



# St. Charles Catholic School Re-opening Plan for the 2020/21 School Year

## Manitoba's Restoring Safe Schools

Updated: July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### Planning for Re-opening

Schools will reopen for teachers and staff on September 2, 2020, with students returning on September 8, 2020. While Manitoba is targeting a return to in-class learning for all in the fall, school divisions and independent schools will need to prepare for the following three scenarios.

1. In-class learning resumes for all, with near-normal conditions.
2. In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.
3. Remote learning from home, with limited use of school facilities.

Planning considerations and conditions of preparedness outlined in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#) will need to be planned for before schools re-open. The purpose of this template is to facilitate communication between school divisions and funded independent schools, Manitoba Education and Public Health to ensure planning clearly and effectively addresses **public health requirements** and **educational priorities**.

The goal is for all students to resume in-class learning in the fall and that schools be ready to adapt to changing public health conditions at any time, based on public health advice, to ensure the safety of students and staff.

### **Planning Considerations**

This plan has been created based on the current information provided by both Public Health, as well as the government. It is subject to change, and must be seen as a flexible plan for the 2020-2021 school year. In creating this plan, the government document, [Welcoming Our Students Back, Restoring Safe Schools, June 25, 2020](#) was used as a resource.

St. Charles Catholic School will stay up to date and ensure that these planning considerations follow Public Health guidelines, and will monitor staff, students, and parents, to make sure that all guidelines are being complied with.

## **School Day Structure/Learning Plans for the 3 Scenarios**

### **Scenario 1- In-class learning resumes for all; near normal, with public health measures in place, in-class learning resumes for all K-12 students.**

- Students would return to classrooms with near normal conditions, and follow all Public Health measures while in-class learning takes place. Staggered recesses, assigned entrances/exits, washrooms, etc. would all be put in place as new protocols. Extra-curricular activities would not be offered at the start of the school year, until more direction is given from both Public Health and the Dept. of Education.
- Students will work in their classrooms as per usual, in their grade level. Lunch, Phys. Ed, Music, Computer Lab, and French, will all be structured so that students are not overlapping with each other, but still able to utilize those speciality classrooms according to timetables.
- Recess will be staggered for all grades, as will lunch hour.
- Staff and students will remain at home if they are not feeling well.
- Limit both parents and non-essential visitors coming into the school.
- Students will not use water fountains, only water bottle re-fills, or water cooler options.
- Cleaning of washrooms and high touch surfaces will become daily protocol, and done consistently.
- Teachers will teach students about personal hygiene practices, as per our standard procedure at the start of every school year.

### **Scenario 2-In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures. In-class learning resumes, five days per week, for students in Kindergarten-Gr. 8. Public health orders and guidance**

- St. Charles Catholic School is a K-8 independent school. Our Middle Years students reside in 1 side of the school, and our Kindergarten students in their own separate building, Grs. 1-2 have their own hallway, as do our Grs. 3-5 students.
- Cohorts: we will focus on these areas to keep social distancing from other cohorts, as well as structure our movement time within cohorts.
- Increased sanitization and hand hygiene, (multiple times per day).
- Enforce strict staggered entrance/exit procedures.
- Divide larger classes into smaller group sizes if necessary.
- Increase social distancing signage if necessary.
- Possible timetabling changes if needed to accommodate cohorts.

- Clear communication to parents, students and staff regarding Public Health protocols.
- Personal hygiene practices taught/discussed and enforced.

### **Scenario 3-Limited Use of Schools**

**In-class learning is suspended. Teacher led remote learning for all Kindergarten to Gr. 12 students.**

- When St. Charles Catholic School implemented the remote learning strategy in the spring, K-5 classroom teachers were using Google classroom websites to do remote learning with their students. Middle Years used both Edmodo/Weebly. All specialists integrated their sites with the classroom teachers. All teaching staff also incorporated either Zoom or Microsoft Teams to do classroom learning/wellness checks/meetings with their students. We would continue with this format, but are switching our Middle Years teachers over to using Microsoft Teams to develop consistency amongst the Middle Years, thereby making it easier for parents to use their sites. The hope would be that if we combined the two models, we would have teachers teaching in the classroom, while recording their lessons, to be shared with students who are learning from home.
- Teachers will focus on Numeracy and Literacy for the most part, with other subject areas to be integrated where possible.
- For the most part, all of our students do have access to technology if remote learning is required. If any of our students are struggling with this, staff will provide home work packages as well, which some of our students took advantage of this past spring.
- Technology accommodations will be considered on a case by case basis for student learning.
- School will be cleaned and sanitized thoroughly. Use/follow our June 2020 soft re-opening plan, focusing on either 1:1 or small group interaction with the teacher, if we are able to. (Limited Use of Facilities guidelines)

## **Learning Preparedness** **Specialty Programming**

### **Technology**

- Our school has implemented/purchased Microsoft 365, paying for bridging this past spring to get the program up and running for our community. We may have to look at purchasing another program, (ie) Seesaw, if remote learning is implemented on a long-term basis again this upcoming school year.
- Consideration may be made regarding streaming classroom lessons for students who are unable to attend school due to illness for an extended period of time.

### **Music Education**

- My Music teachers will follow guidelines set out for best music protocol, as well as do more disinfecting in their perspective classrooms. My choral specialist has also adjusted her choral program to include activities other than singing.
- Any instruments used in the Kindergarten to Gr. 2 Music classes, (ie) xylophones, will be disinfected between classes.
- All of our Grs. 3-8 students have their own instruments, (ie) violins, so sharing will not be an issue.

### **Physical Education**

- For Physical Education, my specialists will work within the guidelines mandated, will take Phys. Ed. classes outside whenever possible, as well as encourage social distancing wherever possible.
- Usually our Grs. 4-8 students are required to change for Phys. Ed. classes, but this would not be implemented at the start of school until everyone is more comfortable with being back, as well as implementing the protocols from Public Health.
- Toys/manipulatives/gym equipment, etc. will be used in cohort groups, and cleaned on a regular basis.
- Students will not be allowed to bring toys from home to play with during Phys. Ed., at recess, or in after school care.

### **Assemblies/School Masses/School Gatherings**

- Large group gatherings such as assemblies and School Masses would not be held as an entire school community. Having smaller group meetings/activities would be implemented where possible.

## **Extra-curricular Activities/Sports**

- At St. Charles Catholic School, we offer a variety of option for our students, and as long as public health orders can be maintained, we will offer extra-curricular activities in small group situations. All sports activities, will be reintroduced as we are able, and according to the mandate in place at the given time.
- We have an after school care program (BASC), which offers different extra-curricular programming. The BASC Director has already started planning activities which could easily incorporate social distancing/safety protocols. Also, limiting the number of students involved in these extra-curricular activities will be put into place. At this time, we will follow protocols and guidelines mandated regarding sports programming, (ie) sports teams.
- Our Middle Years students take electives within our school 1x per week each term. Adjustments to the electives would have to be made, but it would be workable, just a different type of planning for teachers of these electives. (ie) cooking, outdoor education, multiculturalism, leadership, boxing, recreational skills, Technokids, creative arts.

## **School Transportation**

- All of our students are driven by parents, and a handful of our students take city transit. We do not have school buses.
- Students would not participate in field trips at the beginning of the school year. We would look further into the possibility of school field trips as the school year went on, depending on the recommendations at that time.

## **Blended Learning**

- There is a great possibility that there will be students who must remain home for short or long periods of time during the pandemic.
- Teachers are able to send and receive assignments electronically. The school will look at a possible loan system in place for families that need devices for their children to use during remote learning.
- If internet connectivity is a persistent issue, teachers and administration will strategize to find alternatives for families.
- Teachers will also prepare learning packages as needed for pick-up or delivery.
- Frequent email and phone communication with students and parents will be in place to ensure engagement in remote learning. This will be facilitated by the classroom teacher, but may also require involvement from support staff and specialist teachers.

## **School Staff Preparedness**

### **Personal Risk Factors**

- Personal risk factors/medical accommodations for staff and teachers will be handled on a case by case basis, as per usual. Staff mental wellness will be observed, and monitored as well.
- Staff members will have to remain at home if they are ill, have any COVID-19 symptoms, or display any respiratory symptoms.
- Staff members may also have to remain at home if a close family member is in isolation, or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a staff member becomes ill while at school, they will immediately report to the Principal. The staff member's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected immediately. The Principal will arrange coverage and the staff member will be sent home.
- To date I have not had any staff who are not able to be at school due to medical accommodations. If this does occur, I will work with my Board to accommodate that staff member.
- Staff will continue to follow the school's policy of contacting Administration, (Principal, Vice Principal), if they are unable to be at school. Lesson plans will still be the responsibility of the teacher.

### **Staff Well-being**

During this COVID-19 Pandemic, staff have already experienced a lot of stress, physical and emotional fatigue. Monitoring staff mental health is a priority as the new school year begins, especially depending on which scenario is mandated.

- Staff have access to resources through Blue Cross if need be (EAP).
- Staff have access to spiritual support through Faith Development sessions, as well as 1:1 contact with a parish priest.

### **Recovery Learning**

- Recovery learning needs have already been identified in student report card comments this past June.
- Teachers have already engaged in discussions regarding recovery learning, especially in the areas of numeracy and literacy.
- Supports will be given to all students who need it. Recovery learning discussions among teachers will continue, and both Administration and Resource are involved in the discussions/planning for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Teachers will take time to assess all of their students at the beginning of the new school year, and see where the needs/gaps are.

- Support will be given to teachers from both Administration and Resource if need be. If extra materials are needed for recovery learning, we will look at getting those materials.
- Support staff will also be called upon to help with supporting both teachers and students in the recovery learning process.
- Consistent home/school communication will continue, as per our usual standard.
- Since we are an independent school, we will follow the ideas stated above, and help to re-engage any students who may not have participated in remote learning as much as they should have. Overall, we had very good engagement with our students, and teachers were constantly reaching out if they hadn't heard from a student for a few days. Home/school communication is one of our strengths.

## **Institutional Preparedness-All Scenarios**

### **Pandemic Response Team**

St. Charles Catholic School has established a Pandemic Response Team, which includes Administration, Executive Board members, our Maintenance Manager, IT specialist, as well as other key staff members. This team met regularly during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and will continue to do so prior to the onset of school. All recommendations from the Public Health Office are followed, and plans are built around these recommendations.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

- Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing will continue on a daily basis, as well as encouraging students to wash their hands more frequently. This includes going in and out of their classroom, with visits to the Computer Lab, Music room, etc.
- Daily sanitizing of "high touch" areas will be done. Teachers will also be sanitizing more frequently in their classrooms each day.
- Each classroom has hand sanitizer/cleaning supplies available.
- Our night cleaner will also pay more attention to sanitizing details throughout the school building.
- Our building Maintenance Manager will continue with implementing the daily cleaning and disinfecting.

### **Hand Hygiene**

- As students enter the building, they would hand sanitize.
- Each classroom also has hand sanitizer in it. Students would be encouraged to not only use hand sanitizer, but also to wash their hands frequently.
- If students are moving between classrooms, hand sanitizing would be a requirement.



## **Screening**

- Parents would be informed of home screening measures to be followed prior to sending their child to school, and all communication to parents regarding this, and other plans, would be communicated to parents via email, prior to school starting. The screening tools developed by the Province of Manitoba will be referred to parents to use as a reference. (Manitoba COVID-19 Screening Tool)
- Any students who report to school and are unwell will be sent home immediately. If they are already at school, parents will be called, and students will be kept isolated in a small room until they are picked up. The student's workspace would be disinfected immediately.
- Mandates and information provided by Public Health will be followed.

## **Physical Distancing In and Around the School**

- Signage regarding physical distancing, proper hand hygiene and symptoms of COVID-19 are all around the school, and have been in place since our soft re-opening in June 2020. Signs are also found on the main doors of our school.
- Physical/social distancing will enforced wherever possible. Again, signage has been displayed in multiple areas in the school, and students will be encouraged to move along one side of hallway/staircase, etc., as per usual.
- Classes will experience staggered flow with regards to recess, classroom breaks, lunch, etc.
- Hot lunch will still be provided, but will be pre-ordered/wrapped for individual students. St. Charles Catholic School has always implemented and encouraged no sharing of food between students. This is not new, and will continue to be reinforced.
- Staggered drop off and pick up will be implemented.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

To date, Dr. Roussin, Manitoba's Chief Health Officer, is not recommending masks for children. He is concerned that children will not be able to wear the masks properly, and this may cause a safety risk if children wearing masks accidentally touch their masks and then touch surfaces around them. Parents may choose to have their children wear a mask though, if they feel that it is necessary.

Since masks have not been made mandatory by Public Health at this time, it will not be encouraged as a requirement at the school level.

If a staff member chooses to wear a mask as an extra preventative measure, proper instruction will be given at a PD day prior to school starting, to make sure that PPE is used correctly when worn at school.

St. Charles Catholic School will have a moderate supply of masks available for staff if they feel it necessary to wear one.



### **Limiting Non-Essential Visitors**

- Although parent involvement in our school community is important and widely accepted, provincial guidelines instruct us to limit the number of non-essential visitors in the school for the time being. If possible, parents are asked to conduct school business via email or telephone. Parents may accompany their children to the school doors, but we ask that parents refrain from coming into the school. Our regular Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP), will be on hold as the school year begins.

### **Use of School Facility by Outside Groups**

- On Sundays, some of our classrooms are used for Catechism classes. Catechism staff will be required to also do self-screening, as well as make sure that their students have also done self-screening prior to coming to class. Prior to leaving the classroom being used, Catechism staff will be required to clean and sanitize the workspace.
- We often have people renting out our gym space throughout the school year. However, due to COVID-19 and the new guidelines being put in place, this will not be encouraged, at least at the beginning of the new school year.

### **Nutrition Program/Food Sharing**

- Our school cafeteria prepares hot lunch meals in advance and in-house, and will be pre-packaging all lunches individually. This is already standard procedure at St. Charles Catholic School.
- St. Charles Catholic School has a no share food policy, which are students are well aware of.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips will not be encouraged for the beginning of the school year, and will be brought forward to Administration on a case-by-case basis.

### **Lunch Time/Recess**

Lunch time, as well as recess, would be staggered and students will participate with their cohort groups during these times. Recess is important for all students' health, both physical and mental, so recess will be encouraged. It will be staggered, and cohort groups may be implemented if we are in Scenario 2.

## **Communication**

- All members of the St. Charles Catholic School community will be informed of which scenario we will be implementing, as well as the protocols that have been put into place.
- Having parents informed of the changes/protocols that will be implemented, including not sending their child to school sick, or if their child gets sick at school, having someone who is able to pick them up immediately, will be communicated to all parents via email, as well as in a hard copy. A Principal's Weekly Update is sent out to parents every Friday as well, which keeps parents up to date and current, as well as mass parent emails during the school year when necessary.
- Staff will be updated prior to the school year starting, and will continue to be updated via Staff Meetings, emails, etc. If need be, St. Charles Catholic School also has an emergency phone tree system in place.

## **Attendance and Participation in Remote Learning**

- Students are expected to attend in-class learning unless they are ill or exhibiting symptoms. Families will be required to report any student absences to the school office as per our usual absentee procedure. If remote learning occurs, students will be expected to participate, and school staff will be regularly following up with both students and parents.
- At this point in time, we do not have students with health conditions that are not able to attend class. However, if this did occur, we would work with the family to support that child, just as we have done in the past. Any resources that Manitoba Education had available to help facilitate home/school remote learning for these students would be appreciated.
- Students would participate in remote learning via packaged work, on-line websites, etc.
- As we did this past spring, teachers continuously reached out to both parents and students during remote learning via emails, phone, Zoom meetings and Microsoft Teams meetings. This protocol will continue if students are not in school, and because our school community is close-knit, this is not an unreasonable or unexpected procedure.

## **Illness at School**

- Students who become ill at school will be removed from their classroom, and sent to a small space to wait for their parent or emergency contact to pick them up. Parents will be called immediately, and if parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called.
- The student's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected immediately following their leaving the classroom.

## **Community Mental Health and Well-being**

- Teaching staff will be monitoring the well-being and mental health of their students, and reporting any concerns to Administration.
- Administration will be monitoring the mental health and well-being of the entire school community.
- Resources will be accessed through our school clinicians if necessary.
- Families that are struggling will also be offered support, including clinician support if necessary.
- Continued school clinician support will be available to all students, as well as links to mental wellness supports.
- Middle Years Advisory Groups-small group discussions led by assigned teachers.
- Religion program.
- Daily prayer, announcements, sharing to start the day.
- Administration will be visible at drop-off and pick up times, as well as frequent visitation of classrooms throughout the day.
- Teaching staff will be welcoming students at classroom doorways.

## **Additional questions for Public Health**

- Are there any public health questions that have not been answered yet?
  1. Can staff come to work if they have cold symptoms? (ie) just a runny nose  
If so, would a mask be required?
  2. If our school playground has a play structure, is mandatory cleaning of the structure necessary? If so, how often?
- How can Manitoba Education continue to support school divisions so you have access to timely information to inform decisions?  
Weekly Dept. of Ed. updates either through emails or teleconferences, website updates.
- Do you require any supports in connecting with your local public health team?  
Not at this time.



