

COVID-19: OCS Safe Reopening Plan

July 2, 2020



Orangeville Christian School

We are more than a school; we are a community.

INTRODUCTION

On June 19, 2020, the Ontario government released its safety plan for the resumption of class for the 2020-21 school year, outlining scenarios with respect to how students, teachers and staff can safely return to classrooms in September (News Release: [Ontario Prepares for the Safe Reopening of Schools Plan: Approach to reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year](#)).

Premier Ford was quoted as saying, "This plan takes the best medical advice available from our public health experts to ensure every school board and every school is ready to ensure students continue learning in the safest way possible." The Ontario Government's approach to reopening schools for the 2020-21 school year provides the basis for the Orangeville Christian School Safe Reopening Plan.

The first version of our Safe Reopening Plan has been developed with each of our three school distinctives in mind:



STUDENT CENTRED

Our plan provides a safe, nurturing environment by balancing the risk of direct infection and transmission of COVID-19 with the impact of school closures on our students' physical, mental, and spiritual health. Current evidence and experience support the concept that children can return to school in a carefully structured manner that protects their health and minimizes risks from a public health perspective.



PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Our plan provides students with valuable in-person learning and provides our parents with the opportunity to return to work without requiring daycare services for their children on alternate days or weeks.



DIVERSE CURRICULUM

Our plan facilitates the delivery of our diverse curriculum that will continue to challenge each student to reach his or her God-given potential. Our teachers are committed to meeting provincial expectations outlined in the models below and providing instruction that continues to incorporate our Christian values and beliefs.



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TWO KEY ASPECTS OF HEALTH ADVICE

As we plan to safely reopen our school, we are drawing on two key aspects of health advice: “*distancing*” and “*cohorting*”. “Distancing” refers to the practice of avoiding close personal contact with other individuals and maintaining 2 metres of separation for any prolonged encounters. “Cohorting” refers to minimizing the number of students and teachers any individual comes in contact with and to maintaining consistency in those contacts as much as possible.

THREE SCENARIOS

Based on the two aspects of health advice listed above, OCS will be prepared to offer the following three scenarios during the 2020-21 school year:

- 1. Adapted in-person learning.** Based on public health advice, an adapted delivery model has been designed to allow for physical distancing and cohorts of children. Under this model, we will maintain a limited number of students per classroom (approximately 15) at one time and will adopt timetabling that allows our students to remain in contact only with their classmates and a single teacher for as much of the day as possible. Daily lessons will be delivered in-person and synchronous learning (simultaneous in-person and online education) will not be offered at this time. If a student must remain at home due to illness, daily assignments will be provided by the classroom teacher using the Google classroom platform.
- 2. At home learning.** If the Government of Ontario provides all private schools with a school closure order, we will be prepared to transition quickly to remote education using a slightly modified Learning at Home Plan to the one followed from March 23-June 19, 2020. The Learning at Home Plan will provide a similar online experience for our students and parents with the addition of curriculum expectations for Bible, Social Studies and Science. Evaluation, Assessment and Reporting for grades 1-8 will include Learning Skills and Work Habits as well as letter and number grades for the following subject areas: Bible, Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Expectations from the following subject areas will not be covered: Memory Work, French, Health, Physical Education, Music and Visual Arts. Written instructions and pre-recorded video lessons will be provided daily using the Google classroom platform, and supplies and materials will be distributed weekly following scheduled pick-up and drop-off dates and times.
- 3. Regular in-person learning.** When the Government of Ontario determines it is safe to return to school with classes that reflect our standard class size guidelines, we will be prepared to return to our original pre-COVID plan. Returning to our original plan will result in the increase of some class sizes and a decrease in our total staffing needs.



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Orangeville Christian School will only provide the three scenarios listed above as we do not have the capabilities to offer direct synchronous learning (simultaneous in-person and online education) should parents choose not to send their child(ren) back to school in the fall.

All our students will enjoy an in-person education, or they will all enjoy at home learning.

CLASSROOM SCENARIOS

The chart below outlines anticipated classes and student numbers for the in-person learning scenarios.

ADAPTIVE IN-PERSON		REGULAR IN-PERSON	
Classes	Students	Classes	Students
JK	17	JK	17
SK	14	SK	14
1	14	1	18
1/2	13	2	9
3	14	3	19
3/4	14	4/5	23
5	14	6	12
6	12	7/8	25
7	12	Current Enrolment: 137 Students	
8	13		

- Please Note:**
- The adapted in-person model will require 10 classrooms.
 - The gymnasium and music room will be converted into classrooms.
 - Based on classroom sizes of 15 students, we would have enrolment spaces in 9 classrooms for a total of 15 potential new students.
 - After our current families have confirmed their intention for the 2020-21 school year, new Enrolment Applications will be considered for approval.



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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Teacher Rotation

The most important highlight of the adapted in-person model is the opportunity for students to attend school every day. Classroom timetables will be adapted to allow, to the greatest extent practical, for students to remain in contact with only their classmates and a single teacher for as much of the school day as possible. Subjects including French, art, music and physical education will be taught by classroom teachers and not rotating teachers. Band will not be offered to students in grades 5-8, and physical education classes will follow the current requirements of our local health unit.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

Announcements concerning the availability of sports and extracurricular activities will be made as more information becomes available. As a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Toronto North District of Edvance, these activities will be dependent on the decisions made by these governing organizations in conjunction with input from our local public health unit.

Before and After School Program

Our before and after school program (SHARE) will be offered based on the needs of our families. The expenses of the program must be equal to or otherwise exceed the revenues generated by the participating families for the program to continue throughout the school year. The goal of the program is to support families that require additional child care that matches their specific scheduling needs. Children will be protected by using designated child care spaces in the school that strictly follow all cleaning and sanitation protocols.

Support for Students with Special Needs

Although our Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) will continue to plan and direct the individual needs of our students, one-on-one support during the school day will be provided using Educational Assistants (EA). This support will include both in-class and withdrawal activities. Smaller class sizes will provide our classroom teachers with more one-on-one instructional opportunities and reading intervention programs like our Levelled Learning Intervention (LLI) program will not be offered for the duration of our adapted in-person model. Classroom teachers will continue to respond when intervention is required.

Student Transportation

As a result of physical distancing expectations, the Ministry of Education acknowledges that transportation planning will be challenging due to the reduction in vehicle capacity to accommodate students, which may result in school boards transporting fewer students.



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Currently, OCS contracts with the Wellington Dufferin Student Transportation Services (WDTS) for our bussing services. Our students ride on the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board (DPCSB) buses from points in Orangeville, Dufferin County and parts of Caledon to transfer points at three local catholic schools. Given local circumstances differ across the province, school boards, in partnership with their local health units, will determine what protocols are required, as well as any subsequent impacts to service levels. Any and all information will be made available to our families as soon as it is received.

At this time, we would like to encourage families to consider private transportation by parents and caregivers, where possible, to ease pressure on transportation demand. A survey to assess our specific transportation needs will be distributed once more details become available.

HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The document provided by the Ontario Government provides helpful information and suggestions for private schools. By its own admission, it is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, treatment or legal advice. In the event of any conflict between the document provided by the Ontario Government or our own *Safe Reopening Plan* and any orders or directives issued by the Minister of Health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), we will ensure that the order or directive is followed.

To support our *Safe Reopening Plan*, we will implement protocols to provide for the health and safety of students, families and staff by:

- Following all existing worker health and safety requirements, as outlined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations;
- Following any further direction given by the local medical officer of health;
- Cultivating a working relationship with our local public health unit as we navigate the complex and evolving COVID-19 pandemic environment, planning and reopening schools, and addressing other child health issues that emerge;
- Providing additional training/refresher learning of school staff that includes health and safety protocols;
- Providing clear, age-appropriate communication about COVID-19, including what the school is doing to protect our students and how we will prevent the spread of respiratory infections, as well as what parents can do at home (e.g. reinforce hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, physical distancing, environmental cleaning and increased reassurance).



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COHORTING

The purpose of cohorting is to limit the mixing of students, so that if a child or teacher develops infection, the number of exposures is significantly reduced. Classes will be cohorted, particularly for the younger age groups, so that students stay with the same class group, and there are limited interactions between classes and years. This model recognizes that for younger children, closer interaction, such as playing and socializing, is central to child development.

Although close contact may be unavoidable between members of a cohort, general infection prevention and control practices, as well as physical distancing in older grades, will be maintained where possible. Plans will be made to prevent mixing of cohorts in washrooms, and shared surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

The purpose of physical distancing is to encourage our students, cohorts, staff and essential visitors to maintain at least 2 meters of separation. The school's physical environment will be re-oriented to support physical distancing since individual-level behavioural measures are impractical, particularly for younger students.

- **Classrooms.** When children are in the classroom, efforts will be made to arrange the classroom furniture to leave as much space as possible between students. Smaller class sizes will aid in physical distancing. If weather permits, consideration will be given to having classes outside.
- **Adjustments to movement throughout the school.** Designated routes for students to get to and from classrooms, including separate entrance points for students in different grades will be created. Visual cues, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on hallways, to guide appropriate distances in lines and at other times will be provided. Movement of students around the school will be staggered to discourage students from congregating in the hallways.
- **Drop-off/Pick-up.** Procedures that support physical distancing and separate cohorts will be developed. Drop-off and pick-up of students will take place outside the school, unless it is determined that there is a need for a parent/guardian to enter the school. Parents will be provided support with respect to the role they can play in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 through physical distancing at school, and they will be provided with guidance on drop-off and pick-up procedures to discourage congregating at school entrances. Personal belongings brought to school will be kept to a minimum, and they will be labelled and stored separately from other students' belongings.
- **Weekly Assemblies/Chapels.** Large gatherings will be cancelled for the immediate future. Virtual gatherings for assemblies and chapels will be explored for implementation.



- **Outdoor Activities/Recess.** During outdoor activities such as recess, physical distancing will not be required. Children will perform hand hygiene prior to outdoor play/playground use. There will be a low threshold to close the play structure if there are cases in the school. Sports and physical education classes will be encouraged and continue, according to available protocols.
- **Lunch Breaks.** Students will enjoy their lunches in their classrooms with their cohort to ensure chances of contact and transmission are minimized. Break and lunch times will be staggered to allow students to wash their hands before eating, without creating congestion in the washrooms or handwashing stations. If weather permits, consideration will be given to having lunch breaks outside.
- **With respect to eating and drinking at school.** Students and staff will perform proper hand hygiene before and after eating. Students will need their own labelled drink bottles, and they will keep them during the day and will not share. Water bottles will be filled frequently, and all water fountains will be unavailable for student use. Students will have their own individual meal or snack with no common food items. “No food sharing” policies will be reinforced and physical distancing will be maintained while students are eating. The Pizza Lunch program will be suspended until we can ensure proper health and safety protocols.
- **Prohibiting non-essential visitors.** The number of parents, volunteers, guests and other individuals inside the school will be limited. Families will be encouraged to interact with teachers using email, telephone and video conferencing, where possible, rather than in person.

Screening/Self-Assessment

Strict exclusion policies will be in place for symptomatic students and staff. Staff and students will be educated not to come to school if they are symptomatic or ill or if someone they have come in close contact with, including within their household, is ill with suspected or positive COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

- **Student screening.** Parents will be provided with a checklist to perform daily screening of their children before arriving at school.
- **Staff screening.** Self-assessment tools will be made available to staff to ensure awareness of possible symptoms of COVID-19. Staff who suspect they may have symptoms will be required to stay home and seek testing.
- **Signage and monitoring.** Signs will be posted at the entrances of the school to remind students, staff, parents and essential visitors of applicable protocols. Teachers and staff members will be provided with information to identify signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in children so that appropriate action can be taken if children develop symptoms during the day. Students, in particular, will be monitored for atypical symptoms and signs of COVID-19. Due the range of symptoms for COVID-19 and the evolving understanding of the disease, a low threshold for symptoms will be used.



- **Age-appropriate language.** Teachers and staff will use age-appropriate and non-stigmatizing language to identify symptoms of COVID-19 and will encourage students to speak to a staff member immediately if they are experiencing symptoms.
- **Records.** The school will keep daily records of anyone (e.g. students, parents, staff, essential visitors) entering the school setting. Records, including name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, screening completion will be kept up to date and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak. School principals are mandated to report infectious diseases under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. Principals inform local public health units (PHUs), and PHUs recommend closure, provide notices, or make other recommendations, such as additional testing, self-isolation, cleaning advice.

Suspected Cases

When a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified, we will work closely with our local PHU around steps to take including notifying parents that their child has begun to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at school and isolating the student in a safe area for immediate pick-up. In addition, where possible, anyone who is providing care to the student will maintain a distance of at least 2 metres.

If a staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms, they will return home and self-isolate immediately. If they cannot leave immediately, the staff member will be isolated in a specific place until they are able to leave.

Cleaning and Hygiene

Additional cleaning protocols will be implemented. These will include:

- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and shared resources such as doorknobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, electronic devices, students' chairs and desk tops at least twice a day, as they are the most likely to become contaminated;
- Following public health advice regarding the type of cleaning and disinfectant products to use;
- Following the manufacturer's instructions including guidance with respect to the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).



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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

In keeping with public health advice, the *Safe Reopening Plan* and adapted delivery model has been designed to allow for physical distancing and cohorting to the best extent possible. As such, in a classroom where a teacher is able to remain in the front of the class and maintain 2 metres of distance, PPE is not required.

- In a school setting, there are groups of employees whose regular job duties mean physical distancing is not possible (e.g. Educational Assistants who work in close proximity to perform their regular job duties). In such cases, PPE will be provided.
- Teachers and other workers may choose to wear non-medical masks on a voluntary basis. If workers choose to wear non-medical masks, they must be reminded that this is not an appropriate substitute for physical distancing in the workplace.
- Workers will be trained on the care, use and limitations of any PPE that they use.
- It is recognized that parents may choose to send a cloth mask to school for their children to wear. In such cases, parents would be responsible for the safe use/compliance during the school day and the cleanliness of the mask.
- Staff and essential visitors may also choose to wear a mask and would be responsible for safe use and cleanliness of the mask and proper disposal.

CONCLUSION

We truly appreciate that you have taken the time to carefully read over this document. We are committed to partnering with our parents, and we encourage you to contact us if you have suggestions or comments about the plan. Please understand that this is the first version of our *Safe Reopening Plan* and that we will continue to maintain open lines of communication in case there are any questions or concerns. Subsequent versions and protocols will be shared when they are available.

