



COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN V.4.1
19th September 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

Context

Song and Dance Stage School has been deeply committed to adhering to the strict guidelines put in place by the Irish government since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we begin to reopen our doors to our students, we need to incorporate these measures into the way we operate our classes and camps.

This document, our *COVID-19 Response Plan*, outlines the procedures our community will follow to keep each other safe.

It is based on the following guidelines issued by the Irish Government: *Interim Recommendations for the Reopening of Schools and Educational Facilities*, *Interim Recommendations for the Return to Sports Activities for children and Adolescents*, and the *Return to Work Safely Protocol*, which ‘incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET). As the advice issued by NPHET continues to evolve, this protocol and the measures employers and workers need to address may also change. Therefore, it should be noted that the attached details are non-exhaustive and are also subject to change.’¹

Our *COVID-19 Response Plan* will continue to be updated to take into account new guidance from www.Gov.ie, www.dbei.ie, www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie; www.education.ie.

Working together to suppress COVID-19

Song and Dance Stage School acknowledges that the successful suppression of COVID-19 will require us all to work together. We will communicate our procedures to all our staff and students via:

- circulation of this plan
- signs around the building
- age-appropriate induction for students on their first day

Song and Dance expects everyone who uses our facilities to cooperate fully with these procedures.

Song and Dance has appointed Jimmy as the person in charge of ensuring COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to at Song and Dance. If you have any questions or concerns, or would like any advice, please contact Jimmy.

Symptoms of COVID-19²

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take anything from 2 days up to 14 days for symptoms of coronavirus to appear. They can be similar to the symptoms of cold and flu.

¹ Return to Work Safely Protocol, 8th May 2020.

² This section quotes the Return to Work Safely Protocol, 8th May 2020.

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.

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE Website.

Some people infected with the virus, so called asymptomatic cases, have experienced no symptoms at all.

How COVID-19 Spreads³

The virus that causes COVID-19 disease is spread from people in fluid and in droplets scattered from the nose or mouth of an infected person when the person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or speaks. The fluid or droplets land on objects and surfaces around the infected person. Other people contaminate their hands by touching these objects or surfaces and then bring the virus into contact with their eyes, nose or mouth by touching them with their contaminated hands. COVID-19 can also spread if droplets from an infected person land directly on the mucous membranes of the eye, nose or mouth of a person standing close to them.

While people are most likely to pass on the infection when they have symptoms, current information suggests that some infected people spread the virus to others prior to developing or displaying symptoms themselves.

³This section quotes the Return to Work Safely Protocol, 8th May 2020.

2. PROCEDURES TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Song and Dance recognises that the best way to prevent person-to-person spread of COVID-19 is to use proper *hand hygiene* and *respiratory etiquette*, and to practice *physical distancing*.

Hand Hygiene

- Song and Dance will provide appropriate hygiene facilities to accommodate staff and students in adhering to hand hygiene measures.
- Everyone will be required to clean their hands using an alcohol-based hand-rub upon entering and leaving the building. This will be overseen by a Song and Dance team member at the front door, at both drop-off and collection.
- Further, anyone using our facilities is required to wash their hands with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand rub in particular:
 - after coughing and sneezing
 - if in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms
 - if they become dirty
 - after toilet use
- Everyone should avoid touching their eyes, mouth, or nose.
- It is not permitted to share objects that touch the mouth, for example, bottles or cups. Everyone attending a class or camp must supply their own bottle of water. It will not be possible to refill bottles at Song and Dance.
- As far as is possible, all entry and exit doors will remain open to prevent contact with these surfaces.

Respiratory Hygiene

- In addition to hand hygiene, good respiratory hygiene and etiquette is also necessary.
- Song and Dance will provide tissues as well as bins/bags for their disposal.
- These bins will be emptied on the hour/at the end of every session.
- Song and Dance will ensure the building is well-ventilated at all times.
- All students and team are required to practice international guidelines for respiratory hygiene in respect of coughing, sneezing etc. Song and Dance will provide signage and regular verbal reminders of the above.

Physical Distancing

- Song and Dance will adhere to a 'No Physical Contact Policy'. This applies to all staff and students, except in cases of emergency, e.g. to administer first aid.
- Song and Dance will adhere to the *Interim Recommendations for the Reopening of Schools and Educational Facilities* with regards to physical distancing requirements. For our purposes, these are the required distances between all users of our building:
 - Primary Level (all children up to age 10) - a distance of 1m should be maintained at this level.

- Secondary Level (all children age 11+) - a distance of 2m should be maintained at this level.
- Staff to students: staff will maintain a 2 metre distance from students where possible.
- Staff to staff: a 2 metre physical distance is desirable at all times and Song and Dance will help to facilitate this, e.g. both studios will have teacher positions marked out, and Reception will become the staff break room.
- **NOTE:** In accordance with NPHET advice⁴, choir activities must maintain a minimum 2 metre distance.
- The floor of each studio has a grid painted to mark the location of each pod (max. 6 per pod). Upon arrival at each class, each student will be assigned a magic number. This will correspond to the place on the grid where they will they stand for that day's classes.
- The magic number will also correspond to a place on a bench around the walls of the room, also marked at the relevant distances. The student will use this space for breaks/to store their belongings.
- Parents/guardians/family members are allowed only as far as the gates of Song and Dance. There will be no waiting area and toilet facilities are not open to anyone other than staff and students.
- There will be a one-way entry/exit system using the main gates.
- Arriving students/family members are requested to maintain physical distancing while waiting to enter, and give space to any students who may be leaving. Parents are asked to remain with younger students until they are signed in to help them adhere to queuing system. At the top of the queue, students will be required to use the hand-sanitising station outlined above, then enter the building, receive their magic number for the day and go to that number.
- At collection, students will be called in numerical order to collect their belongings and queue at the front door - the reverse of arrival sequence. Children will be released one at a time, managed by a member of the Song and Dance team. Parents are asked to be on time for collection, to be patient with this system and to adhere to physical distancing measures while waiting in the yard area.
- **Please adhere to the rules of the road and respect our neighbours when parking your car. It is recommended to park a little away from the front gate and walk up, so as to avoid congestion at the gate.**
- To facilitate physical-distancing, all fees must be paid by phone/online in advance of the commencement of classes. There will be no in-studio payment facilities for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Toilet breaks will be staggered as far as is practical. Students are asked to be patient and let us know in plenty of time to avoid emergencies.
- There will be no food breaks at Song and Dance during the COVID-19 pandemic, nor are students allowed take or consume any food on the premises.

⁴ 'Advice to Government in relation to realigning the Public Health Framework Approach to reducing restrictive measures into two final Phases', 18th June 2020

3. IDENTIFYING/DEALING WITH A SUSPECTED CASE OF COVID-19

The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in protecting both the person involved, and our entire Song and Dance community.

Identification

- We already keep contact information for all students and staff on file. Please be aware this may now be shared with third parties for the purposes of contact tracing.
- We will display age-appropriate information on signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- It is not permitted to enter the building if you are displaying signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Students should tell a teacher immediately if any symptoms develop during your class.
- Staff will be vigilant to potential symptoms appearing during a class.
- Song and Dance will send a form to complete via email at least 3 days before the commencement of classes/camp. This form will ask parents to confirm that no one in their child's household has symptoms of COVID-19, nor are they self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test. If this form is not returned in advance of the first day of classes/camp, the student will not be permitted to enter the building.
- Families must tell us if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed.
- **Families must inform Song and Dance if they have been outside the Republic of Ireland within 14 days of commencing classes/camps. Any family who has returned from a country not on the Irish Government's up-to-date Green List within this period will not be allowed return to Song and Dance until the recommended 14 day period has passed.**
- Families must tell us if any of the above circumstances change during the course of camps/term time.

Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

While it is not permitted to attend Song and Dance if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19, the following steps will be taken if a suspected case arises during classes.

- Jimmy is the appointed person to take care of an individual with a suspected case.
- The designated isolation area is the Green Room, because:
 - It is separate from the main studio and its exit routes
 - It can be reached in a direct route
 - It can be adapted to deal with more than one person displaying the signs of COVID-19.
- Jimmy will accompany the person to the Green Room (maintaining a 2m distance) and then he will stay in the white corridor with the doors open. Please see our Child Protection Policy.
- The person will be provided with a mask to wear.
- The person's parent/guardian will be called immediately. If the person is an adult, assistance will be provided to arrange transport home. Public transport cannot be used. The person will remain in the isolation area until their transport arrives to take them home.

- Song and Dance's decision to ask a student to go home is final.
- The incident will be recorded in our logbook.
- Full cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area and any other areas the person has touched will be completed.
- We may provide assistance if contacted by the HSE.

4. CLEANING

- Song and Dance will follow European Centre for Disease Control guidelines to ensure frequently touched surfaces are cleaned at the end of every session. This will include, but is not limited to:
 - the floor of the Studios (as students may sit on the floor at various points)
 - the benches where belongings are stored
 - all toilet facilities.
- All handles and handrails will be kept visibly clean at all times and will be cleaned at the end of every session.
- **Song and Dance will use the Bioesque Solutions Disinfectant System to disinfect both studios regularly (after they have been vacated).**
- Song and Dance will provide materials to assist staff and students in their personal hand and respiratory hygiene, e.g. alcohol-based hand-rubs, tissues, paper towels for hand-drying.
- Song and Dance has taken advice and training on cleaning methods and materials from an industry expert.
- We are increasing the number of waste collection points and ensure these will be emptied regularly. These bins will be for the collection of hygiene-related materials ONLY - the usual Song and Dance rules for being responsible for all your other rubbish still apply.

5. USE OF PPE - PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

While correctly using PPE can help prevent some exposures, it should not take the place of other preventative measures as outlined above.

Full hygiene compliance should be applied and maintained in all circumstances.

Face-coverings

In line with current recommendations from the Irish Government, the Department of Education, and Sport Ireland, Song and Dance will adhere to the following guidelines regarding the use of face coverings in our indoor studios:

- **Song&Dance team:** face coverings are required
- **Primary school children:** face coverings are not required, however anyone who wishes to wear a face covering may do so. Parents should be aware that 11 and 12 year olds may be in a pod with post-primary school students.
- **Post-primary school children:** face coverings are required (except in cases of exemption laid out by the Department of Education).

Song and Dance will not be providing masks for general use. Masks will only be provided to a suspected case of COVID-19 or for the purposes of First Aid.

Masks must be worn in strict adherence to government guidelines. A new/clean mask must be applied upon entering the building. Disposal of masks is a personal responsibility.

PPE for Cleaning

For cleaning purposes, staff will wear gloves, masks and cleaning jackets. These will be provided by Song and Dance and must be disposed of securely in the appointed bag, to be disposed of safely or taken away and cleaned appropriately at the end of every day.

6. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

There is no requirement for Song and Dance to notify the Health and Safety Authority if a team member or student contracts COVID-19.

Song and Dance will notify parents of close contacts of a case of COVID-19.

7. FIRST AID

In the event that first aid is required, it may not be possible to maintain a distance of 2 metres.

Before any First Aid is carried out, masks will be issued to both First Aid Responder and recipient.

Extra care must be taken around hand hygiene. In this instance, gloves should be worn.