

8th October 2021

Dear RPS Families,

Welcome to Term 4 and may we start by sharing just how impressed we were to see how smoothly and confidently our students returned to learning from home routines this week. It never ceases to amaze us just how flexible, adaptable, and creative our students are.

The current COVID-19 vaccinations rates are encouraging, and we cannot help but get excited that some of our life experiences from pre-covid 2021 are closer to returning.

Just yesterday the staggered return to face-to-face learning, was revised and updated by the NSW Premier.

The revised dates are:

Monday 18th October – Preschool, Kindergarten, Year 1

Monday 25th October – Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5, Year 6

Once year groups return to face-to-face learning there will be no learning from home grids or explicit online teaching sessions. If you have concerns regarding your child returning to school, please contact our school office.

Currently at RPS executive staff are busy planning our staggered return as we anticipate a move from our current Level 4 Learning from Home into Level 3+ Staggered Return. Together we are working to put procedures in place to support children and staff returning safely to school.

Our school will:

- only have vaccinated staff onsite from Monday 18th October 2021.
- return students to face-to-face learning in-line with the Premier's and NSW Health advice.
- minimise interaction and contact within and across student cohorts where possible and practical.
- limit staff interactions with physical distancing, staggered break times and provide the option of an outdoor teacher eating space for meal breaks.
- stagger access where possible to school facilities and shared spaces, including canteens and playground equipment.
- stagger pick-up times to support parents physically distancing during peak traffic times.
- require staff to wear masks indoors and outdoors.
- have extensive cleaning regimes throughout the school day, targeting high touch areas.

While it is not mandatory for primary students to wear masks, we strongly encourage the wearing of masks for our students when inside the classrooms. Please label your child's mask.

Return to Face-to-Face Learning Survey

On Monday 11th October, a return to school survey will be emailed to all Preschool to Year 1 families. Please complete the stage appropriate survey for each child in your family by Wednesday 4pm.

On Wednesday 4th October a survey will be sent to families with students in Years 2 to 6.

Please return this survey by 3pm on Friday 15th October.

This information is vital to our whole school planning. It will allow us to plan effectively and safely for the return of all students onsite.

Drop-offs and Pick-ups

Morning drop-offs are naturally staggered. Students are welcome to arrive at school between 8:25 – 8:55am. Students will have designated morning play areas to minimise contact across cohorts. Students are not to enter school grounds before 8:25am unless going to before school care as there is no playground supervision before this time.

Elizabeth Street and Regent Street gate will be open to support students entering and exiting the school.

Parents and carers are asked to not congregate at the school gates, to wear masks and to maintain physical distancing. There will be a teacher at Regent Street and Elizabeth Street gate from 8:25am to support K-6 students independently entering the school. Both school gates will be locked at 9am. If students arrive late, parents will need to call the school office and wait outside Elizabeth Street gate.

If it is safe to do so and you are able to stay inside your car when dropping off and picking up children, this would be appreciated. Please be aware of the road and traffic signs around our local streets.

To support parents physically distancing, we will be operating a staggered pick-up time.

Please make sure your child knows if they are to exit via Elizabeth Street, Regent Street, go to after school care or travel home on a bus. Teachers will walk students from Years K-4 to each gate at the following times and remain with them until they are collected by a parent or carer.

The staggered pick-up times are:

Kindergarten – 2:30pm

Year 1 and Year 2 – 2:40pm

Year 3 and Year 4 – 2:50pm

Year 5 and Year 6 – 2:55pm

Again, we request your support by maintaining physical distancing from others and arriving on time.

Health

Staff and students must not attend work or school if unwell, even with mild symptoms of COVID-19. Any person with any COVID-19 symptoms must be sent home and not return to school unless:

- they have a negative COVID-19 test result and are symptom free or
- they have isolated for 10 days, when no medical certificate is available.

In circumstances where children or staff have other medical reasons for recurrent symptoms, a letter from their GP is sufficient to negate the requirement for a negative test.

Parents and Non-Essential Visitors

Parents should remain outside our school grounds and adhere to mask-wearing requirements. If you require support from our school office, please call 9627 1517 and wait outside Elizabeth Street gate for one of our school administration team or teaching staff to support your needs. Please be aware that the office is a busy place, and they cannot always get to the school gate immediately.

Exceptions for parents entering school grounds will exist for Preschool. Preschool parents please read carefully the preschool drop off and pick up procedures section below.

Non-essential visitors are not permitted on school sites. Workers supporting infrastructure development and maintenance of school grounds are permitted.

Any visitor or parent who enters the school ground, regardless of the time or duration of stay, MUST complete the QR code sign in process and wear a mask. This QR code will be located at all school gates and staff may request to see your check-in to ensure you have followed this procedure. This information supports contact tracing, should we be required to do so.

Preschool Parents

It is mandatory for all preschool students to be signed in and out of preschool. The preschool entrance and exit gate for parents will be located at Elizabeth Street and Regent Street gate. Preschool starts at 8:55am and concludes at 2:55pm.

The preschool entrance and exit gates will be open for one fully vaccinated parent per child to enter from 8:40 – 9:00am and 2:30 – 3:00pm. Any late arrivals, parents will need to contact our school office and wait outside Elizabeth Street gate.

Preschool parents are carers must daily QR code in, wear masks and go directly to the preschool. Please follow the signs when entering and exiting the preschool and do not congregate with other families or staff. If you have older children in Years K-6, please meet them outside the school gates, do not wait on school grounds.

Return of Technology

As student cohorts return from Monday 18th October 2021, we are asking families to also return technology borrowed from the school. In a clearly labelled bag with students name and class, please place the laptop and charger. At Regent Street and Elizabeth Street gates teachers will support students to place their technology into the correct location. All devices will be reimaged.

Uniform Shop

At Level 3+ uniform shops can only operate through an online service. Please complete all order forms, with full payment. A dedicated staff member will arrange the distribution of these items. Do not remove tags from clothing until you have tried on the items and are happy with the fit. Recently purchased uniforms with attached tags, can be exchanged for other sizes if they do not fit correctly.

Year 6 Farewell

Further advice around large gatherings will be provided in Term 4 from NSW Health and Department of Education. Currently our Year 6 teachers are busy organising different options

in hope of providing our Year 6 students with a farewell that meets COVID-safe restrictions and allows them to mark this special milestone with some fun!

Other Activities not permitted at Level 3+

- Interschool sport
- Scripture
- Onsite community events
- Assemblies
- Excursions and camps
- Choir and band
- P&C activities or onsite meetings
- Onsite transition and orientation programs

If you require any further details, please do not hesitate to click on this link to get the latest update. This link contains information about the roadmap for return and levels of restrictions for schools.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families>

Thank you for your ongoing support during this challenging time. It is great to know we can count on our community to support us in planning a safe return to school.

We look forward to returning to face-to-face learning very soon.

In kindness,
Sam Gillard
Deputy Principal

Michael Cruickshank
Principal