



Striving Together for Achievement

Gaelscoil na Móna
Primary School
1 Monagh Link
Belfast
BT11 8QB
02890 611588

info@gaelcoilnamona.belfast.ni.school.uk
Website ~ www.gaelcoilnamona.com

Friday 13th March 2020

A Thuismitheoirí / Chaomhnóirí,

I am sure that the recent health crisis is very alarming for you and I would like to provide you with our latest and most up to date guidance from the Public Health Agency to help answer some of the questions you may have regarding the recent outbreak of Corona Virus (Covid-19).

If you or your child develop a new dry cough do not come to school for 7 days and **phone** your GP for advice immediately. Self-isolate for up to 14 days if advised by GP. In the event of whole school closure, each child will be provided with a work folder for completion over the period spent at home, as well as online links for further learning.

1. Preventing spread of infection in Gaelscoil na Móna and our community:

General principles:

- each child must bring own water bottle to school, which you wash thoroughly every day
- washing your hands often – with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if hand-washing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after using public transport
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See, “*Catch it, Bin it, Kill it*” <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5016>
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend school
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:

1. before leaving home
2. on arrival at school
3. after using the toilet
4. after breaks and sporting activities
5. before food preparation
6. before eating any food, including snacks
7. before leaving school

- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- change towels daily and bedding regularly
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment

2. What to do if pupils, students or staff in Gaelscoil na Móna become unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 (either through travel to specified countries or areas or contact with a confirmed case)

Call the GP or NHS 111, or 999 in an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk), and if appropriate, explain which country they have returned from in the last 14 days. You can do this on their behalf if this is easier. People who become unwell should be advised to phone rather than to go to GP, pharmacy, or a hospital.

3. What to do if a case of COVID-19 (pupil, student or staff) is suspected in Gaelscoil na Móna

If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case in an educational setting, **NO restrictions or special control measures are required** while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited unless otherwise advised by health professionals.

4. What to do if a case of COVID-19 (pupil, student or staff) is confirmed in Gaelscoil na Móna

We will be contacted by the Public Health Agency to: discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advised on any actions or precautions that should be taken. An assessment of our school will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team with relevant staff.

Advice on the management of pupils or students and staff will be based on this assessment.

The Health Protection Team will also be in contact with the patient directly to advise on isolation and identifying other contacts, and will be in touch with any contacts of the patient to provide them with appropriate advice. Advice on cleaning of communal areas such as classrooms, changing rooms and toilets will be given by the Health Protection Team.

If there is a confirmed case, the local Health Protection Team will advise on whether any closure/restrictions will be necessary, in consultation with us. **(The decision to close will not be only the decision of the Principal or Governors but in collaboration the local Health Protection Team)**

5. Will events planned in Gaelscoil na Móna such as Confirmation continue?

Any planned gatherings in school, such as Confirmation and First Communion will proceed as normal unless guidance from the Public Health Agency changes.

6. How will I receive further updates?

Communication/updates regarding Covid-19, Corona Virus from our school will be issued via our text messaging/email service and on our school website. **Please ensure that all your contact details in school are up to date. If you have recently changed your mobile phone number or email address, please contact the school office to update our records.**

I am sure that many children are feeling anxious about the health crisis. Please keep reassuring your child that even if they were to contract the illness, for the vast majority of children, they have very mild to no symptoms and make a full recovery. This BBC Newsround video link may help to reduce your child's anxiety:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51204456>.

Is mise le meas,

Caireann Uí Mhuireagáin
(Karen Morgan) Principal