

## COVID-19 Routines & Procedures - Guide for Students

Every member of Royal School Cavan is asked to exercise *personal responsibility* in following all the routines and procedures that are in place ***to ensure that we do all that we can to protect each other from Covid-19.***

In developing this student guide, I am following DES and HSE Guidelines on Reopening our Schools and our COVID-19 Response Plan (August 2021). ***These rules/procedures for being together will be the same as the previous school year.*** You will be reminded of these rules/procedures on your first day back at school, during your induction periods. During this time, you will get the opportunity to discuss these procedures and practices to manage the risks associated with COVID-19 with your tutor. This guide reminds you of the measures the school has put in place to prevent COVID-19 entering and spreading within our school community. The guide provides information regarding what is expected of all of us, the symptoms of COVID-19, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene, physical distancing (increased separation and decreased interaction), use of PPE, impact on school activities and what procedures will be followed if there is a suspected case in the school community.

### How do I prepare for coming back to school?

If you or your family have *been abroad* before school reopens you need to check and confirm you are compliant with HSE guidelines on travel.

If you are old enough (over 16) and your parents agree, you should download the *COVID app* to your phone.

You must *practice hand and respiratory hygiene and social distancing protocols outside and inside school.*

Some teachers may ask you to bring in a small number of *textbooks and copies* each day. Please ensure these are *covered in plastic covers* so they can be wiped down.

Purchase your own bottle of hand sanitising gel.

Purchase your own face coverings - Cloth Masks. These masks must be of plain or neutral design or pattern, and they must fit you correctly. Please do not arrive to school with novelty, loud or offensive masks.

Please click on this link for details on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>

Please click on this link for details from the HSE on how to wash and sanitise your hands correctly

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

### **Getting your school bag ready, what should I bring to school on my first day?**

To begin with you should only bring, refreshments, a pencil case, copy (with plastic cover) or a refill pad and a small bag containing your own sanitiser and cloth face masks. All your belongings should be labelled with your name. You must not share or leave behind any of your possessions in your base classroom.

Students must bring left-overs, wrappers, fruit skins etc home with them each day in a lunchbox / container. This lunch box should be washed thoroughly each day. As was the case last year, lockers will not be available for the foreseeable future.

### **What time should I come to school?**

Ideally, you should arrive at 8.30am (15 minutes before the start of class) and go straight to your Base Classroom. However, there will be a small number of students who will arrive before that time, due to their bus and the school will facilitate these students.

### **What school entrance will I use?**

*If you arrive by bus or car:*

Form 1, 2, and 5 students should make their way to the Tennis court and enter through the door closest to room 7. Form 3 students should enter at the side entrance, directly across from the Hockey Pitch. TY and Form 6 students should enter through the red door. Please ensure that you enter in a single file, maintaining strict social distancing and go straight to your base classroom.

*If you walk up the student path:*

Form 3, 6 & TY should enter at the normal student entrance, at the Tennis court, in a single file, maintaining strict social distancing and go straight to your base classroom while Forms 1, 2 & 5 should

enter at the door nearest room 7, in a single file, maintaining strict social distancing and go straight to your base classroom.

### *Internal Circulation*

When walking in the corridors, you must walk in single file, at a distance from each other around the building, following the one-way system in place.

Handrails must only be used, if necessary, when moving up and down the stairs. Stairs must be taken one step at a time, and you must remain four steps apart on the stairs.

### **What do I do when I arrive at my classroom?**

You should sanitise your hands with the sanitiser provided, there will be a dispenser at the entrance of each class as well as explanatory posters on hygiene and cleaning measures.

Once you have sanitised your hands, you should take your seat, take out the required materials for your class and place your bag under your chair.

### **What do I do when I move from my base classroom?**

All movement around and within the buildings will be supervised/coordinated by teachers.

You may be required to disinfect your table, chair, or workstation before you leave the room.

You may sanitise your hands using your own sanitiser before moving to another area in the school.

There will be designated areas outside for each class group during break times.

### **How do I know if my classroom has adequate ventilation?**

To balance the need to have adequate ventilation and comfort in a classroom, the Department are introducing portable Carbon Dioxide Monitors. The monitors will record when Carbon Dioxide levels are low, because of good ventilation, and when Carbon Dioxide levels increase above a certain level in the room, which indicate the need to introduce more fresh air into the classroom. As was the case last year windows will be fully open when rooms are not in use, partially open when rooms are in use, opening internal doors for periods of time, while always managing comfort levels for the occupants of the rooms.

### **How often do I need to perform hand hygiene each day?**

You must wash/sanitise your hands regularly,

- On arrival to school
- Before eating or drinking
- After using the toilet
- After playing outdoors
- When your hands are physically dirty
- When you cough or sneeze.

### **Where will I sit in my classroom?**

The classroom arrangement of desks/tables will be according to the rules of social distance and safety.

You should use the same desk and chair every day. A seating plan for your class will be in place. If you have a specific seating requirement, please email Ms. Gray [agray@royalschoolcavan.ie](mailto:agray@royalschoolcavan.ie)

### **What happens at breaktimes?**

Breaktimes and lunchtimes will be staggered

Form 3, 6 & TY will break at 10:10 – 10:25 and have lunch at 12:25 – 13:05

Forms 1, 2 & 5 will break at 10:50 – 11:05 and have lunch at 13:05 – 13:45

You must bring in your own food and water from home. It should not be purchased in a shop on the way to school. Food should be carefully wrapped and not shared. Snacks and refreshment breaks will be confined to your base classroom. You should sanitise your hands before eating a snack or lunch. Weather permitting you will be allowed to go outside to an assigned area for some fresh air and a mask break if you are 2m apart from another person.

### **Use of toilets**

You should only use the assigned toilet and washing areas for your class.

Toilets are fitted with hand soap, paper towel dispensers and pedal bins, toilets will be cleaned frequently.

You should wash your hands after using the toilet, for a minimum of 20 seconds and dry your hands for at least 20 seconds.

### **What do I do if I feel unwell?**

If you are at home, you should not come to school. Lesson material will be available on Google Classroom for you to follow if you are well enough.

If you feel unwell in school, you should let your teacher know immediately. Please learn the symptoms of Covid-19 in case this is what is making you ill. The symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- High temperature
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

Further Information about the symptoms of Covid-19 can be viewed at this link <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/472f64-covid-19-coronavirus-guidance-and-advice/#symptoms>

If you have a suspected case of Covid-19 the following will occur:

The Acting Principal or Acting Deputy Principal will bring you to the isolation area keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person.

Your parents/guardians will be contacted immediately to come and collect you from school and your parent(s) will be advised to inform your general practitioner by phone of your symptoms.

### **What about extra-curricular?**

In line with the Covid-19 Response Plan, the school will not be running any extracurricular activities that will involve the use of changing rooms or leads to the mixing of year groups, in spaces that does not allow for maximum social distancing of 2m. Our focus is on getting everyone back to school safely and reducing the spread of Covid-19. We will keep this decision under review as public health advice changes.

### **How do I leave school?**

To avoid congregating on the way out of school classes will finish at staggered times during the last 5 minutes of period 9. You should leave in single file by the appointed exit for your last class, strictly social distancing.

**What happens if the school must close due to COVID-19?**

We will use Google classroom, Google Meets and Zoom. We will be explaining how to use these platforms to our new students as part of their induction on the first day and working to embed it over the first few weeks of term.