



Larkin Community College  
Coláiste Pobail Lorcáin

## Reopening the School 2020/21 Update 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

We hope that you and your families are all keeping safe and well.

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the school and are following the guidelines that have been issued by the Department of Education and Skills in order to get the building ready and to put procedures in place for a safe reopening of the school. For your information the website: [www.gov.ie/backtoschool](http://www.gov.ie/backtoschool) contains all the guidelines issued to schools and also has information for students and their families.

The school website [www.larkincommunitycollege.ie](http://www.larkincommunitycollege.ie) will be updated regularly to keep you informed – click on the **Information for Parents** link for updates. Please get into the habit of checking for updates regularly. It is really important that we all work together to ensure that everyone returns to school safely – by keeping yourself informed you will be helping play your part in this too. We will be launching a new School App this year for parents/guardians– we will send you more details about this before school starts.

**Please note that all information is current and subject to change at any time on the advice of the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE).**

While we are doing our very best to plan for as normal a return to school we all recognise that it will be a different environment to how schools operated before the buildings closed last March. School this year will be different, and at times the new ways of doing things will be challenging, but keeping everyone safe and looking after their wellbeing, whilst re-engaging with teaching and learning, is our priority. We know that some of our students and parents/guardians may be anxious or nervous about returning to school and this is why there will be a special emphasis on wellbeing for the whole school when we return.

### **Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk



of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student - student, teacher - teacher and teacher- student, and must be managed in all settings.

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, students, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

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

- **Students that have symptoms of COVID-19 should NOT attend school, and should phone their doctor and follow HSE guidance on self-isolation;**
- **COVID-19 symptoms are**
  - **High temperature**
  - **Cough**
  - **Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties**
  - **Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**
- **Students should NOT attend school if they have been identified by the HSE as a close contact for a person with COVID-19 and to follow the HSE advice on restriction of movement;**
- **Students should NOT attend school if they have returned from a country not on the Green List within the previous 14 days.**
- **Students that develop COVID-19 symptoms at school MUST bring this to the attention of the principal (or deputy principal if the principal is unavailable) immediately.**

The HSE website provides up to date information on how what we all need to do in order to protect others: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/protect-yourself-and-others.html>.

In order to plan for the reopening of the school LCC's Critical Incident Management Team which comprises a wide range of staff as well as the Senior Management Team has met and is working on the procedures and protocols that need to be in place for students and staff to safely return. They are collaborating in order to best plan for the return of students to the school. Staff from CDETB Head Office and their Maintenance department are working with us to ensure that the necessary measures are put in place.

Staff are working in the school to reorganise the classrooms and remove all surplus furniture and equipment to ensure that the physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations are met.

- Everyone entering the building must perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- COVID-19 Induction programme for all staff and students



- Signage to show how to move around the building.
- Signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Floor markings to illustrate physical distancing.
- Rearranged classrooms to ensure 1m physical distance between students.
- Hand sanitisers in entrance hall, general areas and all classrooms
- Posters explaining hand washing/sanitising technique.
- Isolation Room has been set up and is stocked with PPE gear.
- Staggered start times and break times for junior and senior cycle students.
- Classes will be based in base rooms as much as possible and students will access specialist rooms or other classrooms as required.
- Limited seating in atrium.
- Break and Lunch arrangements have changed.
- Only essential visitors will be allowed into the school during the day and only by prior arrangement with the principal.
- Any parent/guardian wishing to visit the school must make an appointment with the Principal.
- A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities will be kept to facilitate contact tracing.
- All visitors will have to wear a face covering, like the ones worn in shops or on public transport. Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.
- Code of Behaviour Policy being amended to include sanctions for breaching Covid-19 health and safety protocols.
- COVID-19 Policy being submitted to Board of Management for Ratification
- LCC School Response Plan being finalised and will be published on website before school reopens.
- Risk Assessment being updated to include COVID-19
- Any student who becomes unwell with any sickness during the school day will have to be collected from the school by a parent/guardian. Please ensure contact details are correct and up-to-date.

### **Uniform**

Students should wear their school uniform daily. It is recommended that uniforms be washed more frequently due to the essential respiratory etiquette of sneezing/coughing into your elbow.



## Face Mask/Covering

On 7th August the Department of Education and Skills guidelines to schools were updated and it now **a requirement that teachers, staff and students attending post primary schools wear a face covering when a physical distance of 2m from other staff or students cannot be maintained.**

This means that all students/staff will be required to wear face masks/coverings in the school. It will take time for us all to get used to seeing each other and communicating with each other wearing face masks. Further information regarding the use of face masks/coverings can be found at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>

Some people should not wear face masks – please contact the school to inform us if your child is exempt from wearing a face mask. Please see: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/face-masks-disposable-gloves.html#not-wear> for exemptions.

**Student face masks should not have any words, pictures or symbols on them. Patterned material is acceptable.**

**How to use Face Coverings**

Coronavirus COVID-19 Public Health Advice

**ALWAYS CLEAN YOUR HANDS BEFORE AND AFTER WEARING A FACE COVERING**

**Correct Covering**  
Medical masks should be reserved for health workers or patients in treatment.  
If you have been advised to wear a medical mask, always have the coloured side showing and the metal band at the top of your nose.

**Check Your Fit**  
Check that the face covering is made from a fabric that you are comfortable wearing.  
Check that it is easy to fit and completely covers your nose and mouth, all the way down under your chin.  
Tighten the loops or ties so it's snug around your face, without gaps. If there are strings, tie them high on top of the head to get a good fit. Do not touch or fidget with the face covering when it is on.

**DO NOT:**  
Wear the face covering below your nose.  
Leave your chin exposed.  
Wear it loosely with gaps on the sides.  
Wear it so it covers just the tip of your nose.  
Push it under your chin to rest on your neck.

**FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO STAY SAFE:**  
ALWAYS wash your hands before and after handling your face covering.  
ALWAYS change your face covering if it is dirty, wet or damaged.  
Carry unused face coverings in a sealable clean waterproof bag, for example, a ziplock.  
Carry a second similar type bag to put used face coverings in.  
CHILDREN UNDER 13 should not wear face coverings.  
ALWAYS wash cloth face coverings on the highest temperature for cloth.

**Safe Removal**  
Use the ties or ear loops to take the face covering off.  
Do not touch the front when you take it off.

**Disposing Of Single-Use Mask**  
Always dispose of single-use masks properly in a bin.  
Don't forget to clean your hands and keep social distance.

Stay safe. Protect each other.

hpsc HSE Rís na hÉireann Government of Ireland



### **Dates of Return to School**

Students will be returning to school on a phased basis. Each year group will return to school separately and will take part in an induction programme which will include training in the new ways of doing things due to Covid19 and will also explain our COVID-19 School Response Plan to them.

<b>Mon 17<sup>th</sup> Aug – Thurs 20<sup>th</sup> Aug:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Year Induction Programme (only those students who have registered for this programme online may attend.)
<b>Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August:</b>	Staff Training & Planning Day
<b>Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August:</b>	Staff Training & Planning Day
<b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> Years – Induction Programme 10am – 12pm
<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Years – Induction Programme 10am – 12pm
<b>Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September:</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Years – Induction Programme 10am – 12pm
<b>Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Years – Induction Programme 10am – 12pm
<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> Years – Induction Programme 10am – 12pm
<b>Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Years – Induction Programme 10am – 12pm

**Students will be given their timetables when they do their Induction Programme.**

### **Digital Teaching and Learning**

Every student will have a school email address that will enable them to access teaching and learning resources online. Your teachers did a huge amount of work delivering teaching and learning when the school was closed last term and created lots of resources for you. This use of digital technology will form part of the day to day teaching when you return to school. Please download the link to Office365 from the website so that you are ready to learn when you come back to school.

**If your child is at high risk of Covid-19 or has a medical condition that means they cannot return to school. Please let us know immediately so that we can discuss and plan with you how best to support their remote learning.**

### **Please Note:**

Students should bring 2 face masks (in a ziplock bag), hand sanitiser and tissues with them daily.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your continued support. We will be sending you a text this week with a link to a form that you can complete if you have any questions for us.

We are looking forward to welcoming your child back to the school and working with you again in supporting your child's education journey.

Kind regards,

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Thomas Usher  
Principal