**COVID - 19 Response Document**

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**Loreto College**

**2020**

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**'Keeping our Loreto Community Safe'**

**A policy document on responding to COVID-19 related issues**

The situation with COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly changing; so as a school, we continue to take advice from the Public Health Agency and the Department of Education to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff. Using those guidelines, we wish to reinforce the government guidelines to all staff and students:

**Symptoms of COVID-19:**

* a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature); OR
* a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual); OR
* a loss of or change in sense of smell or taste.

Staff and students are reminded that **they must self-isolate (i.e. stay at home**), **immediately** if:

* you have any symptoms of coronavirus or if you have tested positive for coronavirus – this means you have coronavirus
* you live with someone who has symptoms or tested positive
* someone in your support bubble has symptoms or tested positive and you have been in 'close contact with them'*. 'Close contact' is defined as being within a 2-meter distance from the person who has tested positive for 15 minutes or longer*
* you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace
* you arrive in the UK from a country with a high coronavirus risk – see GOV.UK: how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK, for up-to-date guidelines.
* Get a test as soon as possible if you have any symptoms of coronavirus. The test needs to be done in the first 5 days of having symptoms.
* You do not need to get a test if you have no symptoms or if you have different symptoms.
* You can ring NHS 111 for information or advice and they will help you decide if you need to contact your GP. Calling your GP may be necessary if you have:
* an existing health condition;
* problems with your immune system;
* you feel you are not coping with your symptoms.
* It is advised that you do **not** attend your GP surgery or emergency department in person before calling ahead and speaking with someone.
* If you have very serious symptoms or feel it is a medical emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the operator of your symptoms.

**What happens if a member of the school community begins symptoms in school:**

If a student begins to have symptoms in school, Loreto College will follow the guidelines from the Department of Education as outlined.

These guidelines outline clearly the procedures to ensure the appropriate medical treatment is made for the student, depending on the nature of their symptoms and how they seem to be responding.

In summary,

* if the student appears to be seriously ill, staff will ring 999 and contact parents / guardians.
* If the student appears to be exhibiting symptoms, but does not appear to be seriously ill, staff will contact parents/ guardians to arrange collection from school **as soon as possible.**
* The student will be isolated in a ventilated area, until they are collected. This area will be cleaned and disinfected when the symptomatic student has been collected; as will any workstations the student has sat in during the day.
* Any other members of the student's household who attend school, will also be sent home as PHA guidelines outline.
* Parents will be asked to sign their understanding that students exhibiting symptoms in school should be tested prior to return to the college.
* **Mrs L McCracken** will be the staff member (in PPE) dealing with those students who appear symptomatic. She will take a record of the name of the student, reason why the student could not stay in school (i.e. symptoms exhibited) and who collected the student.
* Staff and other students should keep a distance of at least 2 meters from the person exhibiting symptoms.

**Test Results:**

*If the test comes back negative*, students / staff member can come back to school if:

* everyone at home has tested negative
* they have not had fever in the previous 48 hours
* they feel well enough

*If they test positive, (or members of their household test positive)*

* the student / staff member and everyone in their household will be told to self-isolate

**Procedures if a person in the school community tests positive:**

Mrs McCarry is the senior teacher who coordinates the COVID-19 response within the school setting, in liaison with Ms Toner (Principal).

On learning of a positive case, Mrs McCarry will inform the Public Health Agency, who will advise that information is gathered to identify 'close contacts' of the positive case.

School will be asked to provide the following evidence:

* Name of the case
* Date we were informed of the result
* Date the case became unwell (if we are aware of this)
* Dates the case was present in school – from 2 days before the person became unwell to up to 14 days after
* Identify the class(es) / bubble (if using) that child / teacher attends
* Determine the number of students within the class(es) / bubble that were < 2 metres, for greater than 15 minutes
* Identify other indoor school settings child / teacher was in e.g. assembly hall, sport hall, canteen, staff room, school transport
* Provide information on whether face masks are used

Mrs McCarry will contact:

* The family of the positive case, to identify areas / classrooms in the school where the student was, and who they were with, within 2 metres for longer than 15 minutes during the school day.
* Staff identified on the timetable of the contact, will also be asked to identify close contacts according to their seating plans.
* The duty officer will then phone Mrs McCarry to discuss the information above and determine if there are any pupils / teachers that meet the definition of a school close contact. *(Please note, tracing must be completed to 48 hours before the positive case began symptoms. For example – if a student becomes symptomatic on a Friday, tracing will have to go back to all classes / areas in the school attended from Wednesday. If, however, a student begins symptoms on a Monday, we will get advice from the PHA, but it is unlikely, we will have to trace back, as 48 hours would bring the time scale back to Saturday; so no pupils are in school).*

The following details will be emailed to PHA.dutyroom@hscni.net

* Name of close contact
* Date of last contact with case
* Contact Number (parent/guardian if <16 years)
* The PHA Contact and Trace team will then be in touch with the family to trace outside the school setting.
* Should staff or parents / guardians need to contact school regarding a COVID related issue, during school hours (8.45 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.) please ask to speak to **Ms B. Toner (Principal) or Mrs S. McCarry (Senior Teacher coordinating COVID response).** You can telephone the college - 02870343611 or email - lstewart846@loretocollege.coleraine.ni.sch.uk, who will then notify Ms Toner or Mrs McCarry who will get in contact with you.
* If you have become aware of a positive test result out of school hours – e.g. over the weekend, you can contact this 'emergency only' phone number: **07869544772**, so relevant staff are alerted to initiate the close contact trace.
* We will complete a 'Confirmed COVID 19 case proforma issued by the EA.

**Procedures if identified as 'close contact'**

Where a student or member of staff tests positive, or the Public Health Agency have advised that we must treat a case as positive, the school will act in the following way:

* Depending on the numbers of students impacted, school will then notify those identified as close contacts, either by text message or a telephone call. **If we are notified over the weekend, text messaging will be the method used.**
* If you do not get communication from school, please consider that as confirmation that your son / daughter has not been a close contact.
* The school will be following the advice given by the Public Health Agency guidelines strictly. **This will mean that anyone identified as a close contact will be asked to stay at home (self-isolate) for a full fourteen days, from the date they were in last contact with the positive case.** This is because it can take up to 14 days for coronavirus symptoms to appear.
* School will operate as normal for all other students, including siblings of the student self-isolating, as long as the close contact and they themselves do not get symptoms.
* If they do get symptoms, they must get a test, and the family should isolate together at that point, until they get clarity of a negative result. If positive, the whole family must then isolate as per Public Health Agency guidelines, and notify the school.

Following advice from the Public Health Agency, arrangements will be made in school for:

* enhanced cleaning of affected areas / classrooms
* close contact will be maintained with parents/ guardians regarding student recovery and planned return to school at an appropriate time in consultation with PHA advice.
* If two or more of the school community tests positive within a fourteen day period, this may be viewed as a 'potential' outbreak, and advice will be sought from the Public Health Authority as to how we go forward.

##  How long to self-isolate if you have tested positive

If a student or member of staff has symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus, you'll usually need to self-isolate for at least 10 days.

However, you will usually need to self-isolate for 14 days if:

* someone you live with has symptoms or tested positive
* someone in your support bubble has symptoms or tested positive
* you've been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace / PHA, as you are considered to be a ‘close contact’.

**Remote Learning**

For students who have tested positive (if well enough) and those instructed to self-isolate, classwork will commence through Google Classroom. In these cases, students will be absent from between ten to fourteen days or more. Students should treat Monday to Friday as normal school days. We advise they take time for physical exercise as would be provided in PE classes.

**Please contact the school office on 02870343611:**

* if your son / daughter has not signed on to our school network
* if they have not taken note of google classroom codes

Heads of Department are asked to gather codes from the teachers of their subject by class. These will be collated on a spread sheet by the office staff, in the event that a student is not aware of the codes their teacher has allocated the class.

Students must ensure they join Google Classes as soon as they have their codes.

Mrs McCarry will inform staff of those self-isolating.

Subject departments will have their own policy on how they will arrange work on google classroom for students. This may take varying forms – e.g. uploading notes to complete work on; podcasts; research; assignments; Google Meet etc. Students are asked to keep up to date with their learning from home, using the uploaded resources provided by their teachers.

Please advise your son / daughter to check both the stream and classwork material.

They should have their textbooks at home, and depending on subjects, hard copies of booklets / units of work. It is important that they keep up with the work set, and should also be encouraged to independently research topics they had been covering in class as well. We encourage them to use initiative in learning; for example:

* complete mind-maps to revise content covered from the beginning of September, in preparation for mid-term assessments;
* build literacy skills by reading around topics in each subject;
* build on numeracy skills through practice questions;
* refer to examination websites for past paper questions;
* use time to get ahead in coursework / portfolio based subjects
* revision of topics covered to date

Some teachers may opt to teach via google meet. If this is the case, there are clear safeguarding guidelines and protocols about how this operates, which we expect our students to conform to at all times. *(See Safeguarding and On-Line Learning Policy).* Staff have received and will continue to engage in Google Classroom training, as coordinated by **Mr Murtagh (Google Classroom Coordinator).**

Please advise your son / daughter that if they come across any material they find very difficult in a subject, take a note of the questions they would like to ask, and bring that to the subject teachers on return to school.

**Attendance**

The Department of Education have issued that a new code - '8' which will be used on SIMS attendance registers in school for the following reasons relating to COVID-19:

* If a pupil does not physically attend school due to Covid-19 concerns; the parent requests work to be sent home and will ensure that lessons are followed.
* A pupil is choosing not to attend school or parent chooses not to send pupil to school as they are self-isolating and there are underlying medical issues of pupil or immediate family members.
* In the event of a student felling unwell with e.g. a cold, or staying at home pending a family member being tested for coronavirus – these will be considered short term absences. Students are advised to use their text-books and resources already provided by teachers to work on topics they were covering in classes, as would be the case for normal casual illnesses any year. They will get any other notes they missed on return to school.

**Keeping Safe in School**

*“Following further advice which I have received... from the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Adviser, I am recommending that pupils and teachers wear a face covering in corridors and other communal areas of post-primary schools...when schools return full-time. ...The current public health advice is that the use of face coverings provides some benefits, however, it is not a replacement for frequent hand washing, social distancing where possible, covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and regular cleaning of surfaces". Peter Weir (Education Minister)*

It has been recommended that face coverings in corridors and other communal areas should be worn by staff and students in post primary settings.

We request therefore that our students wear navy or black face coverings,

* on public transport coming in and going home from school
* on the corridors when they move to new classrooms
* enclosed spaces - e.g. locker areas
* at assembly
* students who have been shielding or are anxious, may choose to wear face coverings during lessons
* There may be a genuine medical reason why a person cannot wear a face covering. If there is such a reason, please notify the school. Students in such cases, will not be expected to wear face coverings.

**Social Distancing and Hygiene**

While distancing measures were relaxed among pupils, we request that they still endeavour to keep their distance from others, and they must stay 2 meters apart from staff. We ask for parental support in encouraging this.

All students are asked to bring their own sanitizer with them to school. Sanitizing stations are around the school building as well. Students should however be encouraged to wash their hands thoroughly at least four times during the school day, with soap and water.

All students were shown a COVID presentation by their form teachers, encouraging effective washing and sanitizing; as well as outlining the procedures of our new school day. Posters are displayed throughout the school to reinforce those messages.

**Bubbles**

Students must stay within their own class /year group at all times; no mixing with other year groups during the course of the school day.

Each year group has been advised to enter the school quickly on arrival to school, by a specified entry point. Students should go either to their locker area or straight to their first lesson. They must not congregate outside.

**At break-time and lunch-time - areas have been allocated as the only places the year groups can go to:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Entry Gate in Mornings** | **Year Groups**  |
| **Gate Lodge Entry of Convent Car Park** Year 13 - enter VP square; main doors towards libraryYear 14 - enter brown doors - St. Mary's leading to Senior Study | Years 13 Year 14  |
| **Top Gate (Sport's Hall Car Park)** leading to West Door entry to lockers | Years 10 & 12 |
| **Middle Gates** Year 8 - enter VP square; go in main doors to lockersYear 9 - enter VP square; go to left door entry, near assembly hall to lockersYear 11 - enter VP square; go to right door entry after arch to lockers | Years 8 Year 9 Year 11 |

Senior prefects are allocated to form rooms over break-time and staff will be on corridor supervision over break and lunch. Students must ensure their bags are left in their allocated areas at break and lunch.

The canteen is operating and has a pre-arrangement made for food to be ready to collect at the hatches. The canteen has been divided into zones to allocate year groups to certain sides only. Entry and exit doors must be adhered to. (Parent Pay has been implemented to pay canteen and other school fees).

Main Study is also split in to zone areas, so year groups are kept apart when taking lunch. Year 8 / 9 are allocated the assembly hall to take lunch.

**Students must tidy up after themselves in the canteen, assembly hall, senior study, library or main study. We ask parents encourage sons / daughters to ensure rubbish is put in the allocated bins as well.**

At the end of the school day, students should leave school by the nearest exit on the one-way system:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Areas | Exit Doors at end of day |
| Biology and Chemistry Labs | Leave by exit at top of sciences corridor leading out to front of school |
| Physics and English 1 & 2  | Leave by door beside Mrs Sharkey's Music room |
| English 3 & 4; Drama | Leave at exit on left, on way to assembly hall |
| Upper corridor - e.g. Economics, Computing, Geography | Leave via stairs beside Mr Shaw's room - exit west door |
| Home Economics, Maths, Languages | Downstairs towards staffroom; exit VP main doors / year 11 locker door out to archway  |
| RE4 / Irish / MS block | Base of new fire escape stairs |
| RE 1, 2 & 3 | Exit fire escape door beside RE1  |
| Library / TL's room/ Art | Exit doors on way to Art / RE or bottom of Art corridor |
| Year 14 SS; Bus St; Careers | Exit brown doors - St Mary's |
| Mobiles / Tech / SH | Should walk outside to front of school |

**One-Way System**

All staff and students must adhere to the one-way system in place throughout the college.

**Classrooms**

Staff must remain **2 meters apart** from students in class and from other staff. Those who travel with the class as a bubble, or who assist in e.g. first aid, should wear PPE.

Teachers must ensure there are strict seating plans in place for each class, to assist in the unfortunate event of having to tracking and tracing close contacts. Staff are reminded to take note of special considerations in seating plans, for students with medical conditions. Students must adhere to the seating plans at all times. If there is a room change, teachers must ensure they take a note of the seating plan in the classroom. Staff should ensure a copy of their seating plan is kept in their planners, so they can identify clearly seating arrangements in the event of tracing close contacts, throughout the week and over the weekend.

All classrooms have been resourced with sanitizers, cleaning spray, paper towels and tissues. Classroom furniture is to be sanitized at the end of each lesson.

Staff have been allocated areas of the school to clean door-handles, stair-rails etc between classes.

**Physical Education**

Loreto College is committed to ensuring the breadth of the curriculum is delivered in these challenging times. There is positive impact of physical education on student's health and well-being. The PE department have went to great lengths to ensure that adherence to the EA/DENI guidelines are met so our students can avail of exercise. The sport's hall changing rooms have been:

* marked out in 1m spaces
* students are told to touch as little as possible
* pupils sanitise hands and put on masks as they enter Sport's Hall
* pupils wear masks while they change into PE gear
* Face coverings are not worn during PE
* all PE is outside as far as possible ( in wet weather a well ventilated sport's hall or assembly hall) or class room for theory
* changing rooms are cleaned after every class
* there is one way system for pupils entry and exit at the Sport's Hall
* staff wear masks in changing rooms

**Resources:**

Students must bring their own resources to school - e.g. pencils, pens, rulers, calculators, erasers, sharpeners, colouring. Due to current regulations, sharing of resources is not possible.

Some subjects will give out textbooks to students and they should keep these until the teacher requests them back.

All students should now have returned their COVID contracts to their form teachers.

**Discipline:**

Any behaviour that breaches COVID regulations in school, or which causes a member of the school community concern, will be dealt with in accordance with the school discipline policy.

**Additional Reading:**

*Northern Ireland Re-opening Schools Guidance: New School Day - 13th August 20202*

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/NorthernIrelandReOpeningSchoolsGuidnaceNewSchoolDayVersion213August2020.pdf>

*Management Flowchart - Possible or confirmed case of COVID 19 case in school*

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/COVID-19%20Management%20Flow%20Chart.pdf>

*Flowchart: Management of People who become symptomatic on-site*

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/NSD%20SECTION%208-Management-of-people-who-become-symptomatic-onsite-Flowchart.pdf>

*Flowchart: Text, Trace, Protect*

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/NSD%20SECTION%208-Test-Trace-Protect-Flowchart.pdf>

***Important Contact Numbers:***

Public Health Authority: 03005550119

Education Authority: 02890418056