



## Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk

# COVID -19 RETURN TO SCHOOL SAFELY INDUCTION FOR STUDENTS

All students are asked to return this form signed on or before their first morning return to school. Return will be through google classroom, paper versions will be accepted but only as a last resort.

Student Name:

Year Group:

**Out of an abundance of caution, the Board of Management at Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk set forth new measures designed to minimise of risk of Covid-19 in the school. Covid-19 Response Plan is available to all parents /guardians from the school website and has been developed to address the risk of Covid-19. It outlines the measures we are committed to implementing in addressing these risks.**

- Parents / Guardians / Students need to familiarise themselves with the **Symptoms of Covid-19** i.e. Fever or Chills, Cough, Shortness of breath, Fatigue, Aches and Pains. Students should immediately inform their Teacher should they experience any of the common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). Common symptoms of coronavirus include: a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above) a cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties, loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal. (<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html> updated 21st August 2020 @ 5.20 pm).

- **“Stay at home if unwell”** Policy is in operation at Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk. This means that if any student displays any of the common symptoms, as outlined above, of Covid-19 they must stay at home. Should a student display these symptoms in class, they will be immediately isolated on the school premises and the parent/guardian will be contacted to collect the student. Children with a blocked or runny nose, but no fever can attend school or childcare, but if they require paracetamol or ibuprofen for their symptoms, they must not attend school for 48 hours and GP assessment for testing is indicated (*Schools Pathway for Covid-19, the Public Health approach, Paper prepared by the Office of the Clinical Director, Health Protection, HSE. 24 Aug 2020*)

- **Classrooms** - Teachers will travel between classes to minimise student interactions. Where students are moving to specialist classrooms, they should sit with their base classroom classmates as per seating plan.

- Student Lockers will not be available– students are advised to bring copybooks to school.

- **Cleaning** – We will see increased cleaning schedules from the start of the new school year. Cleaners will now start earlier and will focus on sanitising touch points i.e. handrails, door handles, in addition to our normal schedule of cleaning. Students will clean down their own work stations (table, chair and any shared resources) at the start and at the end of each class.

- **Hygiene** – Students are expected to wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds using hot water and soap at various points throughout the school day i.e. before and after breaks.

- **PPE Packs** – will be available in each classroom comprising of Hand Sanitiser, Disposable Gloves & Face Masks (for those presenting with symptoms).

- **Hand Sanitising Stations** are located as follows – All Student Entrances, At each toilet block, At the staff room door, In each classroom, In all meeting areas, Additional drums of sanitising wipes are located in the normal and practical rooms i.e. to ensure desks, tables, equipment etc. are cleaned down at the start and end of each class and when sharing equipment between students. They should be used throughout the day. Students are asked to bring their own sanitiser also. Students are advised to not (either intentionally or accidentally) ingest hand sanitiser.

- **Respiratory Etiquette** - Students are reminded to cover their nose and mouth when sneezing / coughing. Used tissues should be discarded immediately in the nearest available waste bin. Cups, bottles, pens are not to be shared.

- **Contact Tracing Log** - Our school VSWare system (timetable and attendance log) will provide the basis for the detection and isolation of close contacts of a suspected / confirmed case of Covid-19 and will be the primary tool used for tracing.

- Only authorised personnel allowed in the building i.e. those who have filled out the Covid-19 Self Declaration Form. **Visitors** to the school are now by appointment only. Students must now bring with them what they need, to school each morning.

- **Collecting students** from school – Parents / guardians are asked to not come to the reception when collecting a student. They should phone the school office, indicate that they are in the car park to collect the student. The secretary will sign the sign out book as confirmation and then let the student leave.

- **Social Distancing** is important - Maintain at least 2 metres between you and anyone else where at all possible. The school has instituted a one way system which will be followed by all members of the school community. A map of the system has been circulated to everyone and directions are signed in the building.

- **Use of PPE** – we will follow the latest Public Health advice regarding use of Face Masks in Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk. In accordance with DES instructions, **Masks are mandatory** in Mercy Mounthawk. Mindful of stipulated exemptions, students must bring their own masks to school (Cloth masks – 3 required per day). We ask that students change their masks after break and after lunch.
- **Water** Dispensers / Fountains have been disconnected as a key control measure in preventing the transmission of the Covid-19 in the school. Students are expected to bring their own water to school each day.
- **Blended Learning Plan** – as the Covid-19 crisis continues to evolve, Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk will take appropriate steps to safeguard our school community. This may see a return to distance learning /blended learning environment using G-Suite for Education and other technologies. We will provide more information if this arrangement is being activated.
- **If a student develops a fever and symptoms such as outlined in HPSC guidance whilst in school the procedure is as follows** (*Schools Pathway for Covid-19, the Public Health approach, Paper prepared by the Office of the Clinical Director, Health Protection, HSE. 24 Aug 2020*):
  - They will be immediately isolated in a pre-identified place within school, with good ventilation and preferable an outside window opened.
  - The school will contact their parent or guardian and ask them to collect their child as soon as possible.
  - The child will be cared for appropriately by a staff member whilst they are waiting to go home.
  - The staff member will wear a mask. Use of gloves is not essential, but staff members may wish to use them. If a staff member has helped someone with symptoms, it is essential they avoid touching their nose, mouth or eyes whilst caring for them, and undertake hand hygiene.
  - If any child presents extremely unwell, from whatever potential cause, 112 and an ambulance will be called. NB we do not expect this to happen in relation to Covid-19.
  - After the isolation space is vacated, it will be cleaned and contact surfaces disinfected. The staff member assisting with the child does not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves, or are later advised to by public health.
  - Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk will provide assistance if contacted by the HSE.
- **It is our expectation that all students comply with the COVID Response Plan subject to section 5.4 (Health and Safety) of the School’s Behaviour Code and the above measures. Failure to comply will be subject to regulations under section 5.4 of our behaviour code. The plan is available on our website: <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/return-to-school-autumn-2020/>**
- **Please note that changes to the COVID-19 Response Plan and to this document may be made subject to DES and HSE advice and instruction. We will communicate any changes to you.**
- **Please contact the school if your son/daughter is in a medically vulnerable category.**

**Please tick the boxes attached to the two statements below**

- I have accessed and read the School’s Covid Response Plan and the Policy Statement on our website at the following address : <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/return-to-school-autumn-2020/>
- I have viewed the three return to school videos , see below, from the Department of Education and Skills and from Mercy Mounthawk:

**The videos are also on our website on the return to school page, link above.**

1. Back to school advice for post primary students <https://youtu.be/69fIzIMXrMM>
2. Back to school advice for parents <https://youtu.be/03RXGM1hMMI>
3. School video: <https://youtu.be/QffjKAOor3Y>

We have read and will follow the measures and protocols outlined above in the interests of Health and Safety of all members of the school community under the Covid-19 Response plan of the school.

SIGNATURE (Parent) : ..... DATE COMPLETED: .....

SIGNATURE (Student) : ..... DATE COMPLETED: .....