



## COVID-19

### Frequently Asked Questions

**1. What happens if the school is notified of a confirmed case of Covid-19?**

If a case is *confirmed* then the HSE will inform any staff/parents of children who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons (*the school may assist with this process*) where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and confidentiality is essential at all times.

**2. Can I contact the school for information on a confirmed (positive) case and other close contacts?**

The school cannot comment on individual cases or outbreaks as to do so would compromise the privacy and confidentiality of those involved. When a case of COVID-19 is identified which is linked to a school, Public Health professionals discuss the matter directly with the person, or family as appropriate, and ask them about their contacts. Public Health professionals will also discuss the matter directly with the school, undertaking a public health risk assessment. Recommended measures, including any exclusions of other pupils or staff members, are made at this point. Responses and recommendations for each facility may well differ, depending on the circumstances identified by Public Health.

**3. When should I keep my child/children at home?**

Government Guidance regarding symptoms which will be followed in the school can be found in the School's Covid-19 Response plan and may be updated if necessary. Staff and Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

**4. What happens if there is a suspected case of Covid-19 in the school?**

If a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while in Waterford ETNS the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- The parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
- The pupil will be isolated immediately in the designated isolation area – School Hall.
- Each classroom will have a Covid Pack containing gloves, masks and other relevant items. A disposable mask will be given to the pupil presenting with symptoms as soon as possible and will remain on until the pupil has exited the building (Please see Covid-19 Response Plan for Reopening of Schools 5.5 Use of PPE p22 for exceptions).
- If a teacher feels that a pupil requires isolation they should contact the school secretary (Ext: 100), the school principal (Ext: 150) or deputy principal (Ext: 120) to arrange for a member of staff to bring the child to the isolation area.

## Waterford Educate Together National School

Paráid na bPáistí, Carrickphierish Road, Waterford. Tel: 051 355 714

e-mail: [admin@wetns.ie](mailto:admin@wetns.ie) Roll no. 20160K



- The member of staff who will be accompanying the child to the isolation area must get a Covid pack from beside the photocopier before going to the child.
- The pupil will be guided to the designated isolation area by a member of school staff via the shortest available route.
- The designated guide should maintain a social distance from the symptomatic person and also make sure that others maintain a social distance from the symptomatic person at all times.
- Once the child has been collected by their parents/ guardians the staff designated guide should inform the school caretaker so that the area can be cleaned and the Covid pack used sanitised and quarantined for a one week period.
- If the pupil is well enough to go home, they should be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and their general practitioner should be informed by parents by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, parents should contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- An assessment of the incident will be carried out which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery.
- Appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved will be arranged.
- The parents/guardians will need to fill in the Return to School Declaration form before the child returns to school. Available at [www.wetns.ie](http://www.wetns.ie)

### **5. Should siblings/household members of someone with symptoms be removed from the school setting?**

Only under certain circumstances: if the GP of the pupil/student/ staff member decides that their symptoms are consistent with COVID-19, (for example, fever OR a new cough, shortness of breath, deterioration of existing respiratory condition any loss of or changes to the sense of smell or taste), that person becomes a suspected case of COVID-19 and will be referred for a test. It is at this point that members of the symptomatic person's household, including siblings or children of staff members, should be withdrawn from school by their parents or guardians.

### **6. What is the period of restricted movements required of a pupil/student or staff member deemed to be a "close contact"?**

Pupils/students will be asked to restrict their movements based on current HSE advice. [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

## Waterford Educate Together National School

Paráid na bPáistí, Carrickphierish Road, Waterford. Tel: 051 355 714

e-mail: [admin@wefns.ie](mailto:admin@wefns.ie) Roll no. 20160K



### **7. If a test comes back as "not detected" for a symptomatic pupil/student/staff member, will the person still be required to restrict their movements and why?**

Yes. If the person receives a negative / 'not detected' test result, the person should remain at home until they are well enough to return to school, unless parents/guardians of (pupil/students) or staff members are specifically asked by HSE public health to remain excluded because of further investigation. A pupil/student /staff member can return to their normal activities, once they have been given either: a negative ('not-detected') test result and are 48 hours without symptoms another diagnosis, which is not COVID-19. Those who live with the person will then no longer need to restrict their movements.

### **8. If a test comes back 'SARS-CoV-2 detected' (confirmed case of COVID-19) will the pupil /student/staff member still be required to self-isolate?**

If a person was symptomatic for COVID-19 they should already be self-isolating. If a close contact who was restricting their movements receives a positive COVID-19 test result (SARS-CoV-2 detected), they are now a confirmed case of COVID-19 and must self-isolate; additionally, their close contacts including household contacts must now also start restricting their movements. They may already have been restricting their movements, however if only one person in the house was deemed a close contact from an exposure outside the house, for example, in the school, then the other family members would not have been restricting their movements until this point.

### **9. If a pupil/student/staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 and self-isolated for 10 days thereafter, can they return to school/work**

Yes, provided that both of the following apply:

- they have not had a high temperature (38 degrees Celsius or over) for 5 days
- it has been 10 days since they first developed symptoms
- **What happens at drop off and collection times?**

To assist with social distancing and ensure the safety of all members of the Waterford ETNS school community there will be staggered drop off and collection times for all pupils during the 2020/2021 school year. Staggered drop off and collection times will be done alphabetically according to your child's surname and can be found in the Covid-19 Response Plan. Children will no longer assemble in the morning at the basketball courts and instead at your child's allocated drop off time children will proceed directly to their classrooms via the rear of the school building.

### **10. How can I communicate with the class teacher?**

For the 2020/2021 school year it will not be possible to "meet quickly" with teachers at drop off or collection time and all enquiries should be made via the teacher's email. Teachers email addresses are available on the school website at this link

## Waterford Educate Together National School

Paráid na bPáistí, Carrickphierish Road, Waterford. Tel: 051 355 714

e-mail: [admin@wetns.ie](mailto:admin@wetns.ie) Roll no. 20160K



<http://wetns.ie/staff-contacts/>

Please make contact with your child's teacher via their school email address with any queries, questions or concerns that you may have. If required, a meeting can be facilitated over the phone between parents and teachers.

If following communication by emails, and phone calls you feel that a face to face meeting is required requests must be made in writing to the school principal.

Please note that contact with SNA's should be made through the class teacher only.

### **11. What is a Pod / Bubble?**

The best way to describe pods and bubbles is the following. A pod is the new name for a group and a Bubble is the new name for a classroom.

### **12. Will individual close contacts receive any school work if isolating at home?**

Unfortunately, no extra staffing was given to schools to help with remote learning in this case. With the exception of children that are deemed very high risk, the school has no capacity to offer one-to-one learning remotely.

### **13. When will Parent Teacher Meetings take place?**

The school will take guidance from the Department of Education in relation to Parent Teacher Meetings for 2021/2022. WETNS will communicate the details of how/when meetings will be held as soon as guidance is issued.

### **14. What is the school's policy on Homework for the year 2021/2022?**

Class teachers will be communicating with parents to outline homework activities for each class level.

### **15. Is the school sanitised and cleaned after a confirmed case of Covid-19?**

All of our classrooms are cleaned and sanitised every day. Extra funding was granted to schools to try to cover the extra costs associated with cleaning.

### **16. Can the class of a confirmed Covid-19 case attend school?**

The HSE will have carried out a Public Health Risk Assessment (PHRA). The only individuals who cannot attend school are those who have been identified as close contacts by Public Health. This may be a small number, for example a 'pod', or it could be a full class. However, if a pupil/student /staff member develops symptoms which could be consistent with COVID-19, they should self-isolate immediately and discuss the matter with their GP.

## Waterford Educate Together National School

Paráid na bPáistí, Carrickphierish Road, Waterford. Tel: 051 355 714

e-mail: [admin@wefns.ie](mailto:admin@wefns.ie) Roll no. 20160K



### **17. If a child returns to school but hadn't been tested for COVID-19 is a GP certificate required?**

No. Please complete the Waterford ETNS Return to School Parental Declaration Form. This form must be completed digitally on Aladdin Connect following consultation with your doctor.

### **18. What's the advice for people travelling into Ireland from a country not on the green list?**

A pupil /student / staff member travelling to Ireland from abroad should follow the governments latest travel advice: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/75d92-covid-19-travel-advice/>

### **19. Why are windows kept open in my child's classroom?**

Ventilation of classrooms is extremely important and windows and doors of classrooms will be kept open throughout the day. With this in mind appropriate clothing and extra layers should be worn to school.

### **20. Will the children be going outside during breaks if it is raining?**

The children will only stay inside for breaks if there is very heavy wind and rain. We ask that all children have suitable clothing for rainy days in the event that it starts raining when children are already outside during break.

### **21. What happens if I need to collect my child earlier in the day for an appointment?**

All children should be collected from the front entrance. Please ring the bell outside the Main front door and the school secretary, Susan will escort your child from their classroom to meet you.