



# *Rolestown National School*

Response Plan for the safe  
and sustainable reopening of  
Rolestown National School August 2020  
Updated Feb 2021

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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.dbei.ie](http://www.dbei.ie), [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie), [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie); [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) or [agreements with education partners as appropriate for primary and special schools.](#)

## **Appendices**

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## 1) **Introduction**

The Minister for Education has published “*The Roadmap for the Full Return to School*” on the 27<sup>th</sup> July. It sets out what the operation of schools will look like and the range of supports which will be available in a COVID-19 context.

It has been developed in line with public health advice issued by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and in compliance with the “Return to Work Safely 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 (HSA). Each workplace is required to have a COVID-19 Response Plan. In addition to being places of learning, schools are also places of work. This document sets out the information that post primary schools need to implement a School COVID-19 Response Plan, including a COVID-19 policy, lead worker representative and 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 through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19 in primary and special schools. It provides key messages to minimise the risk of COVID-19 for staff, pupils, families and the wider community while recognising the importance of education for the health and wellbeing of pupils and society as a whole.

This document focuses on the practical steps which can be taken in primary and special schools to minimise the risk of the introduction of infection into schools while recognising that no interpersonal activity is without risk of transmission of infection at any time. The documentation and templates in this booklet are supported by the public health advice provided by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) for the safe reopening of schools and educational facilities. [That report is available here.](#)

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 our school can take to do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school and the steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of the spread within the school itself.

## **2)What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?**

A Covid-19 Response Plan is designed to support the staff and Board of Management (BOM) in putting measures in place that aim to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

The Covid-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for a school to meet the Government’s ‘*Return to Work Safely Protocol*’, the Department of Education plan for school reopening and to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

It is important that the resumption of school-based teaching and learning and the reopening of school facilities complies with the public health advice and guidance documents prepared by the Department. Doing so minimises the risk to pupils, staff and others. The response plan supports the sustainable reopening of Rolestown National School where the overriding objective is to protect the health of staff and pupils while promoting the educational and development needs of the pupils in the school. *The COVID-19 response plan is a living document and will be updated in line with the public health advice as appropriate for primary and special schools.*

In line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the key to a safe and sustainable return to work, and reopening of schools requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between the BOM, staff, pupils and parents.

The assistance and cooperation of all staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of the plan.

### **3) Rolestown National School COVID-19 Policy**

A COVID-19 policy outlines the commitment of the school to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy has been signed and dated by the chairperson and principal of the BOM and brought to the attention of the staff, pupils, parents and others. A copy of our School COVID-19 policy can be found at **Appendix 1**.

### **4) Planning and Preparing for Return to School**

The Board of Management of Rolestown NS aims to facilitate the resumption of school based teaching and learning and the return to the workplace of staff. The return to the workplace must be done safely and in strict adherence to the public health advice and any guidance issued by the Department of Education.

Details for the safe reopening of the school facility and the applicable controls are outlined in this document.

Before reopening of Rolestown NS for the 2020/21 school year the following processes have been put in place

- The Lead Worker Representative LWR and Deputy LWR will keep up to date with public health advice, changes to any Government plans for the safe reopening of society and Department of Education updates.
- The Lead Worker Representative LWR and Deputy LWR will pass on this information in a timely manner to staff, the principal will pass on this information to pupils, parents and others as required;
- All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 induction training prior to returning to school.
- A Return to Work Form (RTW) must be completed and returned to the school three days before returning to work. Staff must confirm that details in their return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of school closure eg, school holidays **see section 4.2**
- Identified a Lead Worker Deputy Lead worker and Assistant Lead worker representative **see Section 4.3**
- Displayed posters and other signage to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 **see Section 4.4**
- Classrooms from 3<sup>rd</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> class will be re-arranged to support physical distancing, **see Section 4.5**
- Surplus furniture and unnecessary clutter has been removed to facilitate ongoing cleaning of the school taking into account the importance of having educational materials to create a stimulating learning environment;
- Health and safety risk assessment will be updated. **see Section 4.6**
- Access to the school will be limited to necessary visitors and maintain records of contacts to the school **see section 4.7**
- The School buildings have been checked for the following:
  - All windows and doors have been checked for signs of deterioration or damage;
  - Bin collections have been ongoing during the summer.

## **4.1) Induction Training**

All staff will undertake and complete Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the school building. 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 pupil develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school;
- Outline of the Covid-19 response plan.

Staff will be kept fully informed of the control measures in place in the school 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 available from the public health authorities.

If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the Covid-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal, who is supported in this role by the BOM.

## **4.2. Procedure for Returning to Work (RTW)**

In order to return to the workplace, staff must complete a **Return to Work (RTW)** form, which is available online or from the principal. A copy is attached also at **Appendix 2**.

A RTW form should be completed and returned **3 days** before returning to work and returned to the principal Ms Ann Ryan.

Staff must confirm that details in their return to work form remain unchanged following subsequent periods of school closure eg, school holidays.

The principal will also provide details of the **Induction Training** for completion by staff and details of any additional health and safety measures in place in the school to facilitate the staff member's return to the school facility.

There are some school staff who may be unable to return to school. Current public health guidelines have identified these people as being in groups who are defined as being at **very high risk**. This will be updated in line with public health advice.

### **People at high risk (extremely vulnerable)**

The list of people in very high risk groups include people who:

- are over 70 years of age - even if fit and well
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs

- have severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition and are pregnant

The advice for this group is available from the HSE. Details of the arrangements that will apply for these staff, which will be in accordance with those applying for the public service generally, will be updated by the Department of Education following consultation with management bodies and unions and a circular will issue to all schools.

### **4.3) Lead Worker Representative**

The Protocol provides for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in each workplace. The LWR will work in collaboration with the employer to assist in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 and monitor adherence to those measures and to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in schools, and looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. Adherence to the Return to Work Protocol will only be achieved if everyone has a shared responsibility in implementing the measures contained within the Protocol in their place of work.

**If** a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan, control measures or the adherence to such measures by staff, pupils or others he/she should contact the lead worker(s) who will engage with the principal/BOM.

### **Role of the Lead Worker Representative**

In summary, the role of the LWR is to:

- Represent all staff in the workplace regardless of role, and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts;
- Work collaboratively with school management to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to COVID-19;
- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, promote good hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice;
- Assist school management with the implementation of measures to suppress COVID-19 in the workplace in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice;
- In conjunction with school management, monitor adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- Conduct regular reviews of safety measures;
- Report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them;

- Consult with the school management on the school's COVID-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing COVID-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area;
- Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required;
- Consult with colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace;
- Make representations to school management on behalf of their colleagues on matters relating to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Rolestown National School will appoint a Lead Worker Representative and a Deputy Lead Worker Representative will be appointed in addition to the LWR. The role of the Deputy LWR will be to deputise as LWR where the LWR is absent.

**Our Lead Worker Representatives are:**

**Margaret Shortall**

**Damien O Donoghue**

**Suzanne Mc Allister**

All staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors have a responsibility both as individuals and collectively to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures. Full details of the arrangements which will apply for the LWR in primary and special schools is set out at **Appendix 3**.

#### **4.4) Signage**

Rolestown NS will display appropriate signage provided by the Department outlining the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and to support good hand and respiratory hygiene.

#### **4.5) Making Changes to School Layout**

Maintaining physical distancing in the school environment is recommended as one of the key control measures to minimize the risk of the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Classrooms and other areas in Rolestown NS will be reconfigured as necessary to support physical distancing in line with the guidance in advance of school reopening.

#### **4.6) Health and Safety Risk Assessment**

COVID-19 represents a hazard in the context of health and safety in the school environment. A template risk assessment to identify the control measures required to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in school settings is attached at **Appendix 4**.

Rolestown NS have reviewed emergency procedures involving, fire safety, first aid, accidents and dangerous occurrences to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Changes to the school's existing emergency procedures have been documented and incorporated into the school's safety statement.

Rolestown NS have reviewed existing risk assessments to consider any new risks that arise due to the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Any changes to the school's current risk assessments have been documented and incorporated into the school safety statement.

#### **First Aid/Emergency Procedure**

The standard First Aid/emergency procedure shall continue to apply in Rolestown NS. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999 giving details of location and type of medical incident.

#### **4.7) Access to School and Contact Log**

Access to Rolestown NS will be in line with the following agreed school procedures.

Arrangements for necessary visitors such as contractors and parents will be restricted to essential purposes and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the principal.

The Department of Education Inspectorate may also need to visit schools to support them as appropriate in the implementation of public health advice relating to creating a safe learning and working environment for all.

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 staff, contractors and visitors at the workplace. A detailed sign in/sign out log of those entering the school facilities will be maintained. The school maintains a log of staff and pupil contacts.

Parents arriving for late drop off or early collection of pupils will complete the sign in / sign out book at the hatch in the Secretary's office.

All staff, caretaker and cleaners will sign in and out daily using the Staff sign in sheet.

The contact tracing at **Appendix 5**. will be completed by all other visitors to Rolestown NS

The Data Protection Commission has provided guidance on the data protection implications of the return to work protocols. This advice can be found here:

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/data-protection-implications-return-work-safely-protocol>

The contact Tracing Log file will be stored securely in the secretary's office in compliance with GDPR.

#### **5) Control Measures - To prevent Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

In Rolestown NS we will do everything practical to avoid the introduction of COVID-19 into the school. If infection is not introduced it cannot be spread. The risk of spreading the infection once introduced exists in all interpersonal interactions; student-student, teacher-teacher and teacher-student 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 staff, pupils, parents and visitors as far as possible within the school. The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures outlined and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements.

*Staff should note that they have a legal obligation under Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.*

### **How we will Minimise the Risk of Introduction of COVID-19 into Rolestown NS:**

Promote awareness of COVID-19 symptoms (**details at Section 5.1**);

- Advise staff and pupils that display any signs or symptoms of Covid-19 to self-isolate or restrict movements at home to contact their doctor to arrange a test.
- Advise staff and pupils not to return to or attend school in the event of the following:
  - \* if they have been identified by the HSE as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
  - \* if they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.
  - \* if they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Advise staff and pupils to co-operate with any public health officials and the school for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.
- Advise staff and pupils that develop symptoms at school to bring this to the attention of the Principal promptly;
- Ensure that staff and pupils know the protocol for managing a suspected case of COVID-19 in school (**details at Section 8**);
- Everyone entering the school building needs to perform hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser;
- Visitors to the school during the day should be by prior arrangement and must check in with the secretary on arrival at the
- Physical distancing (of 2m) should be maintained between staff and visitors where possible.

## **5.1) The Symptoms of COVID-19**

A pupil must not be sent to school if he/she has any one of the following symptoms.

- ✓ High temperature
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- ✓ Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste

- ✓ If they have tested positive for COVID 19 or have been a close contact of someone who has tested positive with COVID 19, in which case the advice of your family GP should be sought.

The Board of Management and school staff of Rolestown NS are striving to keep our school free from Covid-19 so that our school can sustain teaching and learning and avoid closures as a result of an outbreak in our school.

A pupil sent to school with any of these symptoms risks not just the teaching and learning in our school, but the lives of our pupils and staff, some of whom are vulnerable or live with vulnerable people.

## **5.2) Respiratory Hygiene**

Staff and pupils of Rolestown NS will be encouraged to 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 nearby pedal bin.

By following good respiratory hygiene, we will protect the people around us from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.

## **5.3) Hand Hygiene**

Staff and pupils will be aware of why hand hygiene is important as well as when and how to wash their hands.

To promote good hygiene posters will be displayed throughout the school on how to wash hands. We will follow the HSE guidelines on handwashing:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

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

Each classroom will have three areas for handwashing, one in the male and female toilets and an extra one at the sink in each classroom.

Pupils will use hand washing facilities after activities that are likely to soil hands, for example playing outside or certain sporting activities as hand sanitiser does not work on dirty hands.

There are hand sanitisers in each classroom and at exit and entry points of the school. Care should be taken to clean up any hand sanitiser spills to prevent risks of falls.

A soap that emulsifies easily in cold water will be used at hand washing stations.

Hand washing stations with disposable towels and soap are provided in all toilets throughout the school, in the staff room and in the Art room. Supplies of towels and soap will be topped up regularly. Each classroom will have a spare bottle of soap, handtowels and toilet paper.

Posters displaying hand washing techniques and promoting hand washing will be laminated and placed on walls adjacent to washing facilities.

Hand sanitiser is suitable for use for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled (look clean). Note Rolestown NS is using Hand sanitiser from a Department of Education recognised supplier.

Care should be taken to ensure that pupils do not ingest hand sanitisers as they are flammable and toxic.

Alcohol based sanitiser must not be stored or used near heat or naked flame.

Young children should not have independent use of containers of alcohol gel.

### **Frequency of Hand Hygiene**

Pupils and staff of Rolestown NS should perform hand hygiene:

- On arrival at school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After using the toilet;
- After playing outdoors;
- When their hands are physically dirty;
- When they cough or sneeze.

### **5.4) Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing can be usefully applied in primary and special school settings allowing for some flexibility when needed. It must be applied in a practical way to recognise that the learning environment cannot be dominated by a potentially counterproductive focus on this issue. Physical distancing will look different across the various ages and stages of learning. 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 recognised that it is not always possible for staff to maintain physical distance from pupils and it is not appropriate that they would always be expected to do so where this could have a detrimental impact on the pupil i.e. if a child sustains an injury and requires first aid.

The focus will be in avoiding physical contact unless necessary which may include;

- First Aid Treatment
- If a child is emotionally upset
- One to one teaching by class teacher or Supplementary Education Support Teacher

**However, where possible staff should maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m. 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 interaction

#### ***Increasing separation***

To maintain physical distancing in the classroom, in Rolestown NS we will: Reconfigure class spaces to maximise physical distancing and remove unnecessary furniture from classrooms.

Our school has Reconfigured class layouts and classrooms to maximise physical distancing

Teacher's desks should be at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil desks.

### ***Decreasing interaction***

The extent to which decreasing interaction is possible in a primary school will depend on the school setting and a common-sense approach is required recognising the limits to which this can be achieved between pupils.

A distance of 1m will be maintained between desks or between individual pupils where possible.

It is recognised that younger children are unlikely to maintain physical distancing indoors. Therefore achieving this recommendation in the first four years of primary school is not a pre-requisite to reopening a primary school for all pupils.

Where possible work stations will be allocated consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces which are shared.

Classes in Rolestown NS will be structured so each individual class is a bubble. Classes may be structured into smaller pods (depending on each individual teacher's preference) If the class is divided into Pods, there should be at least (1m distance) between individual Pods within the Class Bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible.

In Rolestown NS we will limit contact and sharing of common facilities between people in different Class Bubbles (and Pods within those Class Bubbles) as much as possible, rather than to avoid all contact between Pods, as the latter will not always be possible.

Our aim is that each class grouping will mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until departure at the end of the school day. The Pods within those Class Bubbles is an additional measure, to limit the extent of close contact within the Class Bubble.

Pod sizes will be kept as small as is likely to be reasonably practical in the specific classroom context.

Pupils and teaching staff will consistently be in the same Class Bubbles although this will not be possible at all times.

In Rolestown NS each Class Bubble will have a separate play area at break times.

Sharing educational material between Pods will be minimised.

Staff members who move from class bubble to class bubble should be limited as much as possible. SEN teachers will be assigned to classes rather than to individual pupils to minimise contact with class bubbles.

### ***Additional measures to decrease interaction in Rolestown NS include:***

Limit interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared areas.

Arrival and departure times will be staggered to limit interaction amongst pupils.

An additional entrance exit way is being installed at the end of the senior corridor to limit interaction.

Social physical contact (hand to hand greetings, hugs) are discouraged in Rolestown NS

Where pupils need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (access to a shared resource) it should be organized to the greatest degree possible to minimize congregation at the shared resource.

Staff and pupils should avoid sharing of personal items.

Encourage pupils to avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact (putting pens/pencils in the mouth).

Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets, the contact surface of the device should be cleaned regularly and hand hygiene encouraged.

## **Physical Distancing outside of the classroom and within the school**

### ***School drop off/collection***

Arrangements for dropping off/collecting pupils will be staggered to encourage physical distancing of 2m where possible.

Walking/cycling to school is encouraged as much as possible. However we recognise that the majority of our pupils travel to school in cars as they live a distance from the school.

Parents and guardians are reminded to maintain 2m distancing. Ground markers indicate 2m distance within the school grounds. 2m distance between parents and guardians and school staff will also be maintained.

Parents are reminded to avoid congregation at the school gates.

To reduce congestion, classes have been assigned access points via the three school gates. Each class will have an assembly point where they will meet their teacher.

### **Arrangements for staggered arrival and drop off:**

*Junior & Senior Infants enter through gate closest to the roundabout.*

*1<sup>st</sup>- 3<sup>rd</sup> classes enter through the main pedestrian gate.*

*4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes enter through the big gates.*

*Pupils with surnames A\_K Arrival 8.50am, Departure 2.20pm.*

*Pupils with surnames L-Z Arrival 9.00am, Departure 2.30pm.*

We have had to assign alternative times to a small number of families as this split does not give us an even distribution of pupils in every class. Parents of children who were assigned a different start / finish time were contacted by email.

Parents will not be allowed to enter the school grounds unless by prior arrangement with the Principal Ms Ryan. (An exception will be made for infant parents who will be permitted to accompany their child to the infant line during the first days of the new term.)

### **Staff**

A distance of 2m is recommended for physical distancing by staff in Rolestown NS. This is particularly relevant to distancing between adults when they are not engaged in teaching such as the staff room and arriving to work.

If 2m cannot be maintained in staff groups, as much as distance as is possible and guidance on face covering should be observed.

Staff meetings will be held in the assembly area to facilitate physical distancing.

We have a no hand shaking policy in our school.

Social distancing will be observed during staff planning meetings.

Staff can rotate between areas/classes but this should be minimized where possible.

### **Staff Room**

We will ensure physical distancing is applied in the Staff Room, staff members must only sit in designated areas.

Use of the staff room will be extended to align with staggered breaktimes and to promote physical distancing.

### **Corridors**

Briefly passing someone in a hall is very unlikely to contribute significantly to the spread of infection if people do not have physical contact and avoid informal group discussions.

Classes must stand back and wait for a class to pass or walk on and must maintain their class bubble by not intermingling with other classes in the corridor. Teachers can control this through ensuring the usual protocols are followed pertaining to a teacher leading a class at all times when moving throughout the school.

Classes and/or individual pupils are not permitted to leave their classroom unless for a timetabled event, e.g. PE Lesson, Supplementary Education Support lesson.

### **Yard/Supervision**

The risk of transmission from contact with outside surfaces or play areas is low.

Yard times will be split to ease congestion on the yard and allow for class bubbles to maintain a distance from other class bubbles.

It is not possible to maintain physical distancing when pupils in primary schools play together outdoors, but in so far as practical it is helpful to keep to consistent groups.

Children should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene before and after outdoor activities.

Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

### **Ventilation**

Windows should be open as fully as possible when classrooms are not in use e.g. during break times and at the end of each day and partially open when classrooms are in use.

## **5.5) Use of PPE in Schools**

Staff in Rolestown National School will wear masks at all times in the school building (with the exception of their lunch time)

The school will provide medical grade masks to SNA's and SEN teachers who work in close proximity to pupils.

Masks must also be worn:

- Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while the school is in operation
- Where staff are particularly vulnerable to infection but are not on the list of those categorised as people in very high risk groups, or may be living with those who are in the very high risk category.

Appropriate PPE will be available for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases, and for first aid.

### **Masks**

Cloth face coverings are not suitable for children under the age of 13 and anyone who:

- Has trouble breathing;
- Is unconscious or incapacitated;
- Is unable to remove it without help;
- Has special needs to who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering.

Re-usable masks must be washed daily.

### **Gloves**

The use of disposable gloves in the school by pupils or staff is not generally appropriate but may be necessary for intimate care settings. Routine use does not protect the wearer and may expose others to risk from contaminated gloves.

Routine use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

## **6. Impact of COVID-19 on certain school activities**

### *Choir/Music Performance*

#### **Choir/Music Performance**

Choir practices/performances and music practices/performances involving wind instruments may pose a higher level of risk, therefore these will be suspended pending a review by the Board of Management

#### ***Sport Activities***

Rolestown NS will refer to the HPSC guidance on Return to Sport. Link to return to sport protocols is found here.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07253-return-to-sport-protocols/>

## ***Shared Equipment***

All toys will be cleaned on a regular basis. This will remove dust and dirt that can harbour germs.

Toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal.

If cloth or soft toys are used they should be machine washable.

Jigsaws, puzzles and toys that young pupils to those with special educational needs may be inclined to put into their mouths should be capable of being washed and disinfected.

All play equipment should be checked for signs of damage for example breaks or cracks. If they cannot be repaired or cleaned they should be discarded.

Clean toys and equipment should be stored in a clean container or clean cupboard.

At this time soft modelling materials and play dough where used should be for individual use only.

### **Cleaning Procedure for 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.
- Some hard plastic toys may be suitable for cleaning in the dishwasher.
- Toys that cannot be immersed in water that is electronic or wind up should be wiped with a damp cloth and dried.
- In some situations toys/equipment may need to be disinfected following cleaning for example: toys/equipment that pupils place in their mouths. Toys/equipment that have been soiled with blood or body fluids or toys where a case of COVID-19 has been identified.
- If disinfection is required: A chlorine releasing disinfectant should be used diluted to a concentration of 1,000ppm available chlorine. The item should be rinsed and dried thoroughly.

Art – Each pupil should have their own set of colouring pencils and/or markers and should not share with other pupils in their class.

Pencil Cases Pupils are asked to provide a school pencil case with school requisites that will remain in school at all times.

Library Policy – Where practical pupils should have their own books. Textbooks that are shared should be covered in a wipeable plastic covering that can be wiped with a suitable household cleaning agent between uses. Pupils should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene after using any shared item.

Shared Sports Equipment – Minimise equipment sharing and clean shared equipment between uses by different people.

Electronics Shared electronic devices such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards will be cleaned between use.

## **7. Hygiene and Cleaning in Schools**



Rolestown NS has arranged for enhanced cleaning of the school. All school settings are cleaned at least once per day.

Rolestown NS will comply with specific advice in relation to school cleaning as set by the HPSC. This advice is to support schools to prevent COVID-19 infections and the enhanced cleaning required in the event of a suspected cases of COVID-19.

Cleaning of the school will be covered in the Covid-19 induction training for all school and cleaning staff.

Rolestown NS setting will be cleaned **once per day**. Staff will clean frequently touched surfaces – door handles, light switches, keyboards, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities twice daily.

All staff will have access to cleaning products and will be required to maintain cleanliness of their own work area.

Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their work area before and after use each day.

All bins are emptied daily, hand towels are disposed in general waste and re-cyclables are placed in designated bins. The caretaker takes the large collection bins to the outdoor bin storage area.

Staff must bring their own cups, plates and cutlery to school for use at lunch time.

### ***Cleaning/Disinfecting rooms where a pupil/staff member with suspected COVID-19 was present***

The room should be cleaned as soon as practicably possible.

Once the room is vacated the room should not be reused until the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry.

Disinfection only works on things that are clean. When disinfection is required it is always as well as cleaning.

Person assigned to cleaning should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household gloves and a plastic apron.

Clean the environment and furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine based product (household bleach).

Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the back of chairs, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids.

Once the room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused.

If a pupil or staff diagnosed with COVID-19 spent time in a communal area like a canteen, play area or if they used the toilet or bathroom facilities, then the areas should be cleaned with household detergent followed by a disinfectant (as outlined in the HPSC interim health advice) as soon as is practically possible.

## **8. Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19**

Staff or pupils should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The following outlines how a school should deal with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

### **Procedure to follow if a pupil displays symptoms of Covid-19 when in school.**

1. Teacher contacts an SNA or an SEN teacher communicate with Ms Ryan or Mrs Bailey if Ms Ryan is not available.
2. Vera rings the parents of the pupil.
3. Ms Ryan (or the person taking care of the pupil) goes to the classroom and says to the class teacher 'Im here to collect XXX their Mum is here to collect them' Ms Ryan wears her mask when collecting the pupil.
4. The pupil is taken to the designated area. Maintain as much physical distance from the pupil as possible when accompanying a covid-19 suspect. Ms Ryan (or the person taking care of the pupil) opens and closes doors and ensures that the pupil does not touch any surfaces unnecessarily.
5. Ms Ryan hands the pupil over to the parent outlining their symptoms and how long they have been present and actions taken, the parent is advised to contact their GP and follow self-isolation and testing instructions.
6. If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
7. Ms Ryan (or the person taking care of the pupil) will maintain a distance of 2m from the pupil. Tissues will be provided and the pupil will be advised to cover their mouth / nose when sneezing or coughing. Tissues to be disposed in pedal bin.  
**Note** Gloves do not need to be worn as the virus does not pass through skin.
8. After the pupil has been collected wash hands thoroughly and arrange cleaning of isolation area and classroom as outlined in section 7.
9. Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;

### **Procedure if a staff member presents with symptoms of Covid-19 when in school.**

1. Staff Member contacts an SNA or an SEN teacher communicate with Ms Ryan or Mrs Bailey if Ms Ryan is not available.
2. Arrangements are made to supervise class and if the staff member is well enough they go home and contact their GP and follow instructions given for self-isolation and testing.
3. If the staff member is not well enough to go home they will be taken to the isolation room and Ms Ryan or Vera will contact their next of kin. If advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
4. Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved. See section 7
5. Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery;

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 and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

School staff are encouraged to download the HSE COVID-19 tracker app to assist public health for contact tracing both in and out of school.

## **9. Special Educational Needs**

### **Additional considerations for those with Special Educational Needs**

For children with special educational needs (SEN) maintaining physical distancing in many instances will not be practical or appropriate to implement. The focus should therefore be on emphasising that parents/guardians should have a heightened awareness of signs, symptoms or changes in baseline which suggests illness/COVID-19 infection and where symptoms are present children should not attend school. Similarly staff should be aware of their responsibility not to attend work if they develop signs or symptoms

of respiratory illness.

### *Hand hygiene*

Children who are unable to wash their hands by themselves should be assisted to clean their hands using soap and water or a hand sanitiser (if their hands are visibly clean) as outlined previously.

### *Equipment*

Some children have care needs which requires the use equipment (eg for calming / re-focusing).

The following points can guide the development of such cleaning schedule:

- Equipment used to deliver care should be visibly clean;
- Equipment that is used on different children must be cleaned and, if required, disinfected immediately after use and before use by another child.
- If equipment is soiled with body fluids:
  - First clean thoroughly with detergent and water;
  - Then disinfect by wiping with a freshly prepared solution of disinfectant;
  - Rinse with water and dry.

## **10. Staff Duties**

Staff of Rolestown NS have a **statutory obligation** to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties. The cooperation 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 school. All staff 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 School COVID-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined.
- Complete the RTW form before they return to work.
- Must not return to or attend school in the event of the following:
  - # If they live with someone who has symptoms of the virus.
  - # If they have travelled outside of Ireland; in such instances staff are advised to consult and follow latest Government advice in relation to foreign travel.
- Cooperate with any public health personnel for contact tracing purposes and follow any public health advice given in the event of a case or outbreak in the school.
- Undergo any Covid-19 testing that may be required in their school as part of mass or serial testing as advised by Public Health.
- Must inform the principal if there are any other circumstances relating to COVID19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to the workplace.
- Must complete COVID-19 Induction Training and any other training required prior to their return to school.
- Must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices.
- Coordinate 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 GP promptly for further advice if they display any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Not return to or attend school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 under any circumstances.

- If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 whilst within the school facility, they should adhere to the procedure outlined above.
- Keep informed of the updated advice of the public health authorities and comply with same.

## **11. COVID-19 related Absence Management**

The management of a COVID-19 related absence will be managed in line with agreed procedures with the Department of Education.

## **12. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme**

The Department recognises the need for school staff wellbeing and collective self-care. Support for school staff wellbeing will be provided by Department Support Services including the PDST and CSL, as well as by the HSE’s Health Promotion Team. An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for staff in schools. The aim of the Occupational Health Strategy is to promote the health and wellbeing of employees in the workplace, with a strong focus on prevention. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the Employee Assistance Service and the Occupational Health Service. The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is provided by Spectrum.Life under the logo of ‘*Wellbeing Together: Folláinne Le Chéile*’.

Under the EAS, employees have a dedicated free-phone confidential helpline 1800 411 057 available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year providing advice on a range of issues such as wellbeing, legal, financial, mediation, management support etc. Where required, short-term counselling is available to employees and their families (over the age of 18 years and living at home). A bespoke wellbeing portal and app which offers access to podcasts and blogs on topics around wellbeing and mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition is also available. In addition online cognitive behavioural therapy is provided. As part of the services provided by Spectrum.Life a Mental Health Promotion Manager is available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma and improve mental health literacy and to increase engagement with the service. They will also be providing a series of webinars and presentations to promote staff wellbeing in schools as schools reopen and during the upcoming school year.

### **Review and Ratification**

This policy was drafted by the Board of Management, Principal and Deputy Principal of Brighde Naofa / Rolestown National School in August 2020. This policy is a live document meaning it may be updated in line with HSE and DES guidelines.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson of Board of Management**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**School Principal**



## **APPENDIX 1 Rolestown National School COVID-19 Policy Statement**

Rolestown National School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and a safe learning environment for all our pupils. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The BOM and all school staff 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 staff
- provide up to date information to our staff and pupils 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
- agree with staff, a worker representative who is easily identifiable to carry out the role outlined in this plan
- inform all staff and pupils of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the school to facilitate physical distancing as appropriate in line with the guidance and direction of the Department of Education
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- ensure staff engage with the induction / familiarisation briefing provided by the Department of Education
- implement the agreed procedures to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school
- provide instructions for staff and pupils to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during school time
- implement cleaning in line with Department of Education advice

All school staff will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Lead Worker Representative(s), who will be supported in line with the agreement between the Department and education partners.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rolestown National School

### Return to Work Form

This form must be completed by staff in advance of returning to work.

If the answer is Yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to work.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: Brighde Naofa (Rolestown National School)

Name of Principal: Ms Ann Ryan      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Questions	YES	NO
1.	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, difficulty breathing, loss or change in your sense of smell or taste now or in the past 14 days?		
2.	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3	Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?		
4	In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19?		
5	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time?		
6	Have you been advised to restrict your movements at this time?		
7	Have you been advised to cocoon at this time? Note: if you are at very high risk (extremely vulnerable) from COVID-19 you may be advised to cocoon.		

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test and have not been advised to restrict my movements.

Please note: The school is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and this data will be held securely in line with our retention policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix 3: Arrangements for a visit to Rolestown National School by NEPS psychologists and other external professionals.**

(External Professionals include Educational Psychologists, Speech and language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and DES Inspectors, HSE School team).

1. All visits by External professionals to Rolestown National School must be organised by prior arrangement with the principal Ms Ann Ryan.
2. The External Professional will be informed of school procedures on entering the school building.
3. A designated teacher will meet him / her to reduce contacts.
2. The External Professional will work meet in a designated room which will be ventilated, cleaned in advance and suitable for maintaining at least 1 metre distance from others.
3. The External Professional will be required to wear a face mask and follow protocols for handwashing and use of hand sanitiser.
4. A bottle of sanitiser gel will be available in the designated meeting room. A portable Perspex screen will also be available for use if necessary.
5. All persons who meet with the External Professional must sanitise their hands on entry to the designated meeting room.
6. Seating / furniture will be arranged to meet with 1m distance requirements between pupil and adult and 2m between adults.
7. Sanitising spray and paper towels are available for wiping down furniture in the designated room, after each individual has used it, according to guidelines. Paper towels to be disposed of in waste bin provided.
8. Sanitising wipes must be used to clean equipment that will be handled, such as blocks. Wipes will be disposed of in the waste bin in the designated room.
9. Pupils will provide and use their own equipment (ie pencils, pens).
10. The External Professional will discuss with the SEN co-ordinator the most appropriate PPE equipment to wear prior to each individual case based on the pupil so that the assessment can be undertaken safely without impinging on the quality of the interaction with the pupil.



11. All persons who meet the External Professional have to declare themselves Covid-19 free and non-symptomatic, to the best of their knowledge. If completing direct casework, a Covid-19 health screen for the student/parent/teacher must be completed. (*NEPS Health Check form attached below*)
  
12. Prior to setting up a meeting with an External Professional the Professional together with the Principal or Deputy Principal will confirm a maximum number of attendees to be present at a meeting based on the space available to facilitate social distancing.
  
13. The time spent at meetings will be pre-arranged to support reduced contact time
  
14. Rolestown NS and the External Professional will keep a contact tracing log of all meetings whilst in the school building. (*NEPS Contact Tracing Log attached below*)

All of the above measures are considered important to ensure the safety of our school community and external professionals.

## Contact Tracing Log for Psychologists working in Schools

<b>Name of Psychologist</b>	
<b>Name and address of School/Setting</b>	
<b>Roll Number</b>	
<b>Contact Person in School/Setting for queries</b>	
<b>Contact phone number/email address for queries</b>	
<b>Date of Visit</b>	
<b>Time in / out</b>	

<b>Who the psychologist met (separate line required for each person or name of class group)</b>	<b>Length of time spent with each person/group in the school</b>

Retain this log for 30 days to facilitate contact tracing

## Health Check for Persons engaging in Direct Casework

*This form is only required when the school (or host organisation) has not already completed a health-check for persons with whom the psychologist will be working.*

**Name:**

**Place, Time and Date of visit:**

Please complete all of the following questions:

NOTE: When working with the psychologist, you must adhere to all public health procedures regarding infection control, which will include social distancing, hand washing / sanitising, and coughing/sneezing etiquette, as well as any other measures as recommended by public health authorities.

	Questions	YES	NO
1.	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu like symptoms or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste now or in the past 14 days?		
2.	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3.	Are you a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days (i.e. less than 2 metres for more than 15 minutes altogether in 1 day)?		
4.	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate or to cocoon at this time?		
5.	Have you been advised by your doctor that you are in the very high risk group? If yes, please liaise with your doctor and line manager re return to work.		
6.	In the past 14 days, have you been in contact with someone who has visited an affected region OR anyone known to have Covid-19		
7.	In the last 14 days, have you visited any countries outside Ireland (excluding Northern Ireland?)		
Please provide details below of any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the above, which may need to be considered to allow your safe return to work.			
By signing below, I confirm that the above information is true.			
Signed:		Date:	

*Please note: The organisation is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely in line with our retention policy.*



## Appendix 5 Contact Tracing Log

<b>Name of School</b>	Rolestown National School		<b>School Contact Person</b>	Ms Ann Ryan	
<b>Address of School</b>	Rolestown East, Swords, Co Dublin.		<b>For Queries only: Phone No</b>	01 8404130	
			<b>Email</b>	principal.rolestown.ns@gmail.com	
<b>Name of Visitor</b>					Was the visit pre-arranged with the Principal? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Date of Visit</b>	___ / ___ / _____	<b>Time</b>	<b>Entry to school</b> _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Exit from School</b> _____ am <input type="checkbox"/> pm <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Visitor Status</b>	Contractor <input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please complete: _____		
<b>Contact details of visitor</b>	Company Name (if applicable)				
	Address				
	Contact No.		Email Address		
	Reason for Visit				
<b>Who the visitor met (separate line required for each person the visitor met)</b>					
<b>Name of Person visited</b>				<b>Length of time spent with each person in the school</b>	

