



accs

Association of Community  
and Comprehensive Schools

Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail  
agus Cuimsitheacha

**5<sup>th</sup> January, 2022.**

**The Secretary,  
Board of Management and  
School Principal in  
each Community and Comprehensive School.**

**Members of the Executive of ACCS.**

**ACCS/Info Bulletin 01/22.**

**Re: Information Note SD 0002/2022, COVID-19: Updated Arrangements for all recognised Post Primary Schools – January 2022.**

The Department of Education has issued Information Note SD 0002/2022, COVID-19: *Updated Arrangements for all recognised Post Primary Schools – January 2022*. The information note is attached to this bulletin. The purpose of this information note is to provide an outline of the operational supports that are available to Post Primary Schools to help minimise the risk associated with COVID-19.

The key messages from this Information Note include:

- Public Health has fully reviewed the measures in effect in schools. Public Health continues to advise that the two most important actions to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 (and other respiratory viruses), are:
  - ensuring no-one with new onset symptoms attends school, and;
  - that all recommended infection prevention and control measures are in place in line with school COVID-19 response plans.
- At all times schools should facilitate as many students attending as possible.
- If operational challenges occur due to staff absences, schools are expected to maximise on-site education for:
  - state examination year groups and fifth year classes.
  - in-person teaching for children with special educational needs.
- Schools are advised to contact the Department of Education in circumstances where they experience difficulties in sourcing sufficient substitute cover by email to [covid19\\_alert@education.gov.ie](mailto:covid19_alert@education.gov.ie) or telephone 057 9324461 and an Inspector will provide further support. This helpline will operate from Monday-Friday 08.00-19.00 and Saturday and Sunday from 14.00-19.00 during this period.
- Where it is not possible to make contact in advance, school management may use their discretion but are advised to make contact with the Department as soon as practicable thereafter. ACCS advises in making the decision the Principal should liaise with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

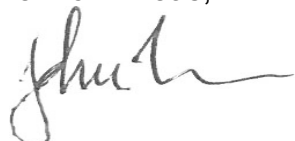
The information note also provides guidance currently in place for hand hygiene, PPE and enhanced cleaning supports, ventilation and the enhanced measures for teacher substitution.

The Department has also confirmed:

- There is no specific antigen testing programme for Post Primary Schools as contact tracing remains in place. Anyone between 4 to 39 years of age who has symptoms of COVID-19 are offered antigen tests through the HSE firstly and they do not book a PCR test unless they get a positive antigen test result.
- With regard to close contacts members of staff follow the HSE guidance for household close contacts. All other incidence of close contact must be notified to the individual concerned by the HSE.
- There is no requirement to complete return to work forms. ACCS advises schools may ask teachers to confirm there has been no change or indicate if there has been any change to their status.

We await an updated FAQ document on leave arrangements due to issue later today. We will revert to you when received. In the meantime, we remain available to you through email or by phone to address specific queries. ACCS will host a briefing in the next number of days.

Is mise,  
le mór mheas,



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John Irwin,  
GENERAL SECRETARY.