

COVID-19 Response Plan for safe and sustainable reopening

St Finian's College

2021



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This is a living 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 or agreements with education partners as appropriate for post primary schools.

1) Introduction

This document has been developed in line with public health advice issued by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and in compliance with the “Return to Work Safely Protocols” developed by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Health with guidance documents provided by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). Each workplace is required to have a COVID-19 Response Plan. In addition to being places of learning, schools are also places of work. This document sets out the information that post primary schools need to implement a School COVID-19 Response Plan, including a COVID-19 policy, lead worker representative/s (LWR) and a process to deal with a suspected case of COVID-19.

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and helpful guidance for the safe operation of St Finian’s College through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19. It provides key messages to minimise the risk of COVID-19 for staff, students, families and the wider community while recognising the importance of education for the health and wellbeing of students and society as a whole.

This document focuses on the practical steps which are being taken in St Finian’s College to minimise the risk of infection while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time.

This documentation is supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe reopening of schools and educational facilities.

One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning. This document identifies the steps we are taking to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself in the event that COVID-19 is introduced to the school.

The Department has worked intensively with the education partners to develop consistent plans, advice, protocols and guidance for schools, including the School COVID-19 Response plan.

In addition the Department has a communication plan for school reopening which focuses on ensuring that schools, school communities and all stakeholders will have the relevant information to support the reopening and continued operation of schools. There is a particular focus on supporting parents and students through the appropriate use of media channels, through schools themselves and on gov.ie

2) What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?

A COVID-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the school environment

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 plan for school reopening that will aim to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment.

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of schools complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department. Doing so minimises the risk to students, staff and others.

The response plan supports the sustainable reopening of 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. The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice and any other relevant agreement with education partners as appropriate for post primary schools.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM/ETB, staff, students and parents.

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of this plan.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should errors or omissions be identified, please notify us so that appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.

3) School COVID-19 Policy

A COVID-19 policy outlines the commitment of the school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the chairperson and principal of the BOM and brought to the attention of the staff, students, parents and others. Schools must have a COVID-19 policy in place prior to the reopening of schools for the 2021/2022 school year.

Appendix 1: St Finian's College COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as an employer to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and will be brought to the attention of our teachers, supervisors, parents, students.

COVID 19 Policy Statement

St Finian's College is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, parents & students.

To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan.

All managers, teachers, supervisors, SNAs and ancillary staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our teachers, supervisors, SNAs and ancillary staff
- provide up to date information to our teachers, supervisors, SNAs, ancillary staff and students on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques

- agree with staff 2 worker representatives who are easily identifiable and who will put in place a reporting system
- inform all teachers, supervisors, ancillary staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing to the best of our ability
- ensure that all teachers, supervisors, SNAs, ancillary staff and students will keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure that all teachers, supervisors, ancillary staff and students undergo an online induction / familiarisation briefing
- In the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or in the school, the agreed procedures will be implemented.
- Instructions will be provided for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- will implement cleaning in line with government and Dept of Education advice.

All our teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, parents & students will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the WORKER REPRESENTATIVES:

Ms Clare Keighran & Mr Patrick Moore

SIGNED: _____ DATE: 25th August 2021

4) **Planning and Preparing for Return to School**

The Board of Management of St Finian's College aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff .

The return to the workplace must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education.

Details for the safe reopening of the schools and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

Before reopening schools for the 2021-2022 school year St Finian's College will have processes in place to include the following:

- Means of keeping up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates;
- Means of passing on this information in a timely manner to staff, students, parents and others as required;
- Ensured that staff have reviewed the training materials provided by the Department of Education
- Provided staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form (emailed 17th August 2021)
- Identified a Lead Worker representatives
- Displayed posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19
- Made the necessary changes to the school layout to support the redesign of classrooms to support physical distancing
- Removed unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school but take into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment;
- Updated the health and safety risk assessment
- Made necessary arrangements to restrict access to the school and maintain records of contacts to the school
- Reviewed the school buildings to check the following:
 - Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease;
 - Has school equipment and mechanical ventilation been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again;
 - Have bin collections and other essential services resumed.

4.1) Induction Training

All new staff will undertake and complete COVID-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. All staff can refresh their training by viewing the video at

<https://youtu.be/UBrwYokvdvk>. The aim of such training is to ensure that all staff have full knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health
- COVID-19 symptoms
- What to do if a staff member or pupil develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- Outline of the COVID-19 response plan
- Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and will be updated with any changes to the control measures or guidance available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal who is supported in this role by the BOM/ETB.

4.2) Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a Return to Work (RTW) form, which is available electronically or from the principal.

This has been emailed to all staff members **August 17th 2021** and the return **date is Friday 20th August. (3 days before the return to work)**

A hard copy is attached also at Appendix 2.

A RTW form should be completed and returned 3 days before returning to work. St Finian's College staff return date **is Wednesday, 25th August.**

A RTW form should be completed and returned to the school before returning to work. Schools should request staff to confirm that the details in the Return to Work Form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure such as school holidays.

The principal will also provide details of the Induction Training for completion by staff and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

Details of the working arrangements that apply to the very high risk school staff, is in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, and is detailed in the relevant Department of Education circulars available on the Department's website.

4.3) Lead Worker Representative

Ms Clare Keighran and Mr Patrick Moore have been elected by staff as LWRs for St Finian's College.

The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

This section sets out how the provisions will operate in respect of schools.

These arrangements will operate for the 2021-2022 school year and will be kept under review.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies with the Board of Management/ Education and Training Board and school management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students.

Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared obligation in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 Response Plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, students or others, they should contact the LWR who will engage with school management.

The role of LWR is separate to that of the Safety Representative under the health and safety legislation. However the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and students being exposed to COVID-19;
- Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- Monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 response plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, students or other s/he should contact the LWR/s who will engage with the Principal.

Names of Lead Worker Representative/s:

Ms Clare Keighran and Mr Patrick Moore are the LWR s for St Finian's College.

Contact details: ckeighran@stfinianscollege.ie , pmoore@stfinianscollege.ie

All staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors have a responsibility, both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

Full details of the arrangements which apply for the LWR in post primary schools is set out at Appendix 3.

4.4) Signage

St Finian's College will be required to display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

The Department will provide printed posters to schools with age appropriate key health messages – hand washing, sneeze and cough etiquette etc.

Note: Signage is under development by the Department. This will be made available to all schools and staff in advance of school reopening here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2da43-signage-for-reopening-of-schools/>

St Finian's College will arrange to display the posters in prominent areas such as offices, corridors, staffroom area, classrooms and toilets.

4.5) Making Changes to School Layout

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19.

Further information on how physical distancing can be used in the school environment is found in the "Framework to maintain Physical Distancing in the Classroom in Post Primary Schools with a full return of all students for the 2021-2022 School Year."

The government has now implemented mandatory wearing of face coverings for all teachers and secondary school students, similar to those worn in shops or on public transport, when a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. **Pupils and**

teachers therefore will need to bring a reusable, cotton face mask everyday which will be worn in places where it is difficult to maintain a 2 metre distance. These masks must be washed daily.

If it is the case that a staff member or a student has a current medical reason for not wearing a face mask, a visor is the alternative.

Teachers have been allocated a new staffroom area in the study hall which is in line with government guidelines to maintain social distance.

St Finian's College has reconfigured classrooms and other areas to support physical distancing in line with the guidance in advance of school reopening. Classrooms have been cleared of excess furniture to enable 1M social distance shoulder to shoulder of students. New furniture has been procured.

Classrooms

Classrooms have been reallocated to teachers. Students will move to their classroom throughout the day. This allows for teachers to store student books safely in their subject classroom. Pupils will not have access to lockers for this academic year. Teachers will be able to store their students' books in their classrooms for use during the school day. All publishers now have e books for use online at home. This will reduce the need for heavy school bags to have to be carried daily.

It is recommended that soft A4 copies / refill pad is used for note taking and that students use a folder system at home for each subject. This further reduces the need to carry hardback A4 copies on a daily basis.

Stairs

There is a one way system in place for movement in the building.

Breaktimes have been staggered both at morning break and at lunchtime to minimise contact between student groups. Students should exit the school building at break times, weather permitting. As breaks are now staggered, it is important that noise levels are low in the building at these times, as classes will be continuing.

10.05 – 10.20 Morning Break – 1st, 3rd and 6th year pupils only.

10.45 – 11.00 Morning Break – 2nd, TY and 5th year pupils only.

12.20 – 13.00 Lunch Break – 1st, 3rd and 6th year pupils only.

13.00 – 13.40 Lunch Break – 2nd, TY and 5th year pupils only.

In order to maintain social distance, it is recommended that students go outside into the grounds during breaks. As breaks are staggered, it is important that noise levels are low in the building at these times.

Our school canteen will be open during this time. Physical distancing must be maintained whilst queueing. Pupils will queue inside the canteen and exit directly upon receiving their order. Outdoor seating has been provided at the back of the school at the gym and behind the gym. No food/drink is to be consumed in the school building except for in the designated areas provided: the canteen and the cinema.

School drop off / collection:

We would encourage as many pupils as possible to walk or cycle to school.

Congregation of people at the school gates where physical distancing requirements may not be respected is not permitted.

The school building is open at 8.am. We recommend that students remain outside 5 minutes before class time. Please do not congregate in the corridors outside classrooms before school and after breaks.

Class begins at 8.45am every morning.

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday class will end at 15.40. Wednesday class will end at 14.20. Friday class will end at 15.00

To avoid congestion at entrance points we have allocated year groups to specific entrances.

Front Student Entrance – This entrance is to be used by **5th and 6th year** pupils only. Students swipe attendance with their card at the card reader only

Back entrance close to the Pavilion – This entrance is for **1st and 2nd year** pupils only. Please use the swipe machine outside the Gaffney Hall. First years do not need to swipe until they have received their attendance swipe cards.

Bubble entrance – This entrance is to be used by **TY and 3rd year** pupils only. A new swipe machine will be installed in the Bubble in the coming weeks.

To enable contact tracing, which is a mandatory government requirement, it is essential that all students must swipe using their swipe cards every morning on entry to the building.

Please note the swipe machine in the office is not available to pupils in the morning. All students must swipe using their swipe cards. Pupils will not be able to type in their pupil ID manually. It is very important that if you wish to purchase a new swipe card that you do that as soon as possible. Please email Susan on secretary@stfinianscollege.ie if you wish to replace a lost or broken card. Susan will create a bill on your Way2Pay account.

4.6) Health and Safety Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment.

The St Finian's College has completed a risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings.

St Finian's College Safety Officer has reviewed their emergency procedures involving fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan.

Any changes to the school's existing emergency procedures are documented and incorporated into the school's safety statement.

St Finian's College has reviewed their existing risk assessments to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan.

Any changes to the school's current risk assessments will be documented and will be incorporated into the schools statement.

First Aid/emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure shall continue to apply in St Finian's College. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, St Finian's College will follow its school policy.

4.7) Access to School and Contact Log

Access to the school building will be in line with agreed school procedures.

Arrangement for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the school office.

Appointment must be made by telephone prior to arrival at the school.

The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools and centres for education to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace.

A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities will be maintained.

St Finian's College staff and students will maintain a log of contacts.

A contact log is available at Appendix 5

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found here:

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-work-safely-protocol>

St Finian's College acknowledges that all school records and data must be maintained and processed in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Acts.

The responsibility for compliance with the legislation rests with each school in their role as data controller.

5) Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school.

If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student - student, teacher - teacher and teacher- student, and must be managed in all settings.

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID -19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff, students, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school.

The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, students, parents and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

Staff should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into schools:

1. Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms
2. Advise staff and students that have symptoms not to attend school, to phone their doctor and to follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;
3. Advise staff and students not to attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as contact for a person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;
4. Advise staff and students that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the principal (or deputy principal if the principal is unavailable) promptly;
5. Ensure that staff and students know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school
6. Advise everyone entering the school building that they needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
7. Advise all relevant parties that visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement with the principal'/school office and should be received at a specific contact point;
8. Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

5.1) Know the Symptoms of COVID-19

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms.

They are:

High temperature

Cough

Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties

Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of cold and flu

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).

a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.

shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.

loss or change in 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

If you have any common symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), self-isolate (stay in your room) and phone your family doctor straight away to see if you need a free COVID-19 test.

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

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE Website.

If you do not have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a COVID-19 walk-in test centre.

COVID-19 Tracker App

COVID Tracker app is a free and easy-to-use mobile phone app that will:

alert you if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)

keep other app users safe by alerting them if you test positive for COVID-19
give you advice on what to do if you have symptoms

You can download the free app from Apple's AppStore or the GooglePlay store

Employers and workers must keep themselves up to date on Public Health information as this can be updated on a regular basis.

Public Health information on close contacts, casual contacts and testing is available from the HSE website.

5.2) Respiratory Hygiene

The staff and students of St Finian's College will promote and follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

5.3) Hand Hygiene

Staff and students should understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.

St Finian's College will promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the school on how to wash your hands.

St Finian's College advises all staff and students to follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing: This can be found here:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basins must avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.

Hand sanitiser dispensers have been deployed at all exit and entry points of schools and classrooms.

Care will be taken to clean up any hand sanitizer spills to prevent risks of falls. Staff and students must be mindful and take extra care at these areas where spillage may be.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying towels are provided in all toilets, kitchens and any food preparation areas.

Hand washing facilities are maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels are topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them.

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing are placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities.

Hand sanitiser is available at every classroom.

Frequency of Hand Hygiene: Students and staff should perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After petting animals;
- After playing outdoors;
- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.
-

5.4) Physical Distancing

It is recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from students and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the student.

However where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1 m distance and where possible 2m. They should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

Increasing separation
Decreasing interaction

Increasing separation

St Finian's College have made appropriate reconfigurations / operational changes necessary to maintain physical distancing using the Department of Education developed *Framework to maintain Physical Distancing in the Classroom in Post Primary Schools with a full return of all Students for the 2020-2021 School Year, now being used for 2021-2022*

The Framework sets out a suite of available measures that should be implemented at individual school level to the greatest possible extent.

The suite of measures we have implemented are:

1. Reconfigured class spaces to maximise physical distancing;
2. Utilising and reconfiguring all available space in the school in order to maximise physical distancing;
3. Reviewed Timetables;
4. Reconfigured Classes;

Break Times

Break times will now be staggered.

10.05 – 10.20 Morning Break – 1st, 3rd and 6th year pupils only.

10.45 – 11.00 Morning Break – 2nd, TY and 5th year pupils only.

12.20 – 13.00 Lunch Break – 1st, 3rd and 6th year pupils only.

13.00 – 13.40 Lunch Break – 2nd, TY and 5th year pupils only.

Canteen

Lunchtime has been staggered so that only three year groups are at lunch at the same time. Physical distancing has been applied in our canteen facility. There is a queue management system.

Students must sanitise their hands before and after entering the canteen area.

Decreasing interaction

St Finian's College has adopted a common-sense approach whilst recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between students.

In St Finian's College physical distancing of at least 1m will be maintained where possible.

Where possible and practical double classes have been planned to minimise movement of these class groups during the day.

There is a one way system to navigate the school. The stairwell at the Gaffney hall is for going up to a higher level. The stairwell at the school entrance is for coming down to a lower level. All students are asked to adhere to this one way system.

Where students have an elective subject in a practical room they will move quickly into the new class and will be seated with members of their class cohort, observing as much physical distance as possible.

Hand sanitising will be required when moving between classes by teachers and students. All rooms have hand sanitisers either outside or inside the door. Students and staff must sanitise when they enter and when they leave a room.

Physical distancing between the teacher and class will be observed.

There are multiple entry and exit points to the school. Year groups have been allocated an entry and exit point.

Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) is not permitted.

Staff and students should avoid sharing personal items.

Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device will be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged.

Ventilation

The Department has 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'

The guidance sets out an overall approach for schools that windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use (e.g. during break-times or lunch-times (assuming not in use) and also at the end of each school day) and partially open when classrooms are in use.

The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort, particularly during cold weather.

The Department has also published guidance on how these practical steps measures can be supplemented and enhanced by the use of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) monitors. The monitors will be arriving at schools shortly.

Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school

School Office

The school office is closed to visitors and parents. Pupil access will also be restricted.

Parents can email Susan or Marie at secretary@stfinianscollege.ie to arrange appointments.

Alternatively, you can log onto our new website, stfinianscollege.ie. This website will provide you with up-to-date information in addition to further email addresses so you can direct your query to the relevant body.

It is important to remember that visits to the school will be restricted to essential purposes only and limited to those who have prior approval.

Reception Areas

We use Perspex in reception areas where it is not possible for staff to maintain a physical distance of 2m from other staff, parents or students.

Staff

A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as any staff room area and arriving to work.

The study hall has been converted into a staffroom to facilitate 2m social distance. Individual Teacher pods have been created for teachers to store their resources, books etc.

Staff meetings will promote physical distancing when held, either remotely or in small groups or in large spaces.

There is a no hand shaking policy.

Teachers will minimise gathering at the beginning or end of the school day by going directly to their classroom area in the morning and by leaving the school building safely and promptly at the end of the day.

Corridors and Stairwells

Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.

There is a one way system to navigate the school. The stairwell at the Gaffney hall is for going up to a higher level. The stairwell at the school entrance is for coming down to a lower level. All students are asked to adhere to this one way system.

Follow the signage provided.

5.5) Use of PPE in Schools

PPE will not be required to be worn within schools according to current occupational and public health guidance.

However, for a limited number of staff, PPE may need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas.

These might include roles such as:

- Performing intimate care
- Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not in the list of those categorised as people in very high risk groups, or may be living with people who are in a very high risk category.
- Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, intimate care needs and for first aid.

Where staff provide healthcare to children with medical needs in the school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Masks/Visors

It is essential for those wearing a cloth face covering to understand that the purpose is not to protect themselves but to reduce onward transmission and the benefit is reliant on wearing the covering appropriately.

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

The government has now implemented mandatory wearing of face coverings for all teachers and secondary school students, similar to those worn in shops or on public transport, when a physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. **Pupils and teachers therefore will need to bring a reusable, cotton face mask everyday which will be worn in places where it is difficult to maintain a 2 metre distance.** These masks must be washed daily.

Advice on how to properly use face coverings can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/?referrer=http://www.gov.uk/facemasks/>

You can watch this on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6ZqdpLfSqw>

If it is the case that a staff member or a student has a current medical reason for not wearing a face mask, a visor is the alternative.

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

All teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a face mask.

Face masks should be stored in a space designated for each student that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labelled containers or bags).

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

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

We have additional disposable face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up face mask is needed during the day. These are available in the school office.

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

Gloves

The use of disposable gloves in the school by students or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for matters such as cleaning or intimate care settings.

Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves.

Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

Aprons

Aprons may also be appropriate in certain circumstances including for intimate care needs or for staff assigned to cleaning an area where a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 was present

6) Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities

School Curricular Trips

Students in St Finian's will travel for school curricular field trips. A risk assessment for bus transport has been completed. Any teacher travelling with a group will complete a risk assessment form and this will be stored in the school office. All Covid 19 protocols for Travel Safely and for Work Safely will be followed prior to, during and after the trip.

Choir/Music Performance

Choir practices/performances and music practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher level of risk and special consideration should be given to how they are held ensuring that the room is well-ventilated and the distance between performers is maintained.

Sport Activities

Schools should refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07253-return-to-sport-protocols/>

Shared Equipment Art –

Where possible students should be encouraged to have their own individual art and equipment supplies.

Electronics –

Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards should be cleaned between use and consideration could be given to the use of wipeable covers for electronics to facilitate cleaning.

Musical Equipment/Instruments –

To the greatest extent possible, instruments should not be shared between students and if sharing is required, the instruments should be cleaned before and after use.

Library Policy –

Where practical students should have their own books. Textbooks that are shared should be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Students should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Shared Sports Equipment –

Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

7) Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools

Enhanced cleaning regimes are required to minimise the risks of COVID-19.

St Finian's College will adhere to the HPSC advice which sets out the cleaning regime required to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected cases of COVID-19.

St Finian's College will be cleaned at least once per day.

Additional cleaning will be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

Where students are moving between classrooms appropriate cleaning products will be provided to enable them to wipe down their desk, chair and surface before leaving the room.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area.

Staff will thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

There will be a regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas within the school facility.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.). Staffroom areas will not provide these items. All equipment/utensils must be taken home and not stored in school.

Cleaning/Disinfecting rooms where a student/staff member with suspected COVID-19 was present.

This will be done as soon as is practicable possible.

Once the room is vacated the room will not be reused until it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.

8) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

Staff or students should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building: The Front Hall. The designated isolation area is behind a closed door and away from other staff and students.

If a staff member/student displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a student, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately by the school office; Students are NOT to use mobile phones to contact parents. Students must inform their classroom teacher that they are not feeling well. The classroom teacher will inform the office immediately so the parents can be contacted.
- The staff member/student will isolate in the front hall area. A designated person will accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the one way system keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times;
- If there is more than one person in the isolation area, they will be at least 2m apart, wearing a face covering. Remember that the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same area;
- If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a student should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves will not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;
- A mask will be provided for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask in the isolation area, in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
- The individual who is displaying symptoms will immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents. The parents/guardians will call their doctor for advice. The individual displaying symptoms will continue self-isolation at home;
- The person presenting with symptoms can remain in isolation if they cannot immediately go home. They can call their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice will be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable

tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided;

- If the person is well enough to go home, the school office will arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms.
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, the school office will contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a COVID-19 suspect;
- An incident report will be completed which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;
- The isolation area and work areas involved will be cleaned

The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and student confidentiality is essential at all times. School staff should be encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist Public Health for contact tracing purposes. Both in and out of the school setting (see section 5.1).

9) Staff Duties

Staff have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties.

The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the school.

All staff have a key role to play.

In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the School COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- Must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.

- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Coordinate practices and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
 - Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
 - Self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Not return to or attend school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances.
-
- Adhere to the procedure outlined above if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility. .
 - Keep themselves informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

10) COVID-19 related absence management

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

11) Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective self-care. Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE's Health Promotion Team. An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for individual staff members in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum.Life under the logo of 'Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile'.

Under the EAS, **employees have a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc.**

Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home).

A bespoke wellbeing portal and app which offers access to podcasts and blogs on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition is also available.

In addition online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided.

As part of the services provided by Spectrum Life a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. They will also be providing a series of webinars and presentations to promote staff wellbeing in schools as schools reopen and during the upcoming school year.

12) Arrangements in the event of school closure in the future

Attendance

Students are expected to attend fully once the school reopens in August for the new academic year.

Absenteeism is monitored daily. Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years' education in a post primary school whichever comes later.

As a parent, you must let the school know if your child is absent and the reason why. It is school policy that reasons must be given in writing. The school will notify Tusla – Child and Family Agency and the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where absence gives rise to concern.

If your child is sick or is absent for good reasons, no action will be taken by Tusla - Child and Family Agency.

However, if there is concern about your child's attendance at school or about the reasons given, you may be visited by an Educational Welfare Officer who will discuss your child's education with you.

The Officer will work with you and take full account of the circumstances of the child and the family before deciding what further action is necessary to ensure that the child receives his/her entitlement to an education.

Aoife Leneghan is the current EWO for St Finian's College.

Covid 19 High Risk Student

It is the parent's responsibility to inform schools where their son/daughter is deemed to be a Covid 19 high risk student. Supporting documentation from your GP should be submitted to the school office as soon as possible.

Provision for Very High Risk Staff and Students and arrangements in the event of school closure in the future

This document outlines St Finian's College measures and procedures to provide for pupils who cannot attend for health reasons related to COVID-19,

And

a situation where we may be faced with closure (in whole or part) for a period during which the curriculum will need to be delivered remotely.

Supporting pupils at "very high risk" of COVID-19

St Finian's College is conscious that there may be some pupils for whom return to school at the end of August may not be appropriate because the relevant public health guidelines indicate they are at "very high risk".

St Finian's College will endeavour to support these pupils to ensure their ongoing connection with their classmates and school community

Supporting Teaching and Learning in the home where there is localised school closure

The continuity of teaching and learning during Covid 19 closures will be achieved by all school staff working remotely to ensure students are supported during this time.

Arrangements are in place to communicate with students and parents through email and Google Classroom. Every student has a school email account. Every class teacher will have a Google Classroom. Class work and materials will be uploaded to Google by teachers.

Teachers continue to upskill in ICT to facilitate development of online approaches to remote and blended learning in the event that such is required once again.

In circumstances where there is clear public health advice from HSE Public Health that a school should close, St Finian's College will:

- make best use of guidance materials which were already provided to all schools during the period of school closures
- alert parents/guardians to where pupils/students are at in terms of their learning using the VSWare Information system.
- make best use of digital technologies to allow continued engagement with pupils/students and their learning and will develop subject specific lessons to be carried out at home by students through Google Classroom
- contact parents through text message / email and school website to update parents with school information.
- engage with pupils/students daily through Google Classroom;
- where possible, make arrangements to support students who do not have access to digital technology,

Google Classroom & Remote Learning

St Finian's College is a Google School. Every pupil has been furnished with a school email address: 2019jbloggs@stfinianscollege.ie. This is the official email address for accessing their Google classroom for Learning. The school domain @stfinianscollege.ie **will not** recognise email addresses from outside this domain and access to Google Classrooms **will be denied.**

Every teacher has a school email address in this domain, eg jbloggs@stfinianscollege.ie

Teachers can be contacted using email during school term during school hours, 9am – 4pm, Monday – Friday.

Every teacher has established a Google classroom for each of their classes. This is accessed through a code which has been given to each student. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they have their up to date access codes for every subject area that they are studying.

Code of Excellence for St Finian's College applies online in Google Classroom in the same way as it applies in the actual physical classroom. All breaches of the code will be dealt with according to the school rules and regulations.

Online work and assignments should be submitted on time. Department of Education deadlines must be observed. Extensions cannot be granted. Issues with WiFi/ Broadband should be reported to the teacher/and /or school office as soon as possible.

Exams and assessments must be completed within the school day at the time allotted by the teacher. Individual timetables are not possible to accommodate.

Parents can view their child's progress through the VSWare system. Every parent has a username and a password. Parents should contact the school office if they do not have access to VSWare.

Online Classes Rules/ Conduct

- In the event of a school closure classes will continue online remotely.
- Pupils are expected to engage with online classes with the same respect and positive attitude as they would in a school based classroom.
- Pupils are asked to log into their online classes as scheduled on their timetable.
- When work is scheduled online a deadline will be set for submission. Please adhere to these deadlines. Progress with the curriculum will be ongoing and therefore it is essential that pupils adhere to their school timetable to the best of their ability.
- Online behaviour must at all times be appropriate and respectful.
- A Google Classroom is provided to ensure, amongst other reasons, the continuation of Teaching & Learning during periods where the school is required to close during term time. It is imperative that the behaviour of all pupils adheres to that of our code of excellence. The posting of inappropriate or offensive behaviour will necessitate the reporting of such behaviour to the school authorities and if necessary the Gardaí. It may also result in the Google Classroom being closed.

13) Additional Support for Children with Special Educational Needs

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or appropriate to implement. In our Special Classes care is being taken to use social stories and visuals to teach the concept of social distance.

As it is often difficult for a child with SEN /ASD to tell us if they are feeling unwell, we have emphasised that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection.

Where symptoms are present, students should not attend school.

Similarly, staff are aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or symptoms of respiratory illness.

PPE

Masks will be worn by all students and staff in the building. Where a mask is too difficult for a student to tolerate, a visor can be used in its place.

SNA's will adhere to the 1m minimum distance rule in classroom situations. Classroom management/ classroom layout will be adjusted in order to best keep both staff members and students safe.

Suspected Covid case:

Will be dealt with as above, in line with school policy and procedure.

Hand Hygiene

Students have been shown how best to wash their hands. Students who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean)

Respiratory Etiquette

Students with SEN / ASD must be shown the correct etiquette for sneezing, coughing, etc. Our SEN team, our teachers and our SNA team will teach the necessary skills and will model the correct behaviour in these areas.

Equipment

Some children may have care needs (physical or behavioural) which requires the use of aids and appliances or medical equipment for example toileting aids, moving and handling equipment, respiratory equipment, classroom equipment,...

A cleaning schedule is in place to deal with the sanitation of the room. An antiviral cleaning agent is used to spray tables, chairs, work surfaces to minimise the spread of Covid 19.

The following points can guide the development of such cleaning schedule:

- equipment used in a classroom should be visibly clean
- Cleaning is generally achieved using a general purpose detergent and warm water
- equipment that is used by different children must be cleaned and disinfected immediately after use and before use by another child.

If equipment is soiled with body fluids, ie sneezing, coughing: it must be

- first clean thoroughly with detergent and water
- then disinfected by wiping with a freshly prepared solution of disinfectant
- and finally rinsed with water and dried.

Dates for Reopening:

Dates for Reopening:

1st year, St Phyl's, St Martha's and Transition Year return on 27th August 2021
@8.45-13.00pm

New students to other year groups will also be given a time to visit the school on August 27th.

Monday 30th August @8.45-3.40pm 1st Year, 6th year, Transition Year, St Phyl's & St Martha's

Tuesday 31st August @8.45-3.40pm 1st Year, 6th Year, 3rd Year, Transition Year, St Phyl's and St Martha's

Wednesday 1st September @8.45-2.20pm 1st Year, 6th Year, 3rd Year, 5th Year, Transition Year, St Phyl's and St Martha's

Thursday 2nd September @8.45-3.40pm 1st Year, 6th Year, 3rd Year, 5th Year, 2nd Year, Transition Year, St Phyl's and St Martha's

Friday 3rd September @8.45-3.00pm 1st Year, 6th Year, 3rd Year, 5th Year, 2nd Year, Transition Year, St Phyl's and St Martha's

Appendices

Appendix 1 **St Finian's College COVID-19 Policy**

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as an employer to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and will be brought to the attention of our teachers, supervisors, parents, students.

St Finian's College is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, parents & students.

To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan.

All managers, teachers, supervisors, SNAs and ancillary staff are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our teachers, supervisors, SNAs and ancillary staff
- provide up to date information to our teachers, supervisors, SNAs, ancillary staff and students on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- agree with staff 2 worker representatives who are easily identifiable and who will put in place a reporting system
- inform all teachers, supervisors, ancillary staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing to the best of our ability
- ensure that all teachers, supervisors, SNAs, ancillary staff and students will keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure that all teachers, supervisors, ancillary staff and students undergo an online induction / familiarisation briefing
- In the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or in the school, the agreed procedures will be implemented.
- Instructions will be provided for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- will implement cleaning in line with government and Dept of Education advice.

All our teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, parents & students will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the WORKER REPRESENTATIVE:

Ms Clare Keighran & Mr Patrick Moore

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

Appendix 2 Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19

Pre-Return to Work Questionnaire COVID-19

This questionnaire must be completed by staff **at least 3 days** in advance of returning to work.

If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to work.

Name: _____

Name of School: St Finian's College Mullingar

Name of Principal: Mr John Mc Hale

Date: _____

		Yes	No
1	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu like symptoms now or in the past 14 days?		
2	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3	Have you been advised by the HSE that you are you a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?		
4	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time?		
5	Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time?		
6	Have you been advised by your doctor that you are in the very high risk group? If yes, please liaise with your doctor and Principal re return to work.		

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating, awaiting results of a COVID-19 test or been advised to restrict my movements. Please note: The school is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed: _____

Appendix 3 Lead Worker Representative

Appendix 3 Lead Worker Representative – Post primary Schools

The COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol is designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

The Protocol was developed following discussion and agreement between the Government, Trade Unions and Employers at the Labour Employer Economic Forum.

The Protocol provides for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in each workplace. The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

The purpose of this section is to set out the provisions in respect of the LWR in schools. These arrangements will operate for the 2020/21 school year and will be kept under review by the parties.

This document should be read in conjunction with the COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol; the Guidance and FAQs for Public Service Employers during COVID-19; COVID-19 Response Plan for Post Primary Schools (available on the Department of Education website).

1. Collaborative Approach

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies with the Board of Management/ Education and Training Board and school management.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared obligation in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the COVID-19 Response Plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, students or others, they should contact the LWR who will engage with school management.

2. Role of the Lead Worker Representative

The role of LWR is separate to that of the Safety Representative under the health and safety legislation. However, the Safety Representative may act as the LWR if selected to do so by the staff.

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Consult with school management on the control measures required to minimise the risk of staff and students being exposed to COVID-19;
- Promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- Monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress COVID-19 in the workplace. Reviews (including an examination of the workplace) should be conducted on a regular basis (at least twice per week);
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;
- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;

- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

2. What can a Lead Worker Representative Do?

The LWR may consult with, and make representations to, school management on any issue of concern in relation to COVID-19.

These include issues in relation to:

- Cleaning protocols and their implementation
- Physical Distancing
- Configuration/re-configuration of the school facilities, including classrooms, corridors, halls, open areas, entry and exit points, school grounds etc.
- Implementation of one-way systems in the school to ensure social distancing including when entering and exiting the school
- Hand Hygiene facilities including their location and whether they are stocked and maintained
- Hand sanitising
- Staff awareness around hand hygiene in the school
- Respiratory hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- At Risk Groups
- Visitors/Contractors

4. Does a LWR have any legal responsibilities?

No. A Lead Worker Representative does not have any duties in relation to COVID-19 other than those that apply to employees generally. In other words, the LWR is not responsible for the control measures within an organisation, which remains the employer's responsibility.

5. Lead Worker Representative(s)

Every school will appoint one Lead Worker Representative. In schools with more than 40 staff, a second Lead Worker Representative will be appointed.

6. Selection of Lead Worker Representative(s)

The school staff are entitled to select staff members for the LWR position(s). The LWR(s) represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role and must be aware of specific issues

that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts. In this regard, where a school has two LWRs, the roles should be spread between teaching and non-teaching staff where feasible e.g. where there is a significant number of non-teaching staff in the school and one or more expressions of interest are received from that cohort (this will be discussed further between the parties).

The process for the selection and appointment of the LWR(s) is that management will seek expressions of interest from all staff in the first instance. If an election is necessary, all school staff have a vote to select the LWR(s).

The LWR(s) will, following selection by the school staff, be formally appointed by the BoM/ETB. The LWR(s) will be required to confirm, prior to taking up the role, that they have been provided with and have completed the requisite training and that they are fully

aware of the requirements of the role

7. Supports for the Lead Worker Representative/s

The LWR(s) shall be entitled to:

- Be provided with information and training in respect of their role [further detail to be provided];
- Be consulted by school management on the control measures being put in place by the school to minimise the risk of being exposed to COVID-19;
- Regular communication with school management on issues related to COVID-19;
- Be informed of changes in practice arising from COVID-19 response measures;
- Have access to any risk assessments prepared or carried out in relation to COVID-19

and to details of incidents of suspected COVID-19 cases that have been notified to the HSE, where they occurred and any actions taken.

- Be provided with the necessary facilities to enable them to consult with employees or prepare any submissions or reports. These might include access to a meeting room, photocopier, communications and equipment.

Where the LWR is a teacher, the LWR will receive protected time of 2 hours per week from timetable to enable them to carry out their duties in that role. In the rare instances where the appointment of a teacher selected for the LWR would cause curricular/timetabling difficulties which cannot be resolved, school management will examine internal and external possibilities to enable the teacher's appointment as LWR. Where the matter cannot be resolved, management will set out the reasons why this is the case. In this circumstance, an alternative individual must be appointed as LWR. Where the LWR is an SNA, 66 of the "72 hours" will be utilised by the LWR to carry out their duties in that role. Where the LWR is a Secretary or Caretaker, a re-prioritisation of duties by school management should be carried out to afford the staff member sufficient time to carry out their duties in that role within the scope of their normal contracted hours.

8. Procedure for dealing with issues that arise

Where a COVID-19 control concern is identified by the LWR (or is notified to the LWR by a staff member), the LWR should bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the

Principal as a matter of urgency. Staff should be informed of the outcome. It is envisaged that issues will be resolved at school level to the maximum extent possible.

If agreement cannot be reached, the LWR should notify the Board of Management (Chairperson in the first instance)/ Education and Training Board head office of the issue.

Action points for addressing the issue should where possible be agreed between the LWR and the BoM/ETB head office as a matter of urgency. Staff should be informed of the outcome.

If, having exhausted the process above, a serious issue of concern remains outstanding, the LWR may have recourse to the Health and Safety Authority.

Appendix 4

Draft INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY ST FINIANS COLLEGE 2021-2022 (IAUP)

Rationale

We have formulated the following Internet Acceptable Use Policy or IAUP in accordance with the schools fundamental aim to foster in students a sense of self-reliance, independence, co-operation and responsibility and to provide them with skills for life-long learning where the school believes that access to the schools ICT resources plays an important role.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP and the Code of Behaviour will be imposed.

Google Classroom & Remote Learning

St Finian's College is a Google School. Every pupil has been furnished with a school email address: 2019jbloggs@stfinianscollege.ie. This is the official email address for accessing their Google classroom for Learning. The school domain @stfinianscollege.ie **will not** recognise email addresses from outside this domain and access to Google Classrooms **will be denied.**

Every teacher has a school email address in this domain, eg jbloggs@stfinianscollege.ie

Teachers can be contacted using email during school term during school hours, 9am – 4pm, Monday – Friday.

Every teacher has established a Google classroom for each of their classes. This is accessed through a code which has been given to each student. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they have their up to date access codes for every subject area that they are studying.

Code of Excellence for St Finain's College applies online in Google Classroom in the same way as it applies in the actual physical classroom. All breaches of the code will be dealt with according to the school rules and regulations.

Online work and assignments should be submitted on time. Department of Education deadlines must be observed. Extensions cannot be granted. Issues with WiFi/ Broadband should be reported to the teacher/and /or school office as soon as possible.

Exams and assessments must be completed within the school day at the time allotted by the teacher. Individual timetables are not possible to accommodate.

Parents can view their child's progress through the VSWare system. Every parent has a username and a password. Parents should contact the school office if they do not have access to VSWare.

Online Classes Rules/ Conduct

- In the event of a school closure classes will continue online remotely.
- Pupils are expected to engage with online classes with the same respect and positive attitude as they would in a school based classroom.
- Pupils are asked to log into their online classes as scheduled on their timetable.
- When work is scheduled online a deadline will be set for submission. Please adhere to these deadlines. Progress with the curriculum will be ongoing and therefore it is essential that pupils adhere to their school timetable to the best of their ability.
- Online behaviour must at all times be appropriate and respectful.

- A Google Classroom is provided to ensure, amongst other reasons, the continuation of Teaching & Learning during periods where the school is required to close during term time. It is imperative that the behaviour of all pupils adheres to that of our code of excellence. The posting of inappropriate or offensive behaviour will necessitate the reporting of such behaviour to the school authorities and if necessary the Gardaí. It may also result in the Google Classroom being closed.

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the schools Internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

Schools Strategy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General

- Internet sessions will be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimize the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Each student will be assigned a specific computer/ Chromebook to use whilst in the computer room/ classroom as per the seating plan. Students may not use any other computer/device without the permission of the supervising teacher.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software, data files, image files, audio and video files will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal memory sticks or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school or its staff members into disrepute.
- Students will observe good etiquette i.e. etiquette on the Internet at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

- Any use of the schools computing resources or Internet connection that could be considered bullying is in breach of this policy and in breach of the anti-bullying policy and will be treated accordingly.

World Wide Web Online

Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only. Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate material to the supervising teacher. The teacher must then record the incident in their journal. Year Head will be informed. If it is more serious in nature, the Deputy Principal / Principal must be informed.
- Students will be made aware not to copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source. This constitutes Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement. This may lead to no grade being awarded.
- Students will be asked to never disclose or publicise personal information unless for educational purposes under the supervision of the teacher.
- Downloading and uploading materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptance use policy.
- Students will be made aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school related or personal may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Email

- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and/or defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will use their school email address only and not personal email accounts. Students will use these approved email accounts to access Google Classroom. Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments using the approved school email account only. This is best practice for remote learning.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details; such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.

- Students are asked to never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the Internet.

Internet Chat

- Students should only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication forums for educational purposes.
- Social networking sites including Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, MSN Messenger and any other similar sites are not allowed to be accessed in the classroom/in the school.
- Proxy servers are strictly forbidden.
- Students will be encouraged where possible to use Usernames in order to avoid disclosures of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with any third party organised via Internet chat are forbidden.

School Website/Facebook/Instagram

- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of pupils or staff.
- The publication of student's work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Facebook/Instagram.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, video and audio clips focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual students will be published on the school website/Facebook/Instagram where parental approval has been given. This is generally given in writing on enrollment to the school.
- Personal pupil and staff information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named.

- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any of their work published on the school website/Facebook/Instagram

Personal Devices

- Pupils using their own technology in school such as leaving a mobile turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorised taking of images with a mobile phone camera still or moving is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy and of the school's mobile phone policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

Legislation

There is no specific legislation governing Internet safety at school level. This is complicated by the fact that the Internet functions in a global context whereas the law functions in a localised one. The following pieces of legislation however have relevance to Internet safety.

Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998

Interception Act 1993

Video Recordings Act 1989

The Data Protection Act 1988

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet will result in disciplinary action. In extreme cases, suspension or expulsion in accordance with the school Code of Excellence may be applied. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Roles and Responsibilities – Teachers

- Teachers will assign specific places in the computer room/ assign specific chrome books in the classroom. Teachers will endeavour to closely supervise students' use of computers at all times. However, it is the responsibility of the student to act responsibly when using a computer / Chromebook.

- Teachers will explain and revisit the AUP in August & September of each academic year.
- Teachers will ensure that students Internet use will be planned, task-orientated and educational within a regulated and managed environment.

St Finian's College 2021-2022

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES & ACCEPTABLE USAGE POLICY ("A.U.P.")

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines and A.U.P. have been developed to assist all employees of St Finian's College (hereinafter referred to as "the School") in making ethical, respectful and acceptable decisions about their professional and personal social media usage and to provide clear direction on the importance of protecting the School's reputation and confidential information.

Social media refers to social and professional networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Instagram, blogs, message boards and forums and other similar online facilities.

The guidelines and A.U.P. are not intended to prevent employees from engaging in social media but are intended to inform employees as to what is considered by the School to constitute appropriate / inappropriate social media usage and conduct.

For those employees who are members of the School's teaching staff, the guidelines and A.U.P. give effect to agreed professional protocols as prescribed by the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council, June 2012) which provides that teachers should: -

"ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as email, texting and social networking sites."

and

"ensure that they do not knowingly access, download or otherwise have in their possession while engaged in school activities, inappropriate materials/images in electronic or other format."

All employees should be mindful of what they post on social media, who can see it and how it can be linked back to the School and work colleagues. Misuse of social media can cause injury to others and can have a negative impact on the reputation of the School. Social media communications are never truly private and once information is published it becomes part of a permanent record.

Employees are **at all times prohibited from using or publishing information on social media which has the potential to negatively impact / reflect on the School and / or its employees and / or its students e.g.:** -

- publishing defamatory, abusive or offensive material concerning any employee, volunteer, member of School management, parent(s), student(s), visitor or other member of the School community;
- publishing any confidential or sensitive information concerning the School or members of the School community;
- publishing material that might reasonably be considered to have the effect of damaging the reputation of the School.

The School reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in respect of employees who engage in prohibited conduct and conduct in breach of this policy.

Given the ever developing and changing nature of social media and the internet the within guidelines and policy will be reviewed and adapted as required.

This policy should be read in conjunction with staff policies which are applicable to social media usage, in particular the dignity at work, internet and email usage, data protection, the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers and other and disciplinary policies and procedures.

ACCEPTABLE USAGE POLICY

A. SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON A SOCIAL MEDIA SITE OR PROFILE ESTABLISHED IN THE COURSE OF EMPLOYMENT WHICH RELATES TO SCHOOL BUSINESS / MATTERS

- (i) **Seek permission:** Employees must seek or have permission from the Principal / Deputy Principal(s) before setting up a site or profile relating to School business and or School matters / registering in the School's name on social media sites, user groups, special interest forums and bulletin boards / using social media for teaching and learning purposes.
- (ii) **Property:** The property rights in a sanctioned social media account in the name of or on behalf of the School are vested in the School.
- (iii) **Responsibility:** A permitted employee is responsible for his/her social media usage, for ensuring that private and confidential information is respected and protected at all times and for compliance with the terms and conditions of the relevant social media platform.
- (iv) **Privacy & Confidential information:** Confidential information pertaining to the School, its employees, volunteers, students, parents and others in the School community must be respected and maintained at all times. Personal information about any students, parents, employees or volunteers must not be divulged or discussed on social media sites.
- (v) **Unacceptable use:** Employees must not create, publish, download or communicate material/content that could reasonably be regarded as defamatory, inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive, hostile, pornographic, damaging to the School's reputation or referring to a third person without their permission. Uploading, forwarding or linking to the aforementioned content is also unacceptable. Employees must never reveal sensitive details whether relating to the School, its employees, volunteers, students, parents and other members of the School community on social media sites.
- (vi) **Behaviour:** Postings by an employee on a social media site that are defamatory, inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive, hostile, pornographic, divulging personal data without consent or damaging to the School's reputation will be addressed pursuant to the School's disciplinary procedure and may result in disciplinary sanction up to and including dismissal.

B. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

- (i) **Boundaries:** Personal profiles are not to be used to conduct school business or to communicate with students/parents. Online interaction with management, other employees and/or school contacts should be appropriate and professional in nature. Employees must not use the official School e-mail address when participating in personal social media / social media that is not related to the employee's job. Personal use of social media must not occur during working time but is restricted to break times at work.

- (ii) **Identity:** Where an employee chooses to identify him/herself on social media as an employee of the School, s/he must make it clear that their communications do not represent the School, its ethos, position, opinions or views. The employee must write in the first person and state clearly s/he is posting in a personal capacity and not in the course of employment or on behalf of the School and state clearly that the views expressed are his/her own and not those of the School. Employees should at all times be mindful of their communications and possible consequences.
- (iii) **Be mindful and respectful:** Employees must be mindful that their conduct not only reflects on themselves but also reflects on their professionalism and the School. Employees should exercise sound judgement, common sense and respect when participating in social media. Employees should not use insulting, offensive or disparaging language. If in doubt, don't publish or post anything. Information published online is permanent and never completely private.
- (iv) **Responsibility:** Employees are personally responsible for their posts and actions on social media.
- (v) **Privacy & Confidential information:** The obligations detailed at (A)(iv) above apply also to employees' personal social media usage. Do not divulge or discuss confidential information pertaining to the School, its employees, volunteers, students, parents and others in the School community and personal information, including photographs, of third persons (including employees, students, parents and other members of the School community) must not be posted, divulged or discussed without the permission of the person concerned.
- (vi) **Unacceptable use:** Employees must not create, publish, download or communicate material/content that could reasonably be regarded as defamatory, inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive, hostile, pornographic, damaging to the School's reputation or referring to a third person without their permission. Uploading, forwarding or linking to the aforementioned content is also unacceptable. Employees must never reveal sensitive details whether relating to the School, its employees, volunteers, students, parents and other members of the School community on social media sites.
- (vii) **Behaviour:** Postings by an employee on a social media site that are defamatory, inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive, hostile, pornographic, divulging personal data without consent or bring the School into disrepute will be addressed pursuant to the School's disciplinary procedure and may result in disciplinary sanction up to and including dismissal.

REPORTING

Employees should immediately report to the Principal / Deputy Principal any inappropriate, abusive or defamatory or other unacceptable social media activity concerning the School, its employees, volunteers, students or other members of the School community. Such reports will be fully and confidentially investigated, the reported activity will be reviewed and, where appropriate, the content will be reported using the relevant online reporting mechanism.

ENFORCEMENT

The School will monitor social media usage on School computers, laptops, mobiles, tablets, notebook computers, smartphones, School accounts and School user names. The foregoing IT resources are the School's property and are to be used for legitimate School business. Whilst the School will not specifically monitor social media for references to the School, its employees, volunteers, students, parents and other members of the School community, employees should not expect privacy in this regard.

A reported or suspected breach of this policy is a serious matter and will be investigated by School management pursuant to the appropriate workplace procedure. The School reserves the right to use information that is expressly prohibited by this policy and which comes to School management's attention whether through monitoring or otherwise for disciplinary purposes.

Non-compliance by employees with any aspect of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

C. Review of Policy

The Board of Management after one year, and every two years thereafter will review this policy.

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of August

Signed William Egerton Chairperson

Signed: John Mc Hale Principal

Next review date: May 2022

