



COVID 19 POLICY

Staff Policy

1. Objective of the policy

- 1.1. The policy aim is to ensure a safe working environment for all employees and to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It is a requirement of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that the employer must provide employees with a healthy, safe, and hazard-free working environment.
- 1.2. People who contract COVID-19 may take anywhere from one to 14 days to develop symptoms. Even if you do not have a history of travel to a COVID-19 affected region or contact with an individual who has contracted the illness, you must still inform your healthcare provider if you present with symptoms of COVID-19.

2. Application

- 2.1. This Policy will apply to all employees of the school without exception.

3. Content

3.1. How does Covid-19 spread?

COVID-19 spreads quickly, through:

- Coughing or sneezing – one can contract COVID-19 if one is standing within one meter of a person who has the illness by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by the ill person.
- Close personal contact, such as when shaking hands or touching others.
- Touching an object or surface on which the virus is found (after an ill person coughs or exhales close to these objects or surfaces such as desks, tables, or telephones), then - before washing the hands – touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.

3.2. Primary symptoms of Covid-19

The primary symptoms of COVID-19 are as follows:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

3.3. What to do if you develop symptoms

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are advised to seek medical treatment and diagnosis as soon as possible.

Employees with acute respiratory illness symptoms are advised to stay home and not come to work until they are cleared for work by a registered medical practitioner.

It is important to note that for an employee to qualify for sick leave, a valid medical certificate booking them off will be required.

Employees should notify the Principal and stay home if they are sick and have been booked off.

All employees should follow the school's sick leave policy in such situations.

If the school has reason to suspect that an employee has been infected with COVID-19 or an employee becomes ill at work during the day, the employer will request the employee to leave the workplace and seek medical treatment and or testing immediately.

If the employer has instructed the employee to seek medical treatment or testing, the employer will be financially liable if the employee does not have medical aid.

If this instruction is not followed, it will be regarded as gross insubordination and disciplinary steps will be taken as it could put other employees at risk.

3.4. Quarantine and working from home

If an employee has been to a high-risk area through travel and chooses to quarantine themselves without a Doctor's note, the employee may apply for annual leave during this period, or if it is at all possible, arrange with the school to perform their duties from home.

If an employee has a family member or a person sharing their living quarters diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee should immediately inform the school and get medical treatment or get tested immediately. The employee will not be allowed back at work until they have been cleared by a registered medical practitioner. If at all possible, arrangements should be made to work from home until you are medically cleared.

If you need to take care of a family member who has contracted the virus, family responsibility leave will apply as per its definition or you can apply for annual leave.

3.5. Hygiene in the workplace

The School commits to routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. The school will use the cleaning agents capable of disinfecting these surfaces.

It is recommended that employees acquire alcohol-based hand sanitizer and frequently sanitize their hands or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds throughout the day.

If an employee coughs or sneezes, we highly recommend that employee covers their nose or mouth with a tissue or the bend of the elbow to stop the spreading of droplets released when coughing or sneezing.

3.6. Required knowledge for staff prior to school opening

All staff must be appraised of the following prior to returning to school and must ensure that they adhere to this protocol for the foreseeable future:

- a) Requirement of physical distance between pupils and staff according to the regulations of “social distancing” at all times during the school day.
- b) Minimising the number of people that are permitted to enter a school at any one time.
- c) The requirement to sanitize hands at entry into the school.
- d) The use of sanitiser upon entering classrooms/venues during the school day.
- e) The requirement to check the temperature of every person entering the school with the use of a thermal thermometer and to do this at random intervals during the school day.
- f) The wearing of masks or protective visors by all people on the school grounds at all times.
- g) Ongoing reasonable level of cleaning of the school on an ongoing basis.
- h) Any person feeling ill must not attend the school until the nature of the illness is clarified.
- i) Ongoing training of everyone on general hygiene requirements such as cleanliness, how to cough and sneeze and how to correctly wash hands.
- j) A separate space in the school should there be any doubt and the need for someone presenting as ill to then be quarantined while awaiting transportation from the school.

An employer is obligated to provide employees with masks and any other appropriate PPE in order to safeguard employees in the workplace. (AS NEEDED)

4. Procedures Regarding Returning Staff

All staff, on arrival at school, are to be screened for temperature at the Main Gate of the School. These staff will be screened by designated staff members of the school (nominated screeners) with the use of an infrared thermometer.

The nominated screeners will be required to do the following:

- Screen any worker, at the time that they report for work, to ascertain whether they have any of the observable symptoms associated with COVID-19, namely fever, cough, sore throat, redness of eyes or shortness of breath (or difficulty in breathing);
- Require every worker to report whether they suffer from any of the following additional symptoms: body aches, loss of smell or loss of taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, weakness, or tiredness; and
- Require workers to immediately inform the employer if they experience any of the symptoms above while at work.
- Use a thermal thermometer on each employee and if the employee’s temperature **exceeds 38 degrees** instruct the staff member to return home and remain there until she/he has a “normal” temperature (below 38 degrees). (All the above must be recorded by the screener on a checklist that will be provided)
- If the employee walks to work, it may be necessary for a driver to take the employee home or to the nearest screening station. It is imperative that the

- driver takes all precautions necessary to avoid contamination if COVID-19 is suspected.
- The staff member may only return to school when she/he has a medical clearance certificate from a doctor stating that she/he does not have Covid-19, or that she/he is fully recovered and cleared if she/he has tested positive.
 - The staff member's name must be recorded by the screener and the Principal notified.
- Academic Staff will be required to sanitize their hands at the beginning of every lesson and at regular intervals.
 - Ground Staff and Maintenance Staff are to practise social distancing when getting changed and only two staff members may be in a restroom at any given time. The Maintenance Manager is responsible for ensuring that this happens.
 - **ALL Staff are to wear masks at all times.** The School will provide each staff member with two masks.
 - The following basic principles will apply to ALL staff:
 - No physical contact, including shaking of hands or hugging allowed. A social/physical distance of at least 1.5 meters must be maintained between all persons.
 - Hands must be sanitized with the provided school sanitizer at least every 40 minutes.
 - Additional sanitising or handwashing with soap and running water is necessary:
 - After going to the bathroom
 - Before and after eating
 - After blowing your nose
 - Coughing or sneezing
 - When hands are visibly dirty
 - After handling work sheets / books.
 - When caring for sick children
 - Glove use is strictly prohibited unless specifically required as part of an identified risk's control measures.
 - Gloves are generally only a requirement when handling chemicals, contaminated or dirty items, or certain maintenance tools and equipment.
 - Unless otherwise advised, at the moment masks are to be worn and these will be provided.
 - When coughing and sneezing, nose and mouth must be covered with a flexed elbow or tissue. The tissue must be disposed of thereafter in a bin.

5. Confidentiality

Where an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the Occupational Health and Safety Directive (clause 16.10) stipulates that an employer must:

5.1. Inform the Department of Health, and the Department of Employment and Labour; and

- 5.2. Investigate the cause including any control failure and review the risk assessment to ensure that the necessary controls and PPE are in place.
- 5.3. This does not amount to a breach of confidentiality as the employer is required by law to make such a disclosure. The employer would, however, still be required to maintain confidentiality within the organisation and to not publish the employee's medical results within the workplace.
- 5.4. The same would be applicable should any pupils test positive for COVID-19. The Department of Health would need to be alerted and the COVID-19 hotline could be used.

6. Consequence of breach

- 6.1. If an employee breaches this policy the necessary disciplinary action will be taken. It is important to note that the school's sick leave policy will not be adjusted or become flexible during the outbreak of COVID-19. The normal sick leave policy which is in line with Labour Law will still apply.

It is the employee's responsibility to contact management should he/she have any queries.

I, _____, (employee number/ ID number) hereby agree that I have read and understood the contents of this policy and agree to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Employee signature as receipt hereof	
Date	