** reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As the advice issued by NPHE 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 students 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.

Our Plan aims to provide an educational experience to our students that is as close to their previous experience as possible, whilst attempting to ensure the health and wellbeing of our students and all our staff. In this regard, we are implementing some necessary changes to ensure the foundation stones of good hand hygiene, coughing and sneezing etiquette and social distancing. We will have induction training for all our staff and students, which will promote best practice in these crucial steps to preventing the spread of Covid-19.

In preparation for the phased re-opening of Mount Seskin Community college beginning with the Shaw Class (the MLD – Special Class), all staff will received updated Induction Training. This training took place on February 22nd. 2021

Likewise, all students will receive updated Covid 19 training on infection prevention on their phased return. This will be facilitated through the Pastoral Care, Tutor/Yearhead systems in place.

This Plan aims to reduce and minimise the risk to students, staff and others and should be seen as a living document, which will be updated in accordance with the public health advice. The assistance and co-operation of all staff, students, parents and visitors is critical to the success of our Plan.

This document aims to provide details of the Steps within our Response Plan:

1. Step 1 – Mount Seskin Community College COVID-19 Policy
2. Step 2 - Responsible Persons for Performing Tasks
3. Step 3 - Employer Information
4. Step 3 - Employer Information
 - a) Return to Work – Planning and Preparing
 - b) Control Measures
 - c) COVID-19 Induction / Familiarisation
 - d) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

- e) Cleaning and Disinfection in the Workplace
 - f) Workers Responsibilities in the Workplace
 - g) Workers Representatives
 - h) Supplementary Information
5. Covid related absence management
 6. Employee assistance and wellbeing programme
 7. Code of positive behaviour
 8. Communication with parents/guardians
 9. Teaching and learning

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan. Note: The plan is a live working document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from www.Gov.ie, www.dbei.ie, www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie; www.education.ie.

The response plan is set out as a 4 step process (Fig.1) below.



Response Plan



STEP 1 – MOUNT SESKIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE COVID-19 POLICY

Mount Seskin Community College's COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy was first approved by the Board of Management on 28th August 2020 and brought to the attention of our stakeholders and visitors. It can be found on our website. Further amendments to the Plan were included on 25th September 2020. **The Plan was further amended during February 2021 in advance of the phased re-opening of all 2nd. level schools and Special Classes.**



STEP 2 - RESPONSIBLE PERSONS FOR PERFORMING TASKS

We have identified suitably trained persons to help with ensuring that the plan is implemented and checklists are completed.

Persons have been identified who have agreed to take responsibility for carrying out tasks such as:

- role of worker representatives
- use of checklists to identify any areas for improvement
- regular checks to ensure the plan is being implemented
- review of risk assessments and the safety statement
- renewal of statutory certification where needed
- training
- reviewing emergency procedures and first aid

We have consulted with the persons responsible for these tasks and have:

- briefed them on the tasks and their responsibilities
- entered their name against the relevant task(s) in the Responsible Persons table (see below) and asked each responsible person to sign to indicate their agreement with carrying out the task.

Responsible Persons Task Register			
NO.	TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS	SIGNATURE
1	Persons responsible for overall implementation of the plan	Austin Fennessy & Charlie Ferguson in consultation with the LWRs, Location Mgt. Team and Middle Leadership Team	



STEP 3 - EMPLOYER INFORMATION

School Name:	Mount Seskin Community College
Workplace Address:	Jobstown, Tallaght, Dublin 24.
Senior Management Team in the Workplace:	Principal: Mr. Austin Fennessy, Deputy Principal: Mr. Charlie Ferguson
Lead Worker Representatives:	Mary Frances Burns and Derek Buckley
Type of Business:	Community College
Phone:	01 4525788
Email:	mountseskincc@ddletb.ie

STEP 4 - CHECKLISTS



a) Return to Work – Planning and Preparing

The planning and preparing phase is critical to ensure a safe return to work and covers such items as information and guidance, return- to- work forms, identifying worker representatives, revising our induction briefing, identifying and putting in place control measures and updating our safety statements, risk assessments and emergency plans.

Staff and students must self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, which have been explained to them, and the return-to-work form will be used to assess workers' health before they enter the workplace.

Phased re-opening of the school February/March 2021: A revised Return to Work form was developed by DDLETB with additional questions. All staff MUST complete this form and return to the Deputy Principal (Mr. Ferguson in advance of returning to work). Responses to the form will be monitored and the complete set of forms will be retained in the school.



b) Infection Prevention Control Measures – to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid 19 in Mount Seskin Community College.

This section deals with the measures we are implementing to prevent or minimise the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and in our communities.

Measures which must be complied with include:

- Ensuring good Hand hygiene/frequent Hand sanitising.
- Hand Hygiene: there is a requirement for access to hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands, for example playing outside or certain sporting activities as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands.
- Alcohol-based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.
- Exercising Respiratory hygiene
- Ensuring Physical distancing at all times.
- All members of the school community ensuring that they Minimise contact
- Considering At-risk workers and students
- The requirements of Visiting Contractors, parents and visitors
- Advise staff and pupils to self-isolate or restrict their movements at home if they display any signs or symptoms of Covid 19 and contact their family doctor to arrange a Covid 19 test.

Advise staff and pupils not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:

- If they are identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid 19
- If they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff/students are advised to consult and follow the latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Advise staff and pupils to cooperate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.

Further Information

Visitor/Contractor Form available at the front office.

A detailed breakdown of the arrangements in place to ensure that supplies of cleaning materials are always available in classrooms is set out in Appendix 1



c) COVID-19 Induction / Familiarisation

Staff and students will be told about changes in the workplace and updated on new ways of working. Our usual induction, or workplace familiarisation, for new employees has been revised to include measures to help prevent the spread of the virus. All staff and students will be brought through this induction before starting back to work. The induction will be carried out in a safe manner with physical distancing measures in place.

The following range of items will be discussed and brought to the attention of staff and students:

- Communication system
- Return-to work form (staff only)
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (at home and in the workplace)
- Information on how the virus is spread
- Control measures to help prevent infection
- COVID-19 contact log
- Worker Representative(s)
- Changes to risk assessments and safety statement
- Changes to emergency plans and first aid procedures
- Minimising contact
- Reporting procedures
- **Ventilation:** The Dept published guidance setting out the practical steps for good ventilation in accordance with public health advice “Practical Steps for the Deployment of good Ventilation Practices in Schools”.
- Windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break times, lunch times and also at the end of the day. Windows and doors(where practical) should be partially opened when classrooms are in use. The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather. **The adult(s) in the class must take responsibility to ensure these measures is actioned effectively at all times.**

DDLETB require all staff to attend online training in advance of their return to work. On completion, an email is sent to the Principal to confirm training has been completed. The Principal retains this log. In addition, staff will attend induction on return to work as prescribed by the Department of Education

and Skills. The February 2021 Amendment to the Covid 19 Policy allows for copies of the new Pre-Return to Work Form to be given to and retained by the Deputy Principal.

Staff Duties:

Staff must not return to work in the event of the following:

- o If they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus
- o If they have travelled outside Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow the latest advice in relation to foreign travel
- o Cooperate with any public health personnel and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case of outbreak in the school
- o Undergo any Covid 19 testing that may be required in the school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.



d) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

This details our procedure to be followed in the event of someone developing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or while on school premises.

We have assigned a manager and put in place an isolation team to manage this situation, and provided them with information on how to do this safely. We have also identified and marked an isolation area to be used to isolate the affected person from the rest of the school community and procedures to be followed to enable them to safely leave the premises. Should there be an additional person affected at the same time, we have in place 2 additional isolation areas as a reserve.

Covid Tracker: School Staff are advised to download the HSE Covid 19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school setting.

Further Information

Health and Safety Authority Checklist No.4 - Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

[See Appendix 2 for More fuller details around procedures.](#)



e) Cleaning and Disinfection in the Workplace

We have put in place an effective cleaning and disinfection system as regular cleaning and disinfection will help reduce the spread of the virus. We have arranged for frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, light switches, kitchen appliances etc. to be cleaned regularly throughout the day.

If disinfection of contaminated surfaces is needed, this will be done in addition to cleaning.

Workers will be provided with cleaning materials to keep their own workspace hygienically clean and advised to regularly clean any personal items brought in from home.

Cleaning staff will be given information and instruction in relation to the new procedures.

In reviewing the cleaning arrangements in the school, a written cleaning schedule is now drawn up to be made available to cleaning staff including frequently touched surfaces, burko, fridges, door handles etc.



f) Workers Responsibilities in the Workplace

Aside from the usual day to day responsibilities that staff and students must comply with, the introduction of COVID-19 into society brings new challenges that staff need to be aware of so that the return to work safely protocol can be implemented effectively.

Staff must keep themselves updated on the latest advice from Government and the HSE. They must also co-operate in maintaining the control measures put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and report any issues or concerns they may have.



g) Workers Representatives

We have appointed two worker representatives to ensure that COVID-19 measures are followed. Worker representatives will receive training and information on the role and the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus. Staff will be informed who their worker representatives are.

Good communications channels in the workplace are essential for all stakeholders. Staff should engage with the worker representatives, to highlight concerns, report defects, submit ideas and identify improvements in the workplace.

An additional meeting between LWRs and school Mgt took place on 16th Feb. 2021 to carry out a briefing and to update the LWRs in relation to the re-opening of the school. A risk assessment of all areas was carried out that say.



h) Supplementary Information

Zoned areas within the school:

All Year Groups are assigned a designated corridor or bloc and base rooms for the various classes within each year group. Parents/students will be advised of locations via the website/texts

Practical subjects such as music, art, home economics, woodwork/metalwork etc will be held in the regular practical rooms.

Specified Entry/Exit Doors for Year Groups are as follows:

- **First Years** - assemble in their class groups in the designated areas in the Peace Garden.
- **Second Years** - assemble in their class groups in the area in front of the Main Office.
- **Third Years** - go directly to the New Building and assemble in the 3rd year cloister.
- **Transition Years** - go directly to the woodwork room.
- **Fifth Years** - go directly to the Basket Ball area.
- **Sixth Years** - enter the college directly by student entrance and assemble in 6th year designated area.

COVID RELATED ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with DES and DDLETB and set out in the relevant 2020 circulars.

Some temporary arrangements/flexibilities put in place for certain staff groups during the phased re-opening of Mount Seskin Community College from February 22nd until school is fully re-opened:

Staff over 60: flexibility in return, until school reopens fully.

Pregnant staff: Flexibility in return until school reopens fully

Teachers on parental leave or unpaid leave

SNA on parental or unpaid leave.

If any of the above applies to you, please talk with H.R./School Mgt.

WELLBEING PROGRAMME

Mount Seskin Community College and its patron, DDLETB aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all students and staff at work, whether in the school facility or at home. We are mindful that the support and promotion of student and staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work, teaching and learning contexts.

We aim to foster a culture and school environment that support healthy behaviours and student/staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to students/staff as well as organising suitable support programmes, initiatives and events. These are challenging times for everyone.

Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the Principal/Deputy Principal or avail of the Employee Assistance Programme. Likewise, students will have a range of supports in school such as tutors, yearheads, care

team, guidance counsellors, BFL, SCP, chaplaincy etc. Parents can also avail of the supports offered through the Home School Community Teacher.

CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As we are now reopening the school within a pandemic crisis, there are some elements of positive behaviour that we will expect of our students, that are supplementary to our Code of Positive Behaviour. We will bring these to the attention of our whole school community. If incidents such as these occur, they will be processed within the parameters of our Code of Positive Behaviour. They include (although are not limited to):

- Refusing to follow instructions around the use of particular areas, yard space or rooms.
- Interfering with the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or the PPE of another student.
- Interfering with Covid related signage and materials.
- Deliberately coughing, sneezing or spitting on another person, or threatening to do so.
- Refusal to wear a face covering, mask, visor.
- Compromising the school's Covid-19 Response Plan and any revisions, amendments to same.

The Code of Behaviour was amended on 29th August and approved by the Board of Management to take the above into consideration.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Communication between school and home is always important but becomes even more crucial during these times. It is therefore essential that we have up to date mobile phone numbers for parents. We are also developing a database of emails and expanding our social media presence to include Twitter.

The majority of Mount Seskin Community College's communication comes through text messages and during this pandemic, we may need to contact parents as a matter of urgency. This may be because their child is displaying signs of Covid-19, or because the school (or part of the school) has been ordered to close for health reasons. We truly hope that this will not be the case, but it is so important that parents and families are contactable throughout the school day.

We therefore ask all parents to ensure that their contact details are correct on VShare and to let us know on our email: mountseskincc@ddletb.ie if contact details need to be adjusted.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and Learning is at the core of everything we do in Mount Seskin Community College. We will do everything we can to reassure students on their continued progress, despite the in-school time lost during the last academic and current academic year. We will follow Department guidelines on the restructuring of Classroom Based Assessments for 2nd/3rd Years and be cogniscent of the missing time when students are selecting subject levels.

We are also aware that a small minority of students may not be able to return immediately due to health issues and we are awaiting further guidance on how to support students who will have to learn from home for a period of time.

Appendix 1

Cleaning materials: the arrangements for the provision of wipes, spray and blue paper roll is as follows.

Each Year head is taking responsibility for their own blocs. Quantities of materials have been given to each year head.

Mr. Byrne is responsible for the TY and 5th Year bloc including Shalom and the PE Area.

Mr. McKay: the first year bloc and the computer rooms.

Mr. Halpin: 2nd and 6th year bloc and computer rooms 1 & 2

Ms. Wall: 3rd year bloc

However, there are specific areas that do not fall within this remit, therefore:

Christine Ward: will take care of supplies to the staff pods, staffroom, work room and the corridor bloc from the staffroom to Julie's room and the new library location. She will also look after the Shaw Base Classroom.

Ms. P. Byrne has supplies for the science bloc.

Mr. McKay will monitor stock levels to ensure orders are placed in a timely fashion.

In addition to the above, **Ms Burns** (Lead Worker Rep.) will do additional checks on Tuesday and Friday mornings.

Stephen Bugler has responsibility for monitoring/refilling the hand sanitisers on the walls. Please let him know if there is any dispenser that needs to be refilled.

Appendix 2

Procedure & Checklist for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

Each main class cohort is considered a separate group for the purpose of managing suspected cases. Each teacher/staff member is required to manage a suspected case in line with the protocol and training as set out below.

A nominated member of the school senior management team is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the protocol to deal with suspected cases have been adhered to.

In Mount Seskin Community College the nominated person is Mr. A. Fennessy (School Principal). In his absence, the Deputy Principal, Mr. Ferguson will assume the role.

Isolation Area

1. The identified location being used as an isolation area is the room opposite the Main Office with the name ISLOATION ROOM on the door. This room is accessible to all including staff and students with disabilities, well ventilated and near the main exit point of the school.
2. A contingency plan for dealing with more than one suspected case of COVID-19 is in place as the dressing rooms in the PE Hall may also be use.
3. Below is a checklist of materials located in the isolation room with other materials contained in a box on the table by the window.
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Disinfectant/wipes
 - Gloves/Masks/aprons
 - Waste Bags
 - Bins

Isolating a Person

4. Procedures are in place to accompany the infected person to the isolation area, along the isolation route with physical distancing of 2 meters from them.
5. Please be advised to maintain the 2-meter distance as the accompanying person. All others are also advised to maintain a distance of at least 2m from the affected person at all times.
6. Arrange with a co-teacher, SNA or staff member in adjacent area to cover your class while accompanying the affected person to the isolation area by the shortest route.

7. Make sure the affected person is wearing his/her mask properly. Stocks of disposable masks are available from yearheads and the main office to give to the affected person while in the common area and when exiting the building if necessary.
8. If you are isolated in a classroom when a suspected Covid 19 incident occurs and are unable to seek support from a colleague, please ring the assigned manager on the mobile number.
9. In any event, notify the manager as soon as possible once the affected person is in the isolation room.
10. The incident manager will contact the parent/guardian and make immediate arrangements for the affected person to go home. The parent/guardian must be advised that the young person is displaying symptoms and that medical advice should be sought from the GP. Ask the parent to maintain contact with the school.
11. Staff members with symptoms should also be located in the isolation room. Ask them if the staff members feel well enough to travel home. If not well enough, make arrangements to do so.