



Mount Anville

Montessori Junior School

2½ – 12 years

Specific measures in the Montessori/Aftercare pods to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19

(18th August 2020, content subject to development in line with national protocols)

Ratified by MAMJS BOM on 1st September 2020

HSE Covid-19 Isolation Quick Guide



**Isolation quick guide -
applying to those aged greater than
3 months and up to 13th birthday**



V1.1 03.09.2020

COVID-19 symptoms: Fever more than or equal to 38.0°C or new cough or shortness of breath or anosmia, dysgeusia or ageusia*

Self-isolation means staying indoors and completely avoiding contact with other people. This includes other people in your household, as much as possible. It applies to people with proven or suspected COVID-19.

Restricting movement means avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible. It applies to those who are without symptoms but considered at higher risk of developing COVID-19 because they were exposed to a particular risk.

	Condition	Person	Others
1	Proven COVID-19	Self-isolate 14 days with last 5 days without a fever	Close contacts restrict movements for 14 days (after last contact with case)
2	COVID-19 symptoms, not tested	Self-isolate 14 days with last 5 days without a fever	Close contacts restrict movements for 14 days
3	COVID-19 symptoms awaiting test (this includes patients with samples reported as indeterminate/invalid until such time as repeat test is available or it has been determined that COVID-19 has been excluded on other grounds)	Self-isolate pending test result	Members of the household restrict movements pending test results
4	COVID-19 symptoms test result "Not Detected"	Follow medical advice. Restrict movement until 48 hours symptom free	Restrictions no longer needed
5	Some medical symptoms that may be COVID-19 related and awaiting medical assessment that day to determine if testing is required	Self-isolate pending assessment	No restrictions until medical assessment offers further direction.
6	Runny nose or other minor symptoms and 'off-form', no fever equal to or greater than 38.0°C, no cough, no short of breath, NO ill household contacts or history of travel.	Keep home from school or childcare for a period of 48 hours to observe emerging condition	No restrictions
7	Runny nose or other minor symptoms and 'off-form', no fever equal to or greater than 38.0°C, no cough, no shortness of breath, but YES to history of travel or household members with symptoms of COVID-19	Self-isolate pending assessment	Members of the household restrict movements pending assessment
8	Runny nose, not unwell, good form, good energy and normal appetite, no fever, not requiring paracetamol, ibuprofen or any other antipyretic	Can go to school	No restrictions
9	No symptoms, close contact of a proven case	Restrict movements for 14 days, testing as advised.	No restrictions
10	Travel from non "Green-List" country	Restrict movements for 14 days, self-isolate and test if develops symptoms	No restrictions unless the person who has returned develops symptoms.

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Know the Symptoms of COVID-19

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it is important to know and recognise the symptoms. [Full guidance on COVID-19 symptoms is available from the HSE](#) but they include:

- fever or high temperature
- cough
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

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. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and safely into a yellow bio-waste bin. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19. Click [here](#) for posters on respiratory hygiene.

Montessori/Aftercare Pods

- Where possible MAMJS will implement the DCYA recommendation to organise children and staff into 'play pods' which comprise of a group of children and 2 staff, who remain with that group of children as keyworkers each day and throughout the day as far as possible. The purpose of the 'play pods' is to limit the number of people a child and a staff member have contact with, to facilitate contact tracing and to support close, positive interactions between children and their adult caregivers.
- MAMJS will determine the size of the play pod (Montessori sessional maximum will be 22:2 and Aftercare maximum will be 8:1 for 3 years plus and 6:1 for those under 3 years). The department has advised that there is no evidence on which to define a maximum pod size, but that they should be kept as small as is likely to be reasonably





practical in the specific childcare context. Pod sizes may take account of regulations relating to maximum adult-child ratios for the different age groups.

- The department has also advised that there will no change to the adult-child ratios and space requirements for the different age groups and care categories under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016
- As far as possible, there will be no contact between two or more play pods (children and staff). Play pods will remain apart in separate or shared spaces including outdoors and at dropping off and picking up times. MAMJS have created play pods in the various outdoor play areas, using outdoor fencing for each pod. This also supports the adult to traverse the spaces during play time. Each pod has its own play equipment that will be cleaned daily. The balls are colour coded for each class, so that if a ball strays, it is easily identifiable which play pod it belongs to. This will help to ensure that in the case of a confirmed Covid-19 case, only one play pod is affected and MAMJS can still continue following disinfection, cleaning etc., if directed by the HSE. Any decisions to close any part of MAMJS will **only** be made in consultation with local public health staff.
- Within a play pod social distancing between young children is not recommended and, therefore, we will not expect children to social distance in MAMJS. Social distancing between pods will apply.
- In the event that a staff member has to move between play pods e.g. to cover for staff absences/breaks, staff must wash hands on entry and leaving a play pod and a record should be kept of this movement and should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- MAMJS will manage the circulation and movement of children in their play pod between their room, the toilets, the outdoor area and any other areas of MAMJS so as to ensure no physical contact with children or staff in other play pods in as far as possible. Indoor attractive fencing has been bought to support social distancing between pods and for movement from room to yard.
- MAMJS will use attractive indoor fencing/barriers and other ways to divide indoor and outdoor physical areas so as to support and guide children's safe movement within their 'play pods' and reduce contact with children in other groups.





- A record will be retained of the people (children and MAMJS staff members) in each pod on each day to facilitate contact tracing in the event of an episode of the infection

Staff's physical contact with children

- MAMJS requires staff members in the same play pod to implement social distancing of 2 meters or 6 feet between them while they are working with children in as far as possible, whilst ensuring children are kept safe and well cared for.
- MAMJS recognises young children need physical contact and comfort from staff for their safety, their wellbeing and to attend to their personal care needs and that staff will have close contact with children in their play pod.
- MAMJS recommends that children should initiate the physical contact with staff or where children are indicating through their behaviour or words that they need comfort, that staff respond to the children's needs for physical comfort, nurturing or hugs.
- When comforting an upset child, it is recommend that a face mask is worn to avoid face to face interaction and that the staff member is at a higher level/at an angle to the child.

Physical Environment

- The premises will be cleaned thoroughly both indoor and outdoor prior to MAMJS re-opening, including all Montessori materials, toys and equipment
- A large room for Aftercare (The 'Street') may contain more than one 'play pod' which has partitions that prevent physical contact between the 'play pods' and the layout complies with Early Years Regulations space requirements and with fire safety requirements. Particular attention is given to any shared entry or exit points and have measures in place to prevent contact. The four Montessori classes will have 2 MAMJS staff members and a maximum of 22 children. When Aftercare commences (cleaning of rooms occurred when out at yard at 11:45-12:30), the room the child was in for the morning, every effort will be made that the child continues for Aftercare in the same room. Aftercare will use the 4 Montessori classrooms and the





communal space for the Preparatory Junior Aftercare children which will have partitions to support movement through the space to the toilet and yard areas. Each pod will have their own materials/toys/equipment. There will be some equipment that will be shared which will be cleaned as per cleaning policy before and after use e.g. tricycles in wooden playground.

- MAMJS will ventilate the environment as much as possible and within temperature requirements e.g. through opening windows in advance of children being in the room or while they are outside. COVID-19 thrives more in an indoor environment.
- MAMJS will use the outdoor space as much as possible when the weather permits. This increases the space for activities to be set up and increases the space between children.
- Child friendly signage will be displayed at drop and collection points to encourage social distancing and to prevent groups congregating.
- We have communicated through letter and posters that are on display, stating that ***children and staff may not attend school if*** a child/parent/household member or staff member has
 - Signs or symptoms of respiratory infection, such as a cough, shortness of breath and/or fever
 - Temperature of 38C or over

Toys and Equipment

- MAMJS will organise toys and play materials into a number of sections/areas for the different groups or 'play pods' of children and wash the toys after use each day (see cleaning schedule). In this way each group or play pod of children has its own box of toys and there is no sharing across play pods.
- MAMJS will offer toys that can be easily cleaned, disinfected (where necessary) and dried on a daily basis.
- MAMJS will limit the use of playdough and similar materials, and where being used should not be shared between the children and should be replaced daily
- MAMJS will limit food preparation activities (on a temporary basis during this Covid-19 emergency) where children take turns in preparing and later eating the food





- Toys, jigsaws and puzzles used by young children, which have been placed in their mouths, will need to be capable of being washed before reuse by another child in their play pod.
- If water play for the children in their individual pods is scheduled, e.g. in their rooms, they must not be shared across the play pods
- MAMJS has communicated with parents/guardians and children not to bring in their favourite toys from home for 'show and tell'.

a. Trips

- MAMJS has a wonderful environment which will be used to explore nature, shapes, language development and care will be taken to ensure the route is away from other children from other pods.
- Trips outside the campus e.g. requiring transport or to amenities will not be scheduled and will be deferred for now

b. Food provision

- Catering staff will deliver the hot meals to the door of the Aftercare room and the MAMJS staff member will serve the hot meal. Food should be brought to the individual care rooms and served by the staff members working in the 'play pod' in the room
- Children will have their snacks and meals with children in their play pod in their room.
- MAMJS actively discourages the sharing of food between children and between staff.
- Snacks at Montessori class are provided by the child and eaten at their individual space. The table will be cleaned by a MAMJS staff member while the child washes their own hands/staff member supports hand to be sanitised. The child's lunch can only be eaten at their allocated table and chair. Parent/guardians are advised to wash lunch boxes at 60 degrees before being brought to school. Lunch policy as to content will be promoted (e.g. slicing grapes in half from top to bottom)
- All hot meals for Aftercare are provided by a third party company to MAMJS who provides them to children and staff. Lunch calendar will be e-mailed to parents/guardian of Aftercare, as they will be at the entrance to see the monthly menu.





c. Children's personal care

- MAMJS uses the following procedure: when providing personal care to children such as when a child has a toileting accident: MAMJS staff should wear disposable single use plastic aprons and gloves, as well as washing hands before and after use of gloves

d. Enhanced COVID-19 Cleaning Schedules

We will use enhanced cleaning schedules (see cleaning procedure and schedule for more details) which specify:

- The areas to be cleaned, particularly frequently touched surfaces, e.g. light switches, door handles, taps, toilet flush handles, tables
- The method of cleaning, frequency of cleaning, and the cleaning product to be used
- All toys, in particular mouthed toys, and also outdoor toys and equipment
- Each Montessori room or Aftercare pod will have an adequate supply of cleaning agents stored safely so that staff do not have to leave the care room to retrieve them. The manager will ensure that there are adequate supplies of cleaning agents, liquid soap, hand sanitizer, paper hand towel.

Cleaning of Toys (including mouthed toys)

- All toys (including those not currently in use) will be cleaned on a regular basis. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.
- Toys that children put in their mouths will be washed after use or before use by another child.

Cleaning Procedure (including mouthed toys)

- Wash the toy in warm soapy water, using a brush to get into crevices.
- Rinse the toy in clean water.
- Thoroughly dry the toy.
- Hard plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher.
- Toys that cannot be immersed in water i.e. electronic or wind up should be wiped with a clean damp cloth and dried.

Disinfection procedure (including mouthed toys)

- In some situations, toys/equipment may need to be disinfected following cleaning. For example:
 - Toys/equipment that children will place in their mouths.





- Toys/equipment that have been soiled with blood or body fluids.

Fire Evacuation

- Fire evacuation will be carried out per room to room basis rather than every class simultaneously to allow the safe evacuation of the entire school whilst still maintaining pod/room groupings during the period of COVID-19
- At assembly points, every second line will revert to the other side of the paths (180 degree turn) to ensure social distancing between pods. The older classes will rotate and the Montessori/Preparatory/Aftercare children will remain at their assembly point.

Revised Drop off and Collection Procedures

The purpose of these dropping off and the pick-up times for parents is, in as far as possible, to support social distancing and minimize the number of contacts that parents and children have with other parents and children, especially at the entrance to MAMJS or in the arrival area. A specific video was created to help parents understand the new system:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qdM6vZpmvk&feature=youtu.be>

MAMJS will where practical:

- Organize that parents drop and collect their children in their outdoor play pod. MAMJS have extended their time period for children to enter MAMJS e.g. from 8am to 8:30 (Wed and Fri) and 8:50am (Mon, Tues and Thurs). The same staff members will supervise the pod outside as will be inside in their classroom pod.
- The staggered dropping off will be 8am to 8:30 (Wed and Fri) and 8:50am (Mon, Tues and Thurs). The picking up times with the parents will be from different areas in their play pods.
- The group of children in their 'play pod' and parents are met by MAMJS staff that are assigned to that 'play/Montessori pod' group of children
- Use social distancing markings on the ground outside MAMJS to encourage parents with their children to socially distance at drop off and collection times
- Request that only one parent per family drops off and collects their child/children.
- Ask parents to wash their hands and children's hands at home before they come to MAMJS.





- Parents are advised to take their child's temperature each day before they come to MAMJS as part of ensuring that children are well, this will need to be balanced against not causing distress to the child.
- If a child is upset or would like to create a routine for separation, the 'Huggle Zone' has been created that is outside the lining up area.
- Parents should not to leave equipment such as buggies, car seats, scooters at or in the premises but to bring them home.
- Ask parents and children to wash their hands on arrival at MAMJS (hand washing trough and hand sanitisers outside and sinks in each classroom) and at collection times. Children will be supported to use the hand sanitizer and should not be used independently
- Limit access to MAMJS to parents of infants and those with specific needs or in risk categories

Communication with parents/guardians

In advance of children who have been absent returning, MAMJS will make contact with parents by e-mail:

- To enquire if their child is returning to MAMJS
- To send out the child return to school form that requires immediate completion by parents
- To explain the revised COVID-19 health and safety and risk management procedures, the revised drop off and collection procedures, the purpose of these new procedures in reducing the transmission of the virus and that MAMJS is safe for their children to return to while acknowledging that the risk of the virus being transmitted cannot be fully eradicated
- To explain the 'play pod' – who will be their child's key worker and that the purpose is to reduce the number of close contacts that their child and the staff will have while attending MAMJS
- To emphasize the importance of their child only attending MAMJS if they are well and with no symptoms of COVID-19 and actions to be taken if their child is displaying any of the symptoms of COVID-19 or is a confirmed case or is a close contact with a suspected or confirmed case
- To explain the actions that will be taken if a child or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while attending MAMJS including that their child's temperature may be taken in this context
- To request an additional emergency contact in the event that they are not contactable





- To explain the MAMJS permission consent form, what it will cover and that parents will be required to sign it
- Please be reassured that MAMJS educational practices will continue to be child-centered
- To emphasize the responsibilities of parents in supporting the new procedures.
- MAMJS will also seek to understand if COVID-19 and the restrictions have had any traumatic or difficult impacts on the child and family and how MAMJS may need to support the child on their return.
- Send to the parents/guardians correspondence weekly in August and also a video to explain drop off points, hand hygiene, play pods, yard zones etc. Here again: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qdM6vZpmvk&feature=youtu.be>
- MAMJS recognizes that ongoing communication will be really important especially if procedures change or are updated and this helps to make everyone feel secure and safe with the new procedures.
- MAMJS will ensure that parents/guardians are met at the entrance of MAMJS each day by a staff member working in the 'play pod' that their child is in, while adhering to social distancing between the adults. In addition to the usual communication about children, this time also allows discussion on children's health and any sign of them being unwell.
- As communication between staff and parents will be reduced at drop off and collection times, MAMJS staff will use alternative ways to communicate with parents e.g. school app, email, text, phone, Microsoft Team and Zoom.

Actions to prevent adults and children with symptoms of COVID-19 from entering MAMJS

Child returning to MAMJS Montessori Junior School

- Before returning to MAMJS, parents/guardians will be asked to complete a pre-return to service form for their child. This form will seek confirmation that the child, to the best of the parent's/guardian's knowledge is well, has no symptoms of COVID-19, that they are not a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days or awaiting results of a COVID-19 coronavirus test, and that they are not in a risk category.
- Parents/Guardians of all pupils received a declaration form/statement. Parents/Guardians should read and agreed to the statements prior to the academic year commencing.





After returning to MAMJS Montessori Junior School

- Any child who is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms of any kind or displaying any symptoms of coronavirus fever or high temperature, cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties or loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste) needs to stay at home, contact their GP and seek their guidance on referral for coronavirus testing.
- Any child with symptoms of coronavirus or who tests positive should quarantine at home for 14 days and only return to MAMJS when the symptoms have fully resolved and with a doctor's certificate stating that the child is no longer infectious.
- Any child who is a close contact of a person who has or is suspected to have COVID-19 should stay at home and quarantine and seek GP's advice
- Parents/guardians must adhere to all public health travel restrictions that are in place e.g. quarantine for 14 days on return from non-essential travel abroad or any other travel restrictions that are put in place

Parents

- Only parents/guardians or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 14 days where advised should be allowed to drop off and collect children.
- Access to MAMJS is limited and parents/guardians cannot go beyond the school gate

Visitors and contractors

- Where at all possible, we will limit access to MAMJS to staff and children only
- Visitors or contractors will only be permitted to enter MAMJS on essential business which has been pre-arranged e.g. essential maintenance and they should be asked to make these visits outside of the usual operational hours.
- Where external deliveries are required, practices will be put in place to ensure that delivery staff go to the Bursar's Office entrance (other end of Mount Anville campus) and adhere to social distancing and good infection control practices





- All visitors and contractors will be required to sign MAMJS's Visitors' Book giving their name, date of visit, contact details and reason for them being at MAMJS.
- People who are in high risk or vulnerable categories will be asked not to attend.

The incident plan where a child or staff member has or is suspected of having COVID-19 while attending MAMJS

To safely manage a situation whereby a staff member or a child becomes unwell while in MAMJS and may be presenting as a suspected case of COVID-19 MAMJS has an incident plan in place including:

- MAMJS has an Infection Control Officer: Deirdre Conway
- The Infection Control Policy is available on the MAMJS website (www.mountanvillemjs.ie)
- MAMJS has appointed a COVID-19 Lead Staff Representative (Eleanor Cruite) and an Assistant Staff Representative (Aileen Ryan)
- Management has identified the Development Office as the first isolation room, 2 music rooms and the side glass room in the Montessori Building as the designated isolation rooms/ area in MAMJS and the route to the isolation area.
- The purpose of moving a staff member or child who is presenting as unwell and maybe a suspected case of COVID-19, is to move them away from other staff and children thereby reducing the risk of transmission of the virus to others
- Ensure that the staff member or child who is presenting with symptoms of COVID-19 is at least 2 meters distance from other staff and children
- Management will ensure that the isolation room or area will contain Personal Protective Equipment i.e. disposable aprons, gloves, face masks; tissues, hand sanitizer, disinfectant, dedicated pedal bin to dispose of any waste material

Staff

- Elizabeth Kavanagh/Julie Clifton will be the designated person who will accompany a staff member to the isolation room





Temperature testing

- The public health advice is that routine temperature checking for staff and/or children is not required. Temperature testing if a child or a staff member becomes unwell in MAMJS may be required
- Temperature testing devices will be available in MAMJS as part of standard practice.

COVID-19 Testing

- If COVID-19 testing is arranged for a child or staff member by their GP or other medical personnel, the staff member or the parents will be contacted by public health to identify who has been in contact with them. MAMJS should also be contacted by local public health staff to discuss the case, to identify the close contacts and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. It is not necessary to take any action in relation to closing MAMJS, partially or in full until MAMJS has been contacted by and has discussed the case with local public health staff

Overview of Covid-19 Enhanced Polices (all available on our website www.mountanvillemjs.ie) which include

Risk management and COVID-19

In managing the risks associated with COVID-19 in MAMJS, the risk management process outlined in MAMJS's Risk Management Policy will be used. The risk management approach will focus on identifying the hazards, the level of risk and the controls to address the risks identified. Risk assessment forms will capture the risks identified, the level of risk and the control measures that have been put in place.

Fire Safety: (GN 5.6)

Fire evacuation should be carried out on a room per room basis rather than the entire building simultaneously

Cleaning between Sessions: (GN 6.4)

- MAMJS will be cleaned and ventilated between each session.





- MAMJS will be cleaned thoroughly throughout the day at designated times.

Daily Risk Assessment

Daily Risk assessment of classrooms, sanitary areas, sleep areas and outdoors has been enhanced in light of Covid-19

Staffing

Rosters: MAMJS management will confirm in advance to staff any changes relating to:

- New staff rosters according to pods and to allow for minimum contamination within the pod.
- Starting and finish times
- Rostering of breaks [as appropriate] please see breaks below.

Floating/relief people while recognised as essential will be limited as much as possible.

Any changes in staff rosters must be compliant with the adult/child ratios as set out in the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] Regulations 2016 and the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [School Age Childcare] Regulations 2018.

COVID-19 staff induction training

Before returning to work all staff will have specific training on the following and a record of this training will be maintained.

COVID-19 Lead Staff Representative

A COVID–19 Lead Staff Representative, Eleanor Cruite and Assistant Staff Representative, Aileen Ryan, to work in partnership with MAMJS management to assist in the implementation of changes to work practices and infection control measures. There will also be communication with the Health and Safety Officer, Mr Dobbyn. The staff taking up this role will receive training. The roles and responsibilities of this individual will include:

- Working collaboratively with employer/manager to ensure that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to
- Being aware of the signs, symptoms, transmission of COVID-19 and preventative measures
- Being familiar with what to do if a staff member or a child develops symptoms while in MAMJS
- Being familiar with all the COVID-19 measures in place in MAMJS
- Keeping up to date with government advice on COVID-19





- Supporting effective communication between staff and management on the COVID-19 health and safety measures in place and how they are working
- Being available to staff for any concerns they may have
- Reporting problem areas or non-compliance to management

Staff breaks

- Staff breaks/lunches should be staggered by reorganising and rearranging break times to prevent interaction between staff in different play pods. This can be done by ensuring social distance of 2 meters between staff at all times while not working with the children in the play pods and especially between staff that are in different play pods. A second staff room has been provided in order to facilitate social distancing among staff.

Meetings

- Conduct meetings as much as possible using online remote means via Microsoft Teams platform. Where face to face meetings are necessary the length of the meeting should be kept to a minimum and the participants must maintain social distancing of 2 meters at all times. The visitors log will be completed.
- Staff members must not gather together in groups in MAMJS or on arrival or when leaving. MAMJS in cooperation with staff will organise the staggering of the movement of staff in and out of MAMJS to support social distancing.





Cleaning Facilities in MAMJS

Wash Hand Basins:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms • In Blue and Red corridor, there are multiple sinks for hand washing • Washing troughs with level taps: Montessori Astro, inside entrance/exit to yard pods, in the courtyard outside the Welcome Office and extra-curricular room. • Staff room
Hand Sanitisers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At entrance to all classrooms (Montessori and Preparatory will use manual hand sanitizers to apply to children's hands) • At all drop off and collection points • Communal areas: Montessori porch, Old Montessori porch, entrance to corridors • Entrance at staff car park, staff rooms (x2) • Entrance to specialist teacher's rooms
Storage of Cleaning Agents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning agents are stored in all rooms used by MAMJS staff in a safe and secure location in the room • Additional supplies are stored in Welcome Office, Administration Office and Montessori Cleaning Store Room • At isolation room.

