

# Covid-19 School Safety Protocols

## Atlas Dublin



### General Information on COVID-19

Coronaviruses are viruses which cause respiratory symptoms ranging from the common cold to more serious illnesses such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). They are a family of viruses which are present both in humans and in animals. They are spread from one person to another through:

- coughing and sneezing (via droplets),
- the air in poorly ventilated indoor spaces,
- hands which have become contaminated with the virus after touching contaminated surfaces, or
- through direct contact with a person infected with the coronavirus (such as caring for a sick person).

For further information on how the virus is transmitted, the symptoms of the illness and what to do if sick or have symptoms, refer to <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

### Purpose of this document

These guidelines have been drawn up for Atlas Language School in Dublin. Please note that this is a living document, corrected at the time of writing and based on currently available evidence. As new evidence emerges updates will be made accordingly in consultation with the stakeholders. A senior member of staff has been assigned to ensure that the protocols issued by the Health Authorities are followed up accordingly.

***These guidelines are meant to mitigate, as much as possible, against the transmission of COVID-19. Although the risk of infection is reduced, it can never be completely eliminated. Students and staff need to understand that a risk of transmission will still exist even if these guidelines are rigorously followed and implemented.***

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### General Protocols

- Placement and progress assessments, induction and graduation may be done virtually.
- Students arriving in Ireland from overseas need to fill in the Covid-19 Passenger Locator Form (find the latest updates [here](#))
- Atlas has the right of refusal of entry into the premises if students or staff are visibly unwell or with any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Students should be fully vaccinated in order to follow face-to-face classes at Atlas.
- There is a temperature check station at the entrance of the premises to check for the presence of fever. Persons with a temperature of 38°C or higher will be denied entrance.
- Atlas provides containers with 60% alcohol hand-rub at the entrance of the premises, in each classroom and at strategic points throughout the school. All persons should sanitise their hands frequently, and on entry and exit of the building.
- Atlas regulates the entrance into and exit from the premises, adopting crowd management techniques with visible markings where possible.
- There are no large gatherings or assemblies, with the exception of emergency evacuations.
- There is a no hand shaking / hugging policy.
- Daily attendance of students and staff is taken and monitored.
- Students and staff are required to wear face masks at all times on school property - inside the school building and outside in the entrance area and on the steps.
- During break time and before or after class, when eating or smoking, you must remain a minimum distance of 2 meters apart from each other as you will be without a face mask.
- Vigorous and regular cleaning regimes are in place to make our schools as safe as possible for all students and staff. Cleaning and disinfection regimens are documented.
- All students and staff are encouraged to bring their own water.
- Before starting/returning to the school, all students and staff must complete the [Online Covid-19 Declaration Form](#) with their contact information. Providing misleading information will constitute cause for disciplinary measures.
- Atlas will keep the contact details of all people accessing the premises for 28 days.
- If students or staff are leaving and returning to Ireland (e.g. holidays) they must inform the school of their travel plans and flight details. If students return being unwell, a self-isolation period may be required during which entry to the school building will be denied. There is no online component to make up for these classes. Before returning to school after holidays students and staff must re-submit the [Covid-19 Declaration Form](#).
- If students or staff are absent for a full week or more, they must re-submit the [Covid-19 Declaration Form](#) before returning to school.
- There is a minimal personal belongings policy for students and staff to only bring necessary items to the school to avoid the risk of contamination.

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- There is a maximum capacity of 3 people permitted in bathrooms at one time. Students and staff should wait at the side of the corridors if necessary.
- All students and staff are strongly encouraged to download and use the official COVID Tracker App: <https://covidtracker.gov.ie/>

### Testing of students for COVID-19

- Atlas follows HSE protocols for staff or students who show COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19.

### Structure

Proper indoor ventilation is essential . In order to ensure adequate circulation of air, and to reduce the level of pathogens in the air, windows should be opened regularly throughout the day, and remain open where possible, to allow cross ventilation.

All precautions are taken to ensure that water systems are safe to prevent the risk of infections derived from water.

### Reception & Admin

- Any staff member or student showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will be refused entry.
- An isolation room is available for any student or staff feeling unwell during the day until they can leave the school.
- Temperature screening of students and staff takes place at the entrance with anyone with a fever of 38°C or more being denied access to the school or asked to wait in the isolation room until they can return home safely.
- Frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, light switches, reception desks are cleaned regularly throughout the day.
- Direct contact to the staff at reception should be avoided. We encourage students to contact us by email or other channels of communication. If inevitable, protective screen barriers are fitted to the reception desk to protect staff and students. Please avoid approaching staff members through the gaps between barriers.
- Visible signage regarding cough etiquette, maintaining an adequate physical distance and appropriate hand washing techniques are posted in common areas for everyone to see.
- Class times may be staggered, in order to avoid crowding of students on arrival and departure.

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### Classrooms

- During the lessons, unnecessary contact between students or between students and staff should be avoided.
- Timing and schedule of lessons may be staggered. Students should not arrive more than 15 minutes before or after the scheduled start of their class as they are not allowed to enter the building.
- No shared resources are available in classrooms.
- Students are required to bring their own writing materials and notebooks.

### Common areas

- The cafe is closed until further notice. Students can eat lunch in their classroom 'bubble' to minimise contact with other classes.
- We recommend students bring food and water for break time and not leave at break time.
- The student room / lounge is closed until further notice.
- Our computer labs are temporarily not available for use, so we recommend students bring their own mobile or other electronic devices for personal use, if needed.
- For the time being our libraries and self-study areas are closed, however, staff can assist students with borrowing resources that you can use at home.

### Cleaning

- The school is cleaned regularly with specific attention to door handles, drawers, windows, keyboards, handrails, light switches, tables, phones, buttons, reception desk and grip areas with approved sanitizing products.
- Toilets are cleaned frequently and deep cleaned every day.
- Hand sanitisers, blue paper and antibacterial sprays are stationed throughout the school for use by staff and students.

### Students arriving into Ireland from overseas

- Students do not need to quarantine if:
  - They are fully vaccinated with an EMA/EU approved vaccine;
  - They have proof of recovery from COVID-19 in past 180 days;
  - They have a negative PCR test, taken within 72 hours of arrival in Ireland;
- The government guidelines can be found [here](#).
- Atlas Language School reserves the right to deny students access to the school building if students are found not to have followed the travel regulations.

### **Protocol for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19**

Any staff member or a student should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 and should arrange a PCR test.

#### **Case A: Fever at screening**

Any student or staff member that is found to have a temperature of over 38°C or other symptoms when trying to attend school.

In this case, the staff member/student would be refused entry to the premises and asked to return home. If symptoms are suggestive of COVID-19, then they are strongly advised to call their GP and to arrange a PCR test. Students shall remain at home until symptoms have completely resolved.

#### **Case B: Any member of staff or student results in having fever or developing other symptoms during office hours.**

The staff member or student who develops any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 will need to isolate in the designated room and leave the premises as quickly as possible. They are advised to call their GP and to arrange a PCR test.

*In case of a potential case of COVID-19, the school will inform the Health authorities.*

#### **Case C: Plan to follow if a staff member or a student is or becomes sick.**

- The isolation room will be arranged to be used for any staff or student.
- The isolation room used will be cleaned and disinfected after the individual has gone home.

### **Protocol for dealing with a confirmed case of COVID-19**

Any staff member or a student is not allowed to attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.

1. If a student or teacher tests positive, regardless of vaccination status, the student/teacher needs to [self-isolate](#) for 10 days from the date of the test.
2. If it is the teacher who tests positive, the class may move online until the teacher is recovered or a cover teacher is organised.
3. If the class stays online, fully vaccinated students with an EMA/EU approved vaccine **without** symptoms and continue going to class. Any student who experiences symptoms,, regardless of vaccination status, must stay at home and arrange a PCR test.
4. The class will move online within a maximum of 2 days.

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In the event that the school needs to close due to a new wave, course continuation will be provided online. Online classes will be taught by fully-qualified teachers around the same times of the face-to-face classes and for the same length. Attendance will be monitored.