

## **Preparing for our Back-to-School Re-Entry 2020-2021**

Royal Oak School is committed to providing a safe, healthy and supportive environment to our students. At this time, and having reviewed the Ministry of Education reopening plan (updated July 2, 2020), we anticipate that Royal Oak will reopen full-time in September onsite and face-to-face with protocols and policies in place to safeguard the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff and families.

Our plans will continue to remain flexible and ready to pivot in anticipation of new developments in the COVID-19 pandemic, including the possibility of easing or tightening of safety restrictions throughout the school year.

It is important to state: **Live school has risk**. This is something we can't remove but will mitigate to the best of our ability. This is a draft policy that will be modified depending on new public health guidelines, the status of the disease, and recommendations from experts.

Remote learning accommodations will be made for students who have a medical situation or family circumstance that might make returning to school difficult or imprudent. We ask that parents who will request remote learning for their child/ren due to health concerns be in touch immediately with school principal, Julia Murray.

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## **1. Guidelines for School Re-Entry**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students, faculty, staff, and families is our highest priority.
- Government Pandemic Emergency Orders will continue to be strictly followed and Ministries of Public Health and Education guidelines followed.
- We will continue to provide exemplary instruction and teaching.
- There will be continual analysis of re-entry approaches (i.e. schools in other provinces and other countries that have reopened, Sick Kids recommendations) to help determine best practices for our own re-entry.
- We will have ongoing identification and mitigation of potential risks as much as possible, while acknowledging the limitations of attempting to create a perfectly safe and zero risk environment.
- We will provide clear communication of protocols.
- Our most important guide is Public Health - we are educators and not doctors and their advice is of utmost importance. We will consult with Public Health in regards to our re-entry plan and protocol as they evolve - they will be our “guiding star” through this process.

## **2. Student Wellbeing and Connection**

- We believe that in-person school attendance, connection with classmates and strong relationships with teachers support the wellbeing of all students.
- We will sensitively address the social-emotional needs of all students.



- Our Resource Teacher, in tandem with classroom teachers, will continue to provide support to students who require extra academic support.

### **3. Scheduling Plan & Cohorting**

We are very fortunate that the physical space in the Royal Oak building and our small school size allow us to bring all students to school five days a week while cohorting. All School entry protocols will be modified to create a staggered entry and dismissal. Detailed information about new class spaces and entry will be shared in August.

Our planning includes drawing on the key idea from the Ministry of Education: cohorting. Cohorting means that the children in each classroom and split grade will be kept together in that small group all day, with no overlap at any time indoors with all Royal Oak students at once. At all times possible, students will be only with their own homeroom teacher and our Speciality teacher, and the group will be consistent.

Cohorting will minimize the number of students and teachers that any individual comes into contact with and maintains consistency in those contacts as much as possible.

- Due to the nature of our small class sizes and double classroom layout for each grade group, cohorting is inherent in our programming. After “live” lessons, students will work in their alternate classroom with supervision and in their own spaces.
- The second wing of our school space will be open for the 2020/2021 school year to aid in cohorting. The lower grades will enter school up the ramp off Byron St. each morning, and be in the original school wing for classes. The upper grades will enter and exit the building up the main stairs at 176 Wellington St., and attend their classes in the second wing.
- Only one speciality teacher will see all children in the school - our French, Music, Art and Drama teacher. This teacher will keep 6 feet of distance whenever possible, and wear protective gear such as gloves and a mask.

### **4. Grade Teacher Staff List**

We are fortunate during this time of change to maintain consistent staffing across the grades:

Classroom teachers\*

- Laureen Dennis
- Kirsten Koyle
- Brittany Nyenhuis
- Derek Stephenson



French, Music, Drama, Art - Mireille Salem  
Resource Teacher - Campbell Filer  
Administrative Assistant - Megan Hodess  
Founding Head of School - Gianna Dritsacos  
Head of School - Julia Cain Murray

\* Classroom teachers and splits will be determined in August when final enrollment is known.

## **5. General Classroom Delivery Models**

- Plans are underway for our students from JK to Grade 8 to be at school five days a week.
- Any toys and equipment that are shared will be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.
- Students will have their own personal work materials that can be brought home in the event of distance-education.
- Frequent hand-washing will continue to be part of the daily routine including prior to snack and lunch time.
- Lunch and snacks will be eaten in the classroom and students will be outside for recess and teachers will facilitate learning outdoors when possible.

## **6. School Gatherings**

- There will be no large, in-person gatherings.
- We will continue to find ways to come together as a community and build whole school connections through virtual assemblies and celebrations, and outdoors whenever possible.

## **7. Remote Learning**

The Royal Oak School is focused on providing exemplary education to our students. We will continue to provide a caring environment that promotes security for every student, based on relationships of trust, caring and compassion between teachers and students. Our teaching practices and learning opportunities are anchored in inquiry, developmental readiness, and emerging research.

Should a second wave of COVID-19 require us to return to full remote learning at any time during the school year, we are prepared with an updated remote learning plan.



In addition, a parallel remote learning program will be available throughout the year to support any children who are unable to attend school in person due to illness, travel or suspected exposure to COVID-19.

## **8. First Week of School**

We are devising a re-entry schedule that includes an opportunity for all students to become familiar with and practice new routines and protocols in the first week of school (September 9-11, 2020). Further details for the first week will be provided soon.

## **9. Outdoor Time and Physical Education**

- We are fortunate to have many outdoor spaces which are ideal for outdoor learning/play. In addition to the school yard, Fort George and Memorial Park are just minutes away for our use.
- Our plan is to ensure that students have outdoor learning time whenever possible in addition to recess play in the yard.
- The Ministry of Education guidelines recommend that physical distancing within a cohort is not required during outdoor activities such as recess, however physical distancing must be maintained between cohort groups.

\*\*\*At this time, we will not be traveling to the NOTL Community Centre for Gym/Library as we have in the past. Phys. Ed will be taught by Derek Stephenson, outdoors, and we are continuing to look for a close by indoor option in case of inclement weather and to maintain consistency in our programming.

## **10. Health & Safety Protocols**

### Labels and Signs

- Signage (hand washing and sanitizing; prevention and precautions) and floor labelling (directing flow) will be utilized throughout the building.

### Arrival and Dismissal

- Each morning at Royal Oak, families will be asked to pre-screen kids at home to ensure they are well, have no fever and are not displaying any symptoms of illness such as: fatigue/tiredness, sore stomach or diarrhea, cough/runny nose/sneezing, or a rash. Any child with any of these symptoms must be kept home and parents must report this illness to the office.



- Each child will be screened for wellness upon arrival at school to confirm that they have not been in contact with any known COVID-19 cases in the last 14 days, and do not have symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, fever (temperature will be taken with a non-touch thermometer) or difficulty breathing.
- No child or staff member will be allowed to come to school sick. They must stay home until all symptoms have ceased, and when necessary, after a negative COVID 19 test for persisting illness. All families who take a child home sick or have illness in the household will need to contact Public Health for screening and guidance. We encourage all families to proactively test their children for COVID-19 if they are showing any symptoms.
- Visitor access, including all parents, will be limited to advance appointments only and visitors will be required to undergo screening before entry.
- Separate entrance ways will be used for students to aid distancing and ease of traffic flow. Students from the lower years will enter up the ramp off of Byron Street. Students in the upper years will enter from the main entrance off of Wellington (directly across from St. Vincent de Paul Church).
- The school will be implementing staggered arrival and pickup times to limit contact among small groups and with other students' guardians. Family-specific drop off times will be communicated in August, but will be 8:25am or 8:35am, and 3:35pm or 3:45pm.
- All faculty and staff will be required to complete self-assessments and temperature checks at home before departing for school.

## 11. Cleaning and Sanitization

- Hands will be sanitized at the door before entering the building.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on the wall outside of each classroom for children to use before entering.
- Hand sanitizer will be available inside classrooms for children to use after each activity, before/after touching their face, and prior to leaving the classroom.
- Children will be supervised washing their hands 5 times each day (before snack, after recess, before lunch, after lunch recess and in the afternoon at 2:30pm).
  - Children will be taught proper handwashing etiquette and have antibacterial soap available in their bathrooms for use. Signs will be posted reminding children to wash their hands frequently, as well as suggestions on how to do so properly.
- Disposable disinfectant wipes will be available in each classroom so that commonly used areas can be wiped down by individuals (teachers, older students) before each use.
  - All toys and equipment used will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Routine sanitizing of facilities and high touch surfaces will take place throughout the day.
  - Daily sanitization will occur, in conjunction with deep regular cleaning.
  - All surfaces will be wiped down in classrooms and shared areas daily with hydrogen peroxide and/or >60% ethanol (as recommended by the CDC in environments with young children).



- In addition, frequently touched surfaces will be disinfected two additional times daily (for example, doorknobs, water fountain knobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, electronic devices, and tabletops).
- Doors will be kept open to classrooms and all garbage cans will be open for easy disposal.
- A strict “no sharing” of food, water bottles or cutlery policies will be in place, with students needing to bring their own water bottle and utensils necessary for all food items.

## **12. Air flow and Use of UV light**

- Teachers will have a fan in each classroom and windows open whenever possible to promote extra ventilation.
- UVC lights will be used in each classroom. These emit UVC and ozone to aid in killing germs. They will be used overnight each day when the children have gone home for the day as an extra precaution.

## **13. Lunch Program**

- Recess snacks and lunch will be eaten in the classroom.
- Our monthly Pizza Lunches will still be held, but reusable plates and cups will need to be used to cut down on germ spread and lunches will be served only by staff wearing face masks and gloves.

## **14. Monitoring of Student Health While at School**

- We will be implementing a new guideline and protocols for health screening and monitoring, including when and how long to stay home, and when it is safe to return after illness. Royal Oak families will receive detailed information in August once Public Health has shared with us their final recommendations.
- Students who are ill or are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to remain home under the care and supervision of their parents.
- During the school day, should a student exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, parents will be informed and the student will be isolated with supervision until picked up. At this time, a wellness checklist will be provided to parents with symptoms of COVID-19 and the parents will be required to have approval from Public Health and a clear bill of health with no symptoms, before return.
- We are obliged to report suspected cases and contact-tracing information to our local public health unit.



## 15. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- All teaching staff and faculty are required to wear a face covering while at school.
- Although subject to change based on recommendations from Public Health and input from our community of families, students, faculty, and staff will be required to wear face coverings indoors.
- Current research suggests that although face coverings don't eliminate the spread of COVID-19 they play an important role in reducing the spread.
- The school is currently recommending face shields, in lieu of masks, as children are less likely to fiddle with them and can still effectively use non-verbal communication; however, any face covering that covers at least the child's mouth and nose would be permissible.
- If a face shield is used, it should wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend to below the chin.
- Exemptions will be allowed, including those for medical conditions that make it difficult to wear a face covering.
- The school will provide a face shield for each student, however, it is recommended that parents look to find a face shield that is comfortable for their specific child. Face shields attached to hats or visors are permitted.
- Parents are responsible for the safe use and cleanliness of the face covering each day (which should be cleaned and disinfected daily) though teachers and all staff will help teach and support children in their use at school.

## 16. Physical distancing

- Children will never be in a group larger than 15 students indoors. This class size is optimal for helping to promote social distancing and reduce the spread of disease.
- Classroom furniture will be arranged so that no more than 2 students will be at any shared table and plexiglass/other physical dividers will be used where 6 feet of space cannot be maintained
- We will remind students of the need to keep their distance and the flow of movement in the school, while being sensitive to the fact that within a cohort, children, especially the younger children, likely will at times be unable to always be 6 feet apart from each other and may require their teacher to be within 6 feet to assist in their education and care. Wherever possible social distancing will be enforced.
- Assemblies, when held, will be held outdoors with six feet between students. These will be held once a week on Fridays rather than every morning, and classes will do their own "Oh Canada" and Land Acknowledgements rather than as a whole school.
- Recess and Lunch breaks will be staggered so that smaller groups of students are outside at recess and eating at one time. Students in the lower years will have their recess break from 10:00-10:30am and the upper years from 10:30am-11:00am, and





social distancing between and within the classes will be maintained at all times. Weather permitting, lunch breaks will be outside, with each class physically separated into their own areas

## **17. Travel Restrictions**

- Should families be making plans to travel during the summer or the school year, please be aware and adhere to national and international travel restrictions. At this time, anyone who is travelling internationally must self-quarantine for 14 days upon return to Canada. Please plan accordingly.

## **18. Clubs & Aftercare**

- Royal Oak has historically run 4 days a week of after school clubs. These are important to us and to the children, and we are sad to share that in person clubs will be unavailable for the time being due to the need to maintain social distancing between grade cohorts.
- If Aftercare is required by a family, please let us know immediately as there will need to be consistency in the aftercare arrangements required by families and we will do our best to arrange a safe system to support this need. After care is \$9/hr and \$7/hr for a second sibling.

## **19. Summer Communications & Parent Handbook**

Our School Re-Entry Task Force is currently developing the 2020-2021 Parent Handbook. It will be shared with parents in August and will provide updated detailed information.

## **20. Parent Information Morning**

Please plan to join Head of School, Julia Murray and homeroom teacher, Kirsten Koyle, for a coffee and conversations morning on Thursday, July 30, 2020 at 10:30am. This morning is intended as a follow-up to the information provided here. Please email any specific questions you have in advance to Julia Murray ([juliacmurrayroyaloak@gmail.com](mailto:juliacmurrayroyaloak@gmail.com)), and ask live in our chat as well. Please attend understanding that we are still living with a number of unknowns and as a result, we may not have answers to all of your questions but we will note them and share the answers to you as soon as possible.



## Details for Zoom invite for “Coffee Morning”

Julia Murray is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Royal Oak Coffee Morning

Time: Jul 30, 2020 10:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84100867956?pwd=ZDNKanJLakNUZWdZMHZTMjJXZTZpZz09>

Meeting ID: 841 0086 7956

**Passcode: ROCSfamily**

One tap mobile

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+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

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+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 841 0086 7956

Passcode: 7582141310

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84100867956?pwd=ZDNKanJLakNUZWdZMHZTMjJXZTZpZz09>

