### Scoil Chormaic Covid 19 School Response Plan.

#### 1. Introduction:

This Covid -19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management in putting measures in place that will prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Scoil Chormaic.

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 and Skills plan for reopening schools and to prevent the spread of Covid 19 in the school environment. The plan incorporates the current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid -19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET).

It is important that the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities comply with the protocol to minimise the risk to students, staff and others. As advice issued by NPHET continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures management and staff need to address may change.

The response plan will support the sustainable reopening of our school where the overriding objective is to protect health and safety of pupils and staff while promoting the educational and development needs of the children in the school.

In line with the Return to Work Safety Protocol, the key to a safe and continued return to work and reopening of our school requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents.

# 2. Scoil Chormaic Covid -19 Policy.

This Covid -19 policy outlines our commitment as a school to implement the plan and help to prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management and brought to the attention of staff, pupils, parents and others.

### Covid-19 Policy Statement.

Scoil Chormaic is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils.

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

The BOM and all school 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 staff.
- Provide up to date information to our staff and pupils 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, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan.
- Inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements.
- Adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education and Skills.
- Keep a contact log to help with contact tracing.
- Ensure staff and pupils engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Skills.
- Implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of Covid-19 during school time.
- Provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of Covid-19 during school time
- Implement cleaning in line with the Department of Education and Skills advice.

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the lead Worker Representatives: Names of Lead Worker Representatives: Seamus Hayes, Caitriona Shortt, Raymond O'Dowd. Eyvonne Clasby Fahey

Principal: Lorraine Lowry Date: 09/02/2021

Chairperson: Monica Shannon Date: 09/02/2021

# 3. Planning and Preparing for Return to School.

The Board of Management aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to work must be done safely and in strict adherence to the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government.

Details for the reopening of the school facility and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

(a) School Buildings.

\*The water system has been thoroughly flushed out following low usage in order to prevent Legionella disease.

\*School equipment has been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again.

\*Thorough cleaning of all school areas.

\*Hand sanitation points have been installed at all entrances, exits and rooms. These are checked and filled with sanitiser daily.

\*Pedal bins are provided in all classrooms and bathrooms.

(b) Signage.

In line with requirements our school will display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

These signs will be displayed in prominent areas –offices, corridors, staffrooms, classrooms and toilets.

In order to ensure safe entry and exit of students, bus times will be staggered. Students will be collected from their buses and brought to their class rooms.

Hand hygiene measures will be carried out on arrival to school following the bus journey.

Break times will be staggered in order to maintain class bubbles and to minimise risk and ensure staff can social distance in staff rooms.

# 4. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a Return to Work form.

The RTW form should only be completed at least 3 days prior to the proposed date of return to the workplace. We also request staff verbally (or in writing) to confirm that the details in the RTW form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of closure.

The Principal will provide details of the Induction Training for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace and details of any additional Health and Safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school.

# 5. Return to work safely and Lead Worker Representative.

Responsibility for the development of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management and the School Leadership.

Our school has completed a detailed risk assessment prior to the development of this plan in order to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of the virus in Scoil Chormaic.

The Return to Work safety protocol provides for an agreed procedure between management and staff to appoint Lead Worker Representatives to carry out a specific role. These Lead Worker Representatives will have completed training specific to their roles.

The role of the lead worker representative is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to in the workplace as follows:

- Work collaboratively with the employer to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to Covid-19.
- Promote good hand hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice.
- Assist with the implementation of measures to suppress Covid -19 in the workplace.
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to Covid-19 in the workplace.
- Make representations on behalf of their colleagues on matters in relation to Covid-19 in the workplace.

If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan and control measures or adherence to such measures by staff, parents/guardians, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact the lead workers who will engage with the Principal/ BOM.

Names of Lead Worker Representatives: Seamus Hayes, Caitriona Shortt, Raymond O'Dowd. Eyvonne Clasby Fahey

All staff have been made aware of who the Scoil Chormaic Lead Worker Representatives are and have been informed of their roles within our school.

All staff, parents/guardians, 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.

# 6. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment.

Covid-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A risk assessment has been carried out to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 in our school setting and this is attached to the Scoil Chormaic school response plan.

We recognise the importance of reviewing our 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 and any changes to the existing emergency procedures will be documented.

# 7. General advice to prevent the spread of the virus.

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.

The best way to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Scoil Chormaic is to minimise the risk of introduction of the disease into the school setting in the first place.

This can be achieved through the following measures:

- Promote awareness of Covid-19 and its symptoms amongst staff, pupils, parents/ quardians and visitors.
- Advise staff and parents of pupils who have symptoms or other acute infectious diseases not to attend school, to self isolate or restrict their movements at home, to phone their GP and follow the HSE guidance on self isolation.
- Advice staff and parents/ guardians of pupils who have been identified by the HSE as a contact of a person with Covid-19 not to attend school and to follow HSE advice on restriction of movement.

- Staff or pupils do not attend if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus and follow HSE advice on restriction of movement
- Ensure that both staff and pupils know what to do if they develop symptoms at school.
- Everyone entering the school building should be required to perform hand hygiene with hand sanitiser.
- Visitors to school during the day should be by prior arrangement and should be received at a specific contact point.

Visitors, staff and pupils (in so far as is practically possible) should at all times adhere to the up to date advice and instructions of the public health authorities in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

The Department of Education and Skills will ensure all updated advice is circulated to schools.

Scoil Chormaic will arrange for this advice to be circulated to staff, pupils, parents/quardians and visitors in a timely manner.

### 8. Managing the risk of spread of Covid-19.

### (a) Wash hands frequently.

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of Covid-19. We will follow HSE guidelines on hand washing.

### (b) Hand hygiene and hand sanitisers.

Hand hygiene can also be achieved by the use of a hand sanitiser when hands are clean.

Hand sanitisers will be readily available and their use encouraged frequently to avoid disruption to teaching and learning and to avoid congestion of staff and pupils waiting to use hand washing facilities.

Hand sanitisers will be available at exit and entry points and in all classrooms.

#### (c) Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.

Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses, once contaminated; hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.

#### (d) Physical Distancing.

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of infection in the work place.

Two metre distance should be adhered to between staff and one metre between pupil to staff and between pupil to pupil as much as is practiceably possible.

Classrooms have been laid out to ensure physical distancing in as much as is practically possible for working with our students.

Pupils will be seated 1 metre away from each other and if possible 2 metres. Pupils will be taught about physical distancing and the reasons for it in an age appropriate manner.

Staff will be facilitated to have their breaks in the same groups/bubbles each day and the arrangement of the staff rooms will allow staff to physically distance from each other.

Guidance on physical distancing requirements will be informed by public health advice for schools.

#### (e) Ventilation

Good ventilation is recognised as an important factor in managing and reducing the risk of spread of Covid 19 therefore in line with the DES and public guidance for "good ventilation practice in Schools":

- Windows will be open as fully as possible during breaks and lunch times and at the end of the school day (to be closed by the caretaker on locking up)
- Windows will be partially opened during classroom use
- The guidance provides that good ventilation can be achieved in classrooms without causing discomfort particularly during cold weather

 Also classroom doors will be left open where possible during class time. If this is not viable staff will ensure that classroom doors will be left open at all times when the class group are out on movement breaks

#### (f) Practice respiratory hygiene.

Encourage everyone to follow good respiratory hygiene at all times. This means covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze, then dispose of the tissue immediately.

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

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly can help stop the spread of the virus.

It is therefore crucial that all staff adhere to this advice and adopt the following practices as strictly as possible.

#### (g) Do

- \* Wash your hands properly and often.
- \*Cover your mouth and nose with tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- \* Put used tissues in the bin and wash your hands.
- \*Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

#### (g) Do Not

- \*touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- \* Share objects that touch your mouth- for example bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.

# (h) People at Very High Risk /High Risk.

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are identified as being at very high risk/high risk. The HSE has set out these groups, which include people, who:

- Are over 60 years of age even if you are fit and well.
- Staff who are pregnant
- Have had an organ transplant
- Are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- Are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- Have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma that are at any stage of treatment.
- Are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- Are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- Have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppressant drugs
- Severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- Have a condition that means you are at a very high risk of getting infections(such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- Are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosoppression therapies)
- Have a serious heart condition.

Where a staff member has been categorised by Medmark as at high risk if they contract Covid 19 for example over 60 years of age the school may facilitate more flexible working arrangements, this is made possible by the attendance of fewer pupils.

Pregnant staff members who feel that they may be at high risk may be facilitated to work remotely from home if they choose to do so.

These measures are temporary and only for the duration of the partial reopening.

Latest guidance in relation to this can be accessed in the Department of Education Circulars 0001/2021 and 0002/2021, these have been shared with all staff via school emails.

Advice for this group is available from the HSE. Staff who are in this group should self –declare on the Return to Work form if they believe that they are at very high risk.

If the BOM/Principal is unsure whether or not a staff fall into the very high risk category advice will be sought from the Occupational Health Service.

Circular 0049/2020 has been circulated to all staff. Any staff member that is concerned for their health has been advised to fill in the OHS questionnaire and contact the Principal with the outcome.

#### 9. Control Measures

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, pupils, parents/guardians and visitors as far as is possible within the school.

These control measures are outlined in this document.

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

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

Staff, in particular 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.

The following control measures have been put in place:

#### (a) Return to Work Form.

Staff will be required to complete/report verbally a RTW form at least 3 days prior to any return to the school. The purpose of the RTW form is to get confirmation from staff that, to the best of their knowledge they have no symptoms of Covid-19 and are not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.

Induction Training.

All staff will undertake and complete Covid -19 Induction Training prior to returning. The aim of such training is to ensure that 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 Scoil Chormaic Covid-19 Response Plan.

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of Covid-19 and 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 or her duties, they should seek guidance immediately from the Principal.

### (b) Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette.

It is crucial that all staff, pupils, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and adopt, good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Guidance documentation and information posters will be available at various locations within the school.

Information posters will be prominently displayed at appropriate locations within the school including offices, corridors, staffroom areas, class room and toilet areas.

Such are intended to inform but also remind everyone about the importance of hygiene in preventing the spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.

Hand washing facilities and /or hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations within the school, at all entrances/exits and all classrooms.

#### (c) Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

PPE such as masks (medical grade or staff's own) will be worn by staff at all times but most especially when a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained.

Staff assisting with intimate care will be provided with appropriate PPE.

Staff will wear PPE when dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 during school.

Appropriate PPE will also be provided for staff when dealing with any first aid or medical emergency.

Staff will also use PPE when assisting with regular medical needs in the school environment and will apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

This will be updated in line with advice from HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre).

### (d) Wearing of Gloves.

The use of disposable gloves in the school setting by pupils or staff is not appropriate. It does not protect the wearer and it may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves. Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene. Gloves will be worn when disinfecting areas and hands should be washed prior to and after removing and disposing of gloves.

#### (e) Cleaning.

Arrangements for more regular and thorough cleaning of areas and surfaces within Scoil Chormaic have been made.

Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces within the school shall be conducted; in particular, toilets, lifts, stairs handrails, door handles, kitchen/staffrooms and the school lift. Cleaning will be performed regularly and whenever surfaces are visibly dirty.

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

An enhanced cleaning regime and Cleaning Plan for the school has been developed.

The need for the enhanced cleaning plan has been explained to staff. Staff will undertake the Departments' on line cleaning information and training programme prior to the recommencement of work and are made aware of the details of the enhanced cleaning plan.

As per guidelines, cleaning is best achieved using general purpose detergent and warm water, clean cloths, mops and the mechanical action of wiping and cleaning followed by rinsing and drying.

This Cleaning Plan includes:

- ✓ Cleaning and disinfecting of all chairs before school recommences (see Section 2-Hygiene) and at the end of each day.
- ✓ Cleaning and disinfecting of all tables before the recommencement of school (see Section 2- Hygiene) and after break, lunch and at the end of each day subsequently. Cleaning and disinfecting of tables further to this will be done as required throughout the day in response to circumstances as they arise.
- ✓ Frequently touched surfaces will be kept visibly clean and cleaned at least twice per day or more frequently if required in response to circumstances as they arise during the course of the day.
- ✓ Additional cleaners available throughout the day and external contract cleaners to do a thorough clean of all areas at the end of each day.
- ✓ Arrangements have been put in place for the regular and safe emptying of bins and the use of pedal bins to avoid hand contact.

Staff must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.) Bring their items back to their classroom and wash and store them in their classrooms

### (f) Access to the school building/contact log.

Access to Scoil Chormaic will be in line with agreed school procedures.

Arrangement for necessary visitors such as parents/guardians, health professionals and contractors will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal.

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 all who are part of the Scoil Chormaic community, pupils and staff.

A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering Scoil Chormaic and our Pre School will be maintained.

The school will maintain a log of staff and student contacts.

In addition a visitor contact log will be maintained.

The Department of Education and skills inspectorate may also need to visit the school to support and advise in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment.

#### (g) First Aid/ emergency procedure.

The standard First Aid /Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in Scoil Chormaic.

In an emergency or in case of serious incident an ambulance /fire brigade depending on the incident will be called on 999/112, giving details of the location and type of medical incident.

### 10. Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19.

- Parents/Carers have been advised that if their child or anyone in their household is displaying symptoms of Covid 19 then they are to remain at home. The symptoms include:
  - o Fever- A temperature of 38 or above.
  - o A Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Breathing difficulties
  - Loss or change to sense of smell or taste.
  - Sore throat
- ➤ Isolation areas have been identified and prepared in the school and all staff made aware of their location and when/how they are to be used.

If a pupil develops symptoms of Covid 19 while at school the following measures will be followed:

- Pupil will be checked by the school nurse.
- ➤ A decision will be made that the symptoms present are a cause for concern and meet the criteria for them to be escorted to the isolation area. The assigned school personnel making this decision are the School Principal, Lorraine Lowry, Deputy Principal Helena Sweeney and School Nurse Caitriona Shortt.
- ➤ Your child will be moved to an isolation area and kept 2 metre away from other pupils. Staff will remain 2 metres away unless it is unsafe to do so and will be wearing appropriate PPE in any event
- > The parent/guardian will be contacted immediately and the child must be collected from school as soon as possible.
- We will endeavour to make our students feel safe and comfortable if any of the above arises.
- The school will only be in a position to ascertain that a child has observable symptoms that may or may not be consistent with Covid 19.

It remains the responsibility of the G.P. to make the determination if symptoms merit a referral for testing.

➤ A child will not be permitted back to school until the following conditions are met:

- ✓ Written confirmation from your GP that they are not a Suspected Case and then only when their symptoms are gone.
- ✓ On receipt of a Negative result following a test for Covid 19 and once their symptoms have gone.
- √ 14 Days after the receipt of a positive result and 5 days clear of all symptoms.
- ✓ Consult with school before returning to school.
- Staff that are in contact with a symptomatic case within school will maintain social/distancing of 2 metres (unless unsafe to do so), undertake hand hygiene measures prior to and after such contact will use the following PPE:
  - ✓ Face covering/mask.
  - ✓ Eye protection/visor
  - ✓ Disposal plastic apron.
- ➤ All PPE used in the event of a dealing with a Symptomatic case will be double bagged and stored for 72 hours before being disposed of in general waste.
- Protocol will be displayed in the isolation rooms.

If a member of staff develops symptoms of Covid 19 in the course of the day the following measures will be undertaken:

- ➤ The staff member will immediately remain a 2 metre distance from all other staff members and pupils and keep their face covering in place.
- If the staff member is too unwell to travel home themselves, they will remain in the isolation room until such time as arrangements can be made for them to go home.
- If the staff member is well enough to travel home themselves and is confident that doing so will not put them in harm, then they may travel home themselves.
- Staff will be advised to seek medical advice from their doctor and not to return to school until:

- ✓ Written confirmation from their GP that they are not a Suspected Case and then only when their symptoms are gone.
- ✓ On receipt of a Negative results following a test for Covid 19 and once their symptoms have gone.
- ✓ 14 Days after the receipt of a positive result and 5 days clear of all symptoms.
- ✓ Consult with school before returning to work
- We encourage staff to download the HSE COVID Tracker App to assist public health for contact tracing purposes both in and out of the school

# 11. 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. In order to facilitate a safe return to work, these duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the Scoil Chormaic Covid -19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within Scoil Chormaic. All staff have a key role to play.
- Coordinate and work with 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 or attend school if they or any member of their household have symptoms of Covid-19 under any circumstance.
- If they have travelled outside of Ireland, in such instances, staff are advised to consult and follow latest government advice in relation to foreign travel
- If they develop any symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the school they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- 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 school.
- 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 practices.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.
- Cooperate with any public personnel and their and their school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in our school.
- Undergo any Covid-19 testing that may be required as part of mass or serial testing as advised by public health

### 12. Covid-19 related absence management.

The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the DES.

Circular 49/2020 has been circulated to all staff.

# 13. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chormaic aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff both at work whether in school or at home and outside work.

The Board of Management is mindful that the support and promotion of staff health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chormaic aims to foster a culture and work environment that support healthy behaviours and staff wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing a priority. These are challenging times for everyone. Should any staff member experience stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the Principal. Staff have also been advised on the availability of the supports of the occupational health and wellbeing programme through Spectrum life.