



## COVID-19

### Frequently Asked Questions

**1. What happens if there is a case of Covid-19 in my child's class/school?**

Please see updated guidance from 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 from HSPC here: [Contact tracing under 13s.pdf \(hpsc.ie\)](#)

**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.

**3. If my child tests positive for Covid-19, will the school be informed? Can I inform the school/class/teacher and can the school share this information with the whole class?**

The school will no longer be contacted by Public Health Officials and informed of positive cases of Covid-19 within Mainstream Classes unless a parent informs us directly.

A parent would need to give the school permission to inform other parents in a class that there has been a confirmed case of Covid-19 within the class setting. No personal details would ever be shared by the school.

If your child has tested positive for Covid-19, we would ask all parents to consider the likelihood that there are children, staff and family members within our school community who are medically vulnerable and at a higher risk of serious illness from Covid-19 and who would benefit from the knowledge of whether or not they have been a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19.

**4. 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. Parents should contact their GP and follow their advice. If the GP does not recommend Covid testing, pupils should be observed at home and should be **symptom free 48 hours** before returning. If GP has made a different diagnosis, parents/guardians should follow advice and recommendations on exclusion depending on the diagnosis.

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

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

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- 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.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- **Parents/Guardians should contact their GP for advice.** If the GP does not recommend Covid testing, pupils should be observed at home and should be **symptom free 48 hours** before returning. If GP has made a different diagnosis, parents/guardians should follow advice and recommendations on exclusion depending on the diagnosis.
- 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)

### 6. 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, 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 guardian **unless** they are fully vaccinated or have had a confirmed Covid-19 infection within the past 9 months.

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### **7. 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)

[Contact tracing under 13s.pdf \(hpsc.ie\)](#)

### **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 as per HSE Guidelines.

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

For the 2021/2022 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

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

Please contact 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.

### **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 2021/2022 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. 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.

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

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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.

### **12. 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.

### **13. 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.

### **14. 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.

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

See new guidance here: [Contact tracing under 13s.pdf \(hpsc.ie\)](https://www.hpsc.ie/hpsc/1353/Pages/Contact-tracing-under-13s.pdf)

### **16. 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.

### **17. 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/>

### **18. 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. Appropriate clothing and extra layers should be worn to school.

### **19. 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.

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### **20. 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.