



## Roxboro National School

### Re-Opening Plan September 2021

#### Wellbeing

As a staff, we look forward to welcoming the children back to school after the summer break. We recognise that the children have now had 2 school years which were affected by the pandemic. Each child will be in a different place in relation to his/her learning, and we wish to assure you that staff will take that into consideration when planning for Teaching and Learning during the 2021/2022 school year.

We ask Parents to trust our experience and professional expertise as we work with all the children during this new school year to continue to support your child with homework.

We will work on the recommended five principles to support the wellbeing of our pupils and staff. These are promoting:

- A sense of safety
- A sense of calm
- A sense of belonging and connectedness to school
- A sense of self-efficacy and school-community efficacy
- A sense of hope

Specific supports will be available for children who are worried about coming back to school. Our SEN Staff will be working with children in the first few weeks to help them to settle in and hopefully allay any of their fears.

Parents who have concerns about their children's health and wellbeing will be encouraged to contact the school when we open so that we can support you and them in any way we can.

**How Parents/Guardians can help:** Read this document carefully. Be aware of all procedures. Talk to your child about what they can expect on their return to school. Support us and each other. Be flexible and patient as we proceed and find the best and safest way forward for Roxboro NS in 2021/22. We are in this together.

## Morning Arrival

- The school grounds will open to pupils at 9am. **Parents/Guardians may arrive at school between 9am and 9.10am.** All pupils, including those arriving by bus, should enter the school grounds on the play-school side (access through front gates, opposite main door is prohibited) and walk to the meeting point next to the flags where they will be met by staff. Parents are advised to accompany their children to the meeting point.
- Staff will assist children from here to classrooms in small groups (of children from their Bubble i.e. class level). Physical distancing will be observed. Classroom teachers will be in their rooms from 9.05am.
- Junior & Senior Infants will enter through the double doors on the right hand side of the building – Door A  
1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class pupils will enter through the double doors on the left hand side of the building – Door B  
3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils will enter through the single door on the left of the main entry way – Door C  
Wheelchair access – Main entrance
- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** arrive to school between 9am & 9.10am – supervision will only be available during this time period. Accompany your child to the meeting point. Leave the school grounds promptly.

## In Classrooms

- The school day will run from 9.10am to 3pm.
- Staff will ensure that pupils sanitise their hands at their designated entry door on arrival.
- Pupils will enter their designated classroom with their teacher and be seated in their allocated seat in the classroom.
- In order to reduce the risk of spread of infection we have structured our teachers and pupils into Class Bubbles. Each class level is considered a Bubble: from Junior Infants in Bubble 1 up to 6<sup>th</sup> Class in Bubble 8. Pupils in each Class Bubble will stay apart from other Class Bubbles, to the greatest extent possible, from arrival at school in the morning until departure at the end of the school day.
- All classrooms have been cleared of unnecessary furniture/shelves etc. to create maximum space.
- All classrooms have been reconfigured, in line with advice from the Department of Education, in order to maximise physical distancing.
- The teacher's desk will be at least 1m & where possible 2m away from pupils' desks.
- From 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class, where possible, a distance of 1m will be maintained between desks and individual pupils.
- Although maintaining physical distancing indoors is not a prerequisite in the first 4 years of primary school, the class teacher will make every effort to ensure physical distance is observed and Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> class will be seated in pods of between 4 & 8 pupils.
- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** Talk to the children about Bubbles (classes) & Pods (groups), about the need to stay in their own pod in the classroom and that they will be unable to enter other classrooms. Ensure your child has everything needed – stationery items etc. Label all belongings, including pencil case items to avoid mix

ups or sharing of belongings among children. Wipe/disinfect the outside of your child's pencil case each evening. Pare pencils in advance.

## Break & Lunch Times

- Break time will be at 11am for 10 minutes and lunch time at 12.30pm for 30 minutes. The 2pm break is 10 minutes.
- Lunches will be eaten in the classrooms before entering the yard. Children will wash their hands before eating. Children may not bring lunch boxes or drink bottles to the yard. All lunch related waste must be taken home in the child's lunchbox.
- Each class will have access to a designated section of the yard at each break time. Children will play only with those in their Bubble (class).
- Designated areas will be marked and supervising staff will direct children to remain in their allocated areas.
- Playground equipment will be permitted.
- Children will sanitise/wash their hands before and after break times. Sanitiser will be available in the yard also if needed.
- Each bubble will have a designated line up area and each line will be at least 2 metres from corresponding lines.
- **How Parent/Guardians can help:** Speak to your children about the need to remain with their class bubble at breaktimes and not to enter other areas (to talk to a sibling for example). Ensure your child's lunch box and bottle are easy for them to open and do not leak. Include items in their lunches that they can easily manage – avoid items they cannot open or peel themselves. Ensure they have everything they need – extra drinks, cutlery etc. Lunchboxes and bottles must be washed every day as hard surfaces are most likely to spread the virus.

## Afternoon Dismissal

- Infant classes will be escorted to the meeting point by staff and will be collected by their parents at the meeting point at 1.50pm (Junior Infants 12.30pm until September 10<sup>th</sup>.) Socially distant markings have been provided for parents to wait on the path leading from the car park.
- Teaching will cease at 3pm. Dismissal times for 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes will be staggered into 2 collection slots assigned alphabetically by family surname (with the exception of bus/after-school children who will be in the 3pm slot). These slots will be at 3pm and 3.05pm. All children will be escorted to the meeting point by staff. Parents are asked to arrive as close as possible to their designated time and to leave the car park promptly afterwards.
- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** Arrive as close as possible to your allotted time (not early or late). It is advisable to collect your children from the meeting point. Do not linger.

## Hygiene and Cleaning

- Soap and Sanitiser dispensers have been installed throughout the school. Hand hygiene will be taught, promoted and encouraged. A routine of hand washing/sanitising will be implemented for all children and staff.
- Signage will be displayed around the school encouraging hand washing and good coughing or sneezing etiquette.
- Regular and thorough cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces shall be conducted, in particular, desks, toilets, sinks, and door handles. Cleaning will be performed regularly and whenever facilities or surfaces are visibly dirty. The school will be cleaned at least once per day.
- All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area. Staff will thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.
- There will be daily collection of waste from classrooms and other areas within the school.
- A written cleaning schedule will be available for our cleaning staff.
- **How Parents /Guardians can help:** Teach children how to wash their hands properly and how to use sanitiser effectively. Provide children with a packet of tissues. Personal sanitisers may be provided if you wish. Use the slogan '*Cough or Sneeze? Elbow, please.*' Keep fingernails clipped short and long hair tied back. Ensure your child's hands are thoroughly washed before they come to school each day.

## Doors and Windows

- Teachers will be responsible for opening doors, turning on lights and opening/closing windows to minimise hand contact with common surfaces. Doors will be open when children enter/leave their classrooms.
- To ensure that classrooms are well ventilated, windows will be kept open as often as possible and will be opened while children are taking breaks in the playground.
- Children will be permitted to use their designated entry point only when entering or exiting the building.
- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** Remind your children to avoid touching door handles, light switches etc. and if necessary to do so, use an elbow.

## School Uniform

- School policy applies. Government guidelines given to schools do not mention the daily washing of uniforms.
- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** It is best practice to change your children's clothes immediately after school and to only wear school uniform while in school. Have spare uniform items should you wish to wash uniforms more frequently.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- It is recommended that primary school teachers and staff wear face coverings where a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. Visors and face masks are available to staff.
- For a limited number of staff, full PPE (apron, gloves, visor, mask) will need to be used occasionally or constantly due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. This might include roles such as: - Assisting with intimate care needs - Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation.
- Primary school children will not be required to wear face coverings under any circumstances while in school. (Exception – if in isolation area)

## School Visitors

- According to Government Guidelines, there can be **no walk in visits** to the school.
- All school visitors must make a **prior appointment** either by email or phone call and remain outside the main doors on arrival until a staff member can meet them. **Under no circumstances should a visitor enter the building without prior arrangement.**
- All visitors must complete a “School Contact Tracing Log”. This log allows for contact tracing in the event of an infection, as it records contacts between staff and pupils, and others with whom staff have interacted. This log will be given to the visitor by the school Principal or, in her absence, the attending staff member.
- All approved visitors must sanitise on entry. We will also request that all school visitors maintain 2 metre distancing between themselves and school staff at all times. Face masks will be available. Movement of visitors within the building will be strictly limited.
- **How Parents /Guardians can help:** Do not proceed beyond the meeting point without prior arrangement. Exceptional circumstances: see below.

## Collection of Children for appointments

The following arrangements will apply:

- Phone or email the school at least 24 hours in advance to arrange.
- On arrival please ring the bell at the **CONTACT POINT Door C** – (single door to the left of the main entry way) and remain outside, your child will be escorted to you by a staff member.
- You will be asked to sign your child out.

## Returning a child to school/late arrivals

The following arrangements will apply:

- Please ring the bell at the **CONTACT POINT Door C** – (single door to the left of the main entry way) and remain outside, your child will be met by a staff member.
- You will be required to sign your child in.

### **Dropping off essential items during the school day**

The following arrangements will apply:

- Should you wish to drop off an item for your child, please ring or email the school to advise us that you will be doing so. Clearly label the item with your child's name and any relevant instructions and place in the DROP OFF crate at DOOR C. If you are dropping an item without prior arrangement, please ring the bell.

**Under exceptional circumstances** where you cannot give notice to the school please ring the bell at the CONTACT POINT and the Deputy Principal, Mary Fallon will attend to you.

- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** Arrange all visits to the school in advance. If, in exceptional circumstances you must come to the school follow the procedures above strictly. Do not enter the building unless invited to do so. Late arrivals or unannounced visits to the school should be very rare and only if absolutely necessary. The Deputy Principal will attend the Contact Point but please remember this will disrupt her class and such disruptions should be avoided if at all possible.

### **Curricular Activities/Teaching and Learning**

Covid-19 will impact on many activities in the school: Aistear, Art, IT, Music, group work and Sports. While we will be striving to return to as much normality as possible we will have to minimise sharing of equipment and increase cleaning and sanitisation. All of this will take time and planning and we will have to move forward slowly, following all recommended guidelines to find what works best for our school.

#### **ICT**

- A timetable will be drawn up for the use of common ICT equipment. Devices will be cleaned after use.

#### **PE**

- Where possible, PE will take place outdoors and use of equipment will be limited and fully sanitised after use.
- All classes will be encouraged to participate in "The Daily Mile" and engage in regular movement breaks in the classroom.

## Homework

- Each teacher will have responsibility for setting and correcting homework.

## Dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

### **Pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.**

Symptoms: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/symptoms.html>

The following outlines how Roxboro National School will deal with a suspected case that may arise during the course of a school day.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 while at work in Roxboro National School the following are the procedures to be implemented:

- If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
- The child will be accompanied to the isolation area by a staff member.
- Social distancing and PPE protocols will be followed.
- A mask will be provided for the person presenting with symptoms. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises
- Parents will be directed to collect their child immediately and call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home
- The child will remain in isolation if they cannot immediately be collected by parents or if parents/guardians cannot be contacted, and their GP will be contacted by the school.
- If advice is required, emergency services will be called and informed that the sick child is a Covid-19 suspect.
- An assessment of the incident will take place which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
- Appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved will take place.

The HSE will inform any staff/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 instructions of the HSE should be followed.

- **How Parents/Guardians can help:** Ensure the contact details held by the school are up-to-date and that we have the correct details for your child's GP. Please be kind and respectful to staff if you are contacted to collect your child.

## Children who should not attend school

If your child is in one of the following categories, they should not attend school –

- Children who have been diagnosed with Covid-19

- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Children who have a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of Covid-19 and the outcome of the test is pending
- **Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school**
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days – follow public health travel guidance
- Children who are generally unwell

### **Supporting the Learning of Children who cannot attend school**

For the above categories of children (exception below) the class teacher (and/or the SET, where relevant) will provide work to support the child's learning at home and this will be shared with parents/guardians along with other suggested activities.

Please note: The school, as per Government guidelines, will provide online distance learning for **children in the very high risk category only.**

### **Special Educational Needs**

In keeping with our Special Education policy, learning support will be provided by a blended approach of in-class support and withdrawal. The provision of support will be organised to limit, as far as possible, the contact between Special Education Teachers and class bubbles.

- Where a support teacher is working alongside a class teacher in a classroom, both teachers must be mindful of maintaining social distance from one another.
- Where children from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class receive support in one of the SET rooms, social distancing of 1 metre will be maintained between each child in the group.
- The tables and chairs, door handles etc. in SET rooms will be wiped clean in between different groups attending
- Smaller groups will be created where possible. SEN staff may teach large Numeracy and Literacy groups in the school hall.
- Sanitisers will be placed at the entrance to each SEN room and pupils must sanitise on entering and wash their hands on return to class.
- Teachers are advised not to stoop down to pupils if possible.
- Staff may use face visors/masks.
- SNAs/SEN staff will escort children to and from SEN rooms.
- All resources used must be sanitised immediately after use. Resources must not be shared between pods during team teaching/in-class support.
- Parents must ensure pupils have 2-3 pencils/pens in their pencil cases. Pencils are to be sharpened at night.
- Free standing desktop Perspex screens are available for table top activities.
- Team/station teaching may occur in the junior classes with awareness of social distancing and where resources are not shared between pods.
- Use of the outdoor classroom, weather permitting, will be encouraged.



*Thank you for familiarising yourself with this document.*

All of the amendments that have been made in Roxboro NS are as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The procedures and systems that have been put in place are fully compliant with Government guidelines for re-opening schools. This is a working document which will be regularly reviewed and updated in line with advice from the Department of Education and NPHET. We look forward to relaxing and amending these procedures in the future. In the meantime, we hope you will not be inconvenienced by the measures we must take and we look forward to welcoming all of the children back to Roxboro NS.

**Maximise distance. Minimise contact.**