

Advice for parents during COVID-19: Returning to Primary Schools Junior Infants to 2nd Class



School communities are working hard, with the support of public health officials, to ensure the safe operation of our schools for students, staff and families.

All schools have put in place rules and routines which must be followed to keep everyone safe. The latest public health advice on returning to school is available on gov.ie/schools.



If your child has any of the following symptoms of Covid-19, do not send them to school and contact your GP:

- A temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- Any other common symptoms of Covid-19 – a new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, shortness of breath or an existing breathing condition that has become worse
- Been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19
- Been living with someone who is unwell and may have Covid-19
- Other uncommon symptoms of Covid-19, such as sore throat, headaches or diarrhoea
- Returned from another country in the last 14 days.



See [here](#) for more.

Close Contacts: if a student or staff member in a school tests positive for Covid-19, they must self-isolate and Public Health will conduct a risk assessment. Anyone who is deemed a close contact must restrict their movements and not attend school. HSE guide for parents [here](#).

Example: Close contact must restrict movements

- Ciara Kennedy is in 1st class in St John of God primary school
- A child in her class has tested positive for Covid-19
- Following a public health risk assessment, Ciara has been identified as a close contact
- Ciara's parents are informed that she should restrict her movement for 14 days since the day she was last in touch with the child who tested positive.



Example: Contact of a contact is not required to restrict movements

- James Kennedy is in senior infants in St John of God primary school. He is Ciara's brother
- He has not been identified by Public Health as a close contact of the child who tested positive
- James can continue to attend school
- If Ciara or anyone else in the household tests positive then James must stay at home.



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➤ **Good handwashing and hygiene practice** – important for all students. It's important that students' hands are washed regularly. Where possible students should be taught to cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue which must be binned immediately.

➤ Children from junior infants to 2nd class are returning to primary school for in-person learning on 1 March.



➤ Staff members will wear appropriate **personal protective equipment (PPE)** when they cannot keep 2 metres apart from others.

➤ Schools have been provided with the funding to supply this PPE for staff members.



➤ **School transport** – students have an assigned seat that they must sit in. School buses are moving to operate at 50% capacity and further progress will be made on this in the coming weeks.

➤ **Pick up and drop off** can be a busy time.



- Please ensure social distancing by following the school's guidance on when and where to go. Please drop and collect your child quickly without lingering.
- Parents should follow public health advice on socialising outside of the household to keep their children safe outside of school.