

MOHILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mohill, Co. Leitrim (071)9631122/9631208

Principal: Ms. Úna Duffy
Deputy Principal: Ms. Martina Callinan

COVID-19 Policy Statement

Mohill Community College is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our students. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM/ETB 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 students on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct handwashing techniques
- agree with staff a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff and students engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and students to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education 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 Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: Úna Duffy

Date: 18th August 2020

Please note our Covid 19 Response Plan will be available on our school website shortly

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you are aware, the Government has made comprehensive plans for the safe and sustainable reopening of school. We have, over the past two weeks, been working in accordance with Government guidelines to prepare to receive back our staff and students in a safe manner.

All staff, students, parents, 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 as we try to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 in Mohill Community College.

What have we done:

- Installed hand sanitising stations in all classrooms and on corridors, as well as entry and exit points. Students will sanitise hands on entry to the building, and to each classroom.
- Displayed posters and other signage to highlight the need to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19. This includes signage in all toilet areas highlighting the need for hand hygiene, and other posters highlighting coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- Made the necessary changes to the way we utilise our school layout, emphasising our one-way system and identifying one entrance (front door as always) and two exits.
- Nominated different areas for class group. This includes basing our three First Year classes in base rooms as their timetables involve very little movement over the course of the week.
- Redesigned classrooms to support physical distancing - most classrooms are 49 sq m² with desks placed at 1 – 1.1 metre apart. Strict seating plans will apply in all rooms.
- Removed unnecessary clutter to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school.
- Made arrangements to intensify cleaning in line with government advice.
- Identified and prepared an isolation area (First Aid Room in Technology Block).
- Removed access to school lockers as social distancing is not possible within the confined spaces at locker areas. First Year students may provide themselves with a plastic box/container under their chair for their books & copies.
- Cancelled Breakfast Club on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Arranged that caterers will NOT provide lunches as social distancing in a queue situation is more difficult.
- Altered lunchtime as follows: First, Second and Third Year students will have lunchbreak 12.45 - 1.25; Transition Year, Fifth and Sixth Years will have lunch 1.25 – 2.05. With the exception of First Years, all students will leave the school premises at lunchtime.
- Arranged for the gradual return of each year group on their own so that a comprehensive induction into new practices can be given and also, equally

importantly, give students an opportunity to be with each other and with their teachers.

- Arranged for restriction of visitors and parents to essential purposes only and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the principal.
- Planned to maintain a detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities as the prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus.
- Made changes to Code of Behaviour to include spitting and use of chewing gum among the list of unacceptable behaviours which will result in immediate sanction.
- Arranged for daily review of our plans and practices.

As valued members of our school community, what can you do in this shared effort to keep our students, staff and all our families safe?

Before school:

- Assist us with maintaining social distancing in the mornings. If your son/daughter gets dropped to school or walks to school, please do not drop them off/send them to school until 9.05am. This will allow the (approx.) 200 students who travel by bus to be appropriately socially distanced in the school from 8.30am.
- When students arrive to school at 8.30, they will go to their designated seat where they will be supervised. There will be no opportunity to walk back down town.
- When students arrive to school at 9.05am, they go directly to relevant classroom for Class 1.
- Encourage walking where possible – students travelling by car might consider drop off in Church grounds and walk from there?!
- If your son/daughter is ill: **please do not send students who are ill to school.**
- Please do not send in a student if they are a close contact of a suspected Covid 19 case until that suspected case has received negative test result.
- Please do not send in a student if they are a close contact of a confirmed Covid 19 case.
- Follow HSE advice at all times.
- Ensure that your son/daughter has their face covering(s) for the day.

During the school day:

- If your son/daughter forgets something: do not drop in the item. Please note that students will not be permitted to phone home to have forgotten items dropped in. Nor will school personnel be asked to handle such items for delivery to students. This is to reduce the number of visitors to the school to only what is absolutely essential and by prior appointment with the principal.

- Students are reminded to bring home their own belongings each evening. Lunchboxes and jackets must not be left lying around. All 'Lost Property'/unclaimed items will be gathered at the end of each week and disposed of.
- Encourage your son/daughter to spend time each evening planning for their classes the following day – careful thought into the books which will be needed and those which can be left at home will greatly help in reducing the weight of schoolbags and reduce the likelihood of forgetting.
- Ensure that your son/daughter has their own supply of pens, pencils etc.
- No Visitor Policy: please respect our 'No Visitor Policy'.
- If you need to contact the school: please do so by phone or email.
- Absence notes/appointment notes: absence notes and appointment notes can be emailed to mohillcommunitycollege@msletb.ie or phone 071 9631122/31208.
- Ensure that our contact details for parents/guardians are fully up to date on VShare. VShare details will be our contact log for your household in the event of a suspected case.
- If your son\daughter starts to develop symptoms of Covid – 19 while in school, they should immediately report to a member of staff. Please reinforce this message.

General points to support our efforts:

- Please view Department of Education training materials which are online.
- Constantly repeat the important points of regular hand washing/hand sanitising and the avoidance of physical contact.
- Parents/Guardians are requested to promote confidence:
 - getting used to being back at school may take time.
 - time will be given to the experience of settling back in!
 - teachers understand that students have had different learning experiences during the school closure period.
- School life will not be the same: discuss with your son/daughter the reality that school life – for the moment at least – cannot be the same!
- Encourage your son/daughter to comply fully with all new arrangements whose sole aim is the creation and maintenance of as safe an environment as possible.

What is new?

Facial coverings will be worn at all times.

Students who arrive by bus will have designated seating areas from 8.30am to 9.05am.

Students will have designated areas at break time.

Lunchtime will be split - First, Second and Third Year students will have lunchbreak 12.45 – 1.25. Transition Year, Fifth and Sixth Year students will have lunch 1.25 – 2.05.

First Year students will remain in their classroom at lunchtime and will be supervised. All other students will leave the school premises. This may involve them taking their sandwich in hand and going for a walk off premises if they do not wish to purchase lunch locally. Reminder – no Canteen.

Access to the toilet is one student at a time.

Movement to other rooms is an unavoidable aspect of subject choices and different levels. When students move to a different classroom, they will wipe down the desk and chair with a sanitising wipe before they sit in their designated place. On leaving each class, they will use hand sanitiser.

Journal will not be used to enter signatures - signatures will be uploaded to VShare. You are requested to check VShare frequently. Student attendance can also be checked by parents/guardians.

Students will be requested to present that work - which would ordinarily have been taken up in copies - online for corrections.

We will be trying to reduce the amount of paper generated and handled.

What is not new?

Our commitment to your son/daughter in their pursuit of an education.

How will we update you?

- Latest advice from the Government and Department of Education and Skills will be published on the school website. We may on an ongoing basis have to adjust our plans and procedures in line with that advice.
- Our Covid Response Plan will be published on the school website.
- We will text using VShare text system when needed.

Thanking you in anticipation, as we look forward to a new school year.

Úna Duffy

Martina Callinan

Ms. Úna Duffy, Principal

Ms. Martina Callinan, Deputy Principal