



Scoil Naomh Lorcán O'Tuathail

(St. Laurence O'Toole's National School)

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Covid-19: Measures to Support a Safe Environment

5th January 2022

Dear parents/guardians,

I hope that you have all had a lovely Christmas and that families have all had a chance to relax and reconnect with each other over the break. School will reopen on 6th January as usual and all teachers and staff are looking forward to welcoming children back to school. It is important at this time to remind all parents/guardians of the current guidelines in relation to Covid-19 which must be adhered to in order to ensure that all children and staff within our school are kept as safe as possible in this current climate.

Before attending school:

Please ensure that a **Back to School Declaration is completed prior to your child returning** to school. This is available on the Aladdin Connect App.

If your child shows any symptoms of Covid-19 or is unwell in any way, please do not send them to school. If your child comes to school with symptoms, you will be called to take them home. Please adopt a precautionary approach, particularly if your child is young and unable to articulate their symptoms. Please closely follow public health advice in relation to dealing with illnesses.

Close contacts: If your child has been identified as a close contact by the HSE, please adhere to advice on the HSE website in relation to restricted movements and testing:

- Children under 13 years who are household close contacts must restrict their movements for 14 days and they are offered PCR testing at day 0 and day 10. On receipt of day 10 not-detected PCR test results, and no symptoms, they may end restricted movements.

Measures to ensure safety within the school:

All pupils in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th classes are encouraged to wear face masks/coverings as recommended by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). In situations where masks cannot be worn, visors, snoods or alternative face coverings will suffice.

There are exemptions to the wearing of face coverings:

- Any pupil with difficulty breathing or other relevant medical conditions
- Any pupil who is unable to remove the cloth face-covering or visor without assistance
- Any pupil who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the cloth face covering or visor, for example, pupils with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

If you feel that your child falls into one of these categories or have other concerns relating to the wearing of face coverings, please contact the school and we will do everything possible to work with you and your child. At all times, the school will endeavour to work with parents with a solution-focused approach to resolve any issues or concerns. It is important that any parents of a child not wearing a face-covering during the school day have been in contact with the school. **This will be followed up on to ensure that parents wishes/concerns are understood by the school at all times in relation to child safety and the wearing of masks in school.** A medical cert will not be required where the school is aware, having consulted with parents/guardians that a child's needs are such that mask-wearing is not appropriate.

The school **abides by all recommendations from the DES and HSE in relation to good hand hygiene, social distancing, ventilation, PPE and enhanced cleaning supports within the school.** Please see our Covid-19 Response plan and previous correspondence for more information on the school's implementation of safety measures.

Covid-19 confirmed cases

If your child receives a positive PCR test and was in school during the infectious period, please contact the school. Close contacts of the child will be identified and notifications sent


to the parents/guardians of these close contacts, with details of how to access free antigen tests.

Important:

- All children in the pod/class can continue to attend school as long as they remain asymptomatic and they do not have a positive Covid-19 antigen or PCR test result.
- Children who have symptoms of Covid-19 should stay at home, isolate and arrange to have a PCR test.
- Children identified as close contacts in their household will have to restrict their movements as per national guidelines for household close contacts and get a PCR as soon as possible.

I would like to thank all families for their continued support and cooperation as we move into this new term in school.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sinéad Sharkey'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'S' and a decorative flourish at the end.

Sinéad Sharkey

Principal