

COVID 19

RESPONSE PLAN

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This is a living document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance from [www.Gov.ie](http://www.Gov.ie) , [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) , [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) , [www.dbei.ie](http://www.dbei.ie) , [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) , [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) , [www.sportsireland.ie](http://www.sportsireland.ie) , and/or agreements with education and sports partners as appropriate for primary and post primary schools.

1. Introduction

Our Coved 19 policy has been developed in line with public heath advice issued by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and in compliance with the ‘Return to Work Safety Protocols’ developed by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Health with guidance documents provided by the Health and Safety Authority (HAS).

Each workplace is required to have a Covid 19 Response Plan. In addition to being places of learning, dance studios are also placing of work. This document sets out the information that we intend to implement within our Covid 19 Response Plan, including a Covid 19 policy, lead worker representative/s (LWR) and a process to deal with a suspected case of Covid 19.

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and helpful guidance for the safe operation of DFI dance schools/studios and its members through the prevention, early detection, and control of COVID-19. It provides key messages to minimise the risk of COVID-19 for staff, students, families, and the wider community while recognising the importance of dance sport for the health and wellbeing of students and society.

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken to minimise the risk of infection while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. This document and templates are based off the response plan for returning to school and are supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe re-opening of schools and educational facilities.

https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/safetywellbeing/healthsafetyand%20wellbeing/safetystatementsandriskassessments.html

One of the key challenges is to balance the need for a practical and sensible level of caution with the need to provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning.

This document identifies the steps we can take to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into our schools/studios and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within DFI and its schools in the event that COVID-19 is introduced to the organisation and its schools/studios.

1. What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?

A COVID-19 Response Plan is designed to support DFI and their schools/studios in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the class/studio environment.

The COVID-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Governments ‘Return to Work Safely Protocol’

https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/coronavirus/safety-in-the-workplace/managing-employees-return-to-work-safely1.html

That will aim to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19.

It is important that the resumption of dance classes complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department. Doing so minimises the risk to students, staff, and others. The response plan supports the sustainable re-opening of our studios where the over-riding objectives is to protect the health of staff, students while promotion the educational and development needs of the dancing students of Ireland. The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advise.

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and the re-opening of DFI dance schools/studios requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between staff, students, and parents. Because of this, all DFI dance schools/studios will be asked to sign this working policy document.

The assistance and cooperation of all DFI members, students, staff, parents, and visitor is critical to the success of the plan.

*Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, should error or omissions be identified, please notify us is that the appropriate measures can be taken to rectify same.*

1. DFI COVID-19 Policy Statement

DFI is committed to providing a safe and a healthy workplace for all our members and a safe learning environment for all DFI students. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. All our DFI members 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 members.
* Provide up-to-date information to all our members and their 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 hand washing techniques
* Inform all the members and their students of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
* Adapt the studio/classes to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the public health guidance and the direction of the Department of Education
* Keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
* Ensure all members and students engage with the induction/familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education and Government of Ireland
* Implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at DFI dance classes/studios.
* Provide instruction for members, staff, and student to follow if ay develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during class times.
* Implement cleaning in line with Department of Education and Government advice.

All members will be consulted on an on-going basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues, or suggestions.

This can be done through our COVID Response Team:

Signed:

1. Planning and Preparing for Return to Class

DFI aims to facilitate the resumption of dance classes. The return to the studio/class must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education, Sport Ireland, and the Government of Ireland.

Details for the safe re-opening of DFI is outlined in this document.

Before re-opening for the 2020/2021-year DFI will have processes in place to include the following:

* Means of keeping up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe re-opening of society and Department of Education, Sport Ireland, updates.
* Means of passing on this information in a timely manner to members, students, parents, and others as required through the DFI website and registrations.
* Ensured that staff have Completed the reveleant COVID-19 training
* Provided staff with access to the Return to Work (RTW) form
* Displayed posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19
* Made the necessary changes to the class/studio layout to support physical distancing
* Remove unnecessary clutter to facilitate on-going cleaning of the class/studio
* Updated the Health & Safety Risk assessment
* Made necessary arrangements to restrict access to the studio/class and maintain records of contacts to the studio/class.
* Reviewed the building/venue to check the following.
* Does the water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionella disease?
* Has equipment and mechanical ventilation been checked for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again.
* Have bin collections and other essential services resumed.

4.1 Induction Training

All members of DFI will undertake and complete COVID-19 Training prior to returning to classes. The aim of such training is to ensure that staff have full knowledge and understanding of the following;

* Latest up to date advice and guidance on public health
* COVID-19 symptoms
* What to do if a staff member or student develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at class
* Outline of the COVID-19 response plan.

DFI members will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in DFI and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and will be updated with any changes to the control measures or guidance from the public health authorities.

If a member of DFI is unsure of any aspect of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Response Team.

4.2 Procedures for Returning to Work (RTW)

To return to workplace, DFI members must complete a RETURN TO WORK form which is available here…….

A RTW form should be completed and returned within 3 working days before returning to work.

4.3 Leader Work Representative – Duties;

• Help with putting in place the COVID-19 control measures.

• Communicate regularly with DFI and COVID-19 Response Team and assist in providing COVID-19 health advice to your co- workers/colleagues.

• Carry out regular checks that COVID-19 control measures are in place.

• Keep a record of non-compliance with COVID-19 workplace controls.

• Report to main teaching member/DFI any problem areas or non-compliance.

• Listen to the concerns of fellow teachers/colleagues and students and raise them with DFI and school.

• Help keep your fellow teachers/colleagues up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government.

• Help as part of a response team in managing someone with symptoms of COVID-19 at the

4.4 Signage

DFI schools/studios will display signage outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene. We will use age appropriate key health measures – hand washing, sneezing, and cough etiquette, wearing of face masks, etc.

Signage will be displayed in prominent areas such as entrances and exits to the studios/schools and toilets.

4.5 Making Changes to Studio Layout

Maintaining physical distancing in the studio environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimise the risk and the introduction and spread of COVID-19.

Some of the changes to the studio layout will include.

* All studios have been re-configured to maintain social distancing of 2 meters between students, and 2 meters between teacher and students.
* All rooms have been equipped with floor markings to guide students.
* The studios have been reconfigured into pods to minimise social contact

4.6 Update Safety & Risk Assessment

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the studio environment.

First Aid/Emergency procedure

The standard First Aid/Emergency procedure shall continue to apply in DFI schools. In an emergency or in a case of a serious incident, staff/teacher should call for an ambulance of the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and the type of medical incident. All staff will be trained in basic first aid.

4.7 Access to the Studio/classes and contact log

Access to the studio/Class will be restricted to staff, students, and essential services only, such as services providers and limited to those who have received prior permission from the Response Team. Parents can no longer drop into classes without prior contact with relevant DFI member in the interest of public health.

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and other members, contractors, and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sing in/sing out log of those entering the venues/schools should be maintained. DFI and individual schools/studios will maintain a log of staff and students contacts through their online system.

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols to DFI members based on HSE guidelines.

https://www.hse.ie/eng/gdpr/data-protection-covid-19/

1. Control Measures – To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in class

One of the key messages to manage the risks of COVID-19 is to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the studio/class. If infection is introduced, it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student – student, teacher – student, teacher – teacher, etc and must be managed in all settings.

A range of essential control measures have been implemented to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 virus and to protect the safety, health and welfare of members, students, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school/studio/class. The control measures shall continue to be reiwed and updated as required on an on-going basis.

It is critical that members, student, parents, and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and they fully co-operation with all health and safety requirements.

How to Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into DFI:

Promote awareness of the COVID-19 symptoms

* Advise members and students that have symptoms not to attend classes, to phone their doctor and to follow the HSE guidance on self-isolation.
* Advise members and students not to attend class if they have been identified by theHSE as contact for a person with COVID-19 and to follow HSE advise on restriction of movement.
* Advance members and students that develop symptoms at DFI classes/studios to bring this to the attention of the teacher promptly
* Ensure that members and students know the protocol for r managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in DFI.
* Advise everyone entering the building that they need to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser.
* Advise all relevant parties that visitors to the studio/class should be by prior arrangement only
* Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

5.1 Know the Symptoms of COVID-19

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms.

They are;

# High Temperature

# Cough

# Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties

# Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

5.2 Respiratory Hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. The dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a nearby bin.

By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

5.3 Hand Hygiene

Members and their students should understand why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.

Studios/venues should promote good hygiene and display posters throughout the studio n how to wash your hands. Follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/publichealth/publichealthdepts/resources/handwashing.pdf

Hand hygiene can be achieved by hand washing or use of a hand sanitiser (when hands look clean).

Use of hand hygiene facilities including wash hand basin will be managed as to avoid congregation of people waiting to use wash hand basins and hand sanitisers.

Hand sanitisers dispensers will be available at exit and entry points of DFI venues and schools. Care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitizer spills to prevent risks of falls.

Wash hand basins, running water, liquid soap and hand drying facilities will be provided in all toilets, kitchens, and any food preparation areas.

Hand washing facilities will be maintained in good condition and supplies of soap and towels should be topped up regularly to encourage everyone to use them.

Hot air dryers are an acceptable alternative for hand drying and will be regularly maintained. There is no evidence that hand dryers are associated with increased risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing will be place d on walls adjected to washing facilities.

Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean).

https://hselibrary.ie/what-is-the-efficacy-of-60-alcohol-based-hand-gel-vs-non-alcohol-based-hand-gel-for-both-covid-19-and-non-covid-19-scenarios/

When hand gels/rubs are being used in venues/schools, care should be taken to ensure that subtends do not ingest them as they are flammable and toxic.

Frequency of Hand Hygiene:

* On arrival at venue/school
* Before eating or drinking
* After using toilet
* After playing outdoors
* When their hands are physically dirty
* When they cough or sneeze
* Before and after contact with another student/or teacher if contact is deemed necessary

5.4 Physical Distancing

Physical distancing can be usefully applied in a studio/class setting allowing for some flexibility when needed. Its bus be applied in a practical way to recognise that thelreairng environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focuses on this issue. Care should be taken to avoid generating tension or potential conflict and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at times.

It is also recognized that it is not always possible for members to maintain physical distance from students and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the student.

However, where possible, members should maintain a minimum of 1 m distance and where possible 2 meters. They should also take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.

Physical distancing falls into two categories:

* Increasing separation
* Decreasing separation

Increasing Separation:

The following measurements are being employed to increase separation:

* + - 1. Studios/venues have been re-configured to ensure at least 2 meters distance between members and students, and students and students. Pods will be clearly marked.
      2. Live streaming of lessons may be required if lockdown is re-enacted.

Decreasing Separation/Interaction:

The following measures are being employed to decrease separation.

Majority of students have been accepted into competition teams/couples. They will train with their team/partner for all their classes, minimising contact with other students.

Every effort will be made to keep students in pods with students who take the same disciplines and are at the same standard as them.

Movement within the schools/studios will be kept to a minimum.

Sharing of equipment and personal items will be discouraged.

Physical contact will be discouraged.

Hand hygiene will be encouraged.

Where possible, students will remain in the one class and members/teachers will move.

Physical Distancing outside of the Studio

Drop off/collection.

* Students should head straight to their designated class/studio.
* Walking/cycling to class is encouraged as much as possible for older students, with parental/guardian permission and/or guidance.
* No congregation of people at the studio entrance here physical distancing requirements may not be respected.

Teachers/Staff;

* A distance of 2 m is recommended for physical distancing by members/teachers and staff. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching – in the kitchen.
* Face coverings will be worn by all staff on entry and exit to the classes/studio.

5.5 Use of PPE

PPE will not be required to be worn within the studio according to current occupational and public health guidance. However, for a limited number of teaching staff/members, PPE will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. These might include roles such as;

* Performing intimate care if required
* Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation.
* Where teaching staff/members are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not in the list of those categorised as people in very high-risk groups or may be living with people who are in a very high-risk category.

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, Intimate care needs and for first aid. Where teaching staff/members provide health care to children with medical neds in the class/studio/school environment they should apply standard precautions as per usual practice.

Masks & Face Coverings

* The wearing of cloth masks for teaching staff/members and students will be required where a 2m social distance cannot be guaranteed and on a teaching staff/members instruction.
* Students or teaching staff/members do not need to wear a face mask when dancing as this may cause an obstruction to breaking. This guideline will be monitored in accordance with health guidelines.

Gloves

* The use of disposable gloves by teaching staff/members is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for matters such as cleaning or intimate care settings. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves.
* Routines use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

1. Hygiene and Cleaning

The regular sanitation of studios will take place as soon as practically possible. Teaching staff/members and students will be required to clean their equipment after certain use. Additional cleaning if available should be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door hands, handrails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

* There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags form the teaching staff/members kitchen and toilets.
* Students will be required to take home their own rubbish.
* Teaching Staff/members must use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cups, cutlery, plates, etc)

Cleaning/Disinfecting rooms where a staff member or student with a suspected COVID-19 was present:

* The room should be cleaned as soon as practically possible.
* Once the room is vacated, the room should not be reused until it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.
* Disinfection only works on thing that are clean – therefore when disinfection is required it is always in addition to cleaning.
* Person/s assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning. Household gloves and a plastic apron should also be worn while carrying out normal cleaning activities.
* Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chloride-based product (household bleach).

1. Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

**Teaching Staff members or students should not attend dance classes if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.**

The following outlines how DFI and their members will deal with a suspected case that may arise if a student/teacher displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at a dance class/studio;

* If the person with the suspected cases is a student – the parents/guardians should be contact immediately.
* The person will be brought to a designated isolation area, keeping at least 2 meters away from the accompanying person and making sure that others always maintain a distance of at least 2 meters from the symptomatic person.
* The person and the accompanying person will always wear a face mask.
* Assess whether the person who is displaying symptoms can immediately be brought home by parents/guardian.
* Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and if necessary, facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces, and objects.
* If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home y a family member as soon as possible and advise them to inform their doctor by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
* If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required – contact 999/112 and inform them that the sick person is a COVID-19 suspect.
* Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery.
* Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved.

The HSE will inform any teaching staff member/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instruction of the HSE should be followed by teaching staff members and student’s confidentiality is always essential.

1. Staff Duties

Teaching Staff members have a statutory obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. The co-operation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 and to protect health and safety as far as possible within the studio/class/school. All teaching staff members have a key role to play.

In this regard and in order to facilitate a safe return to work these duties include, but are not limited to, the following;

* Adhere to the COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlines.
* Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
* Must inform DFI if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
* Must complete COVID-19 training and any other training required prior to their return to class.
* Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
* Co-ordinate practices and work with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained.
* Make themselves aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.
* Self-isolate at home and contact their doctor promptly for further advise if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
* Not return to or attend classes if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances.
* Adhere to the procedure outlines above if they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 while within the venue/studio.

1. Programme for the Return to Work for DFI and their members 2020/2021

September 2020 – December 2020

January 2021 – December 2021