

COVID-19: OCS Protocols

September 11, 2020



Orangeville Christian School

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

INTRODUCTION

The OCS Safe Reopening Plan & Protocols have been developed with our three school distinctives in mind:

Student Centred

Our plan provides a safe, nurturing environment for our students by balancing the risk of direct infection and transmission of COVID-19 with the impact of school closures and online learning on our students' physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Parents As Partners

Our plan provides relevant and researched information to assist our parents in their decision to have their son or daughter return to school in September. Returning to OCS for in-class, every day learning is an important decision for every one of our families. The Board of Directors and our staff are honoured and privileged that you have decided to partner with us during this unprecedented time in the history of our school.

Christian, independent schools respect parental choice as a guiding principle based on the Word of God. Parents are the ones given the responsibility to educate, train, and instruct their children (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:6,7).

Respecting parental choice is especially crucial when dealing with potentially divisive issues. The current pandemic has highlighted strong parental convictions concerning the use of non-medical masks at school. Research and corresponding reports both in favour and against the use of masks at school have been shared online and in print.

We have chosen to invest in a plan that focuses on maintaining physical distancing and cohorting as we seek to provide our parents and students with an excellent Christ-centred education that respects parental choice.

As outlined in the [Update](#) to the [OCS Safe Reopening Plan](#), Orangeville Christian School will not mandate the use of masks in grades JK-5. Students in grades 6-8 will be required to have a non-medical face mask on their person at all times to be used when it is not possible to physically distance. All students using the services of the bus company will also be required to wear a mask while riding the bus.

Our class sizes provide every opportunity to maintain physical distancing and cohorting. It will be critical that we continue to assess the use of masks on an ongoing basis, throughout the school year, and adjust accordingly based on the development of further evidence, changes and local epidemiology.



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We also acknowledge that some of our families will choose to send their children to school with a mask that is to be worn when physical distancing is difficult or at all times while inside the school building. No student will be shunned or shamed for their choice to either wear or not wear a face mask. Respecting the choices of our students and families will be enforced as we continue to provide our students with a safe and caring learning environment.

Diverse Curriculum

Our plan facilitates the delivery of our diverse curriculum that is designed to challenge each student to reach his or her God-given potential. Our teachers remain committed to providing an excellent, Christ-centred education for our students. We believe this includes having our students at school every day, in-person. Although our physical spaces and schedules will be modified, and new safety protocols will be implemented, our teachers will continue to strive to meet not only the physical and academic needs of their students, but also their mental and spiritual needs as well.

Community Blessings

The school distinctives above are the reasons why families choose Orangeville Christian School. We are more than a school; we are a community. We are a community that respects parental choice, and acknowledges the commitment and responsibility we have made to each other.

We are blessed to have the opportunity to teach our students that our great God is in control of all things, and we have no reason to worry or fear.

***“Fear not, for I have redeemed you by your name. You are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.” Isaiah 43:1b-2a***



SCREENING PROTOCOLS

INTRODUCTION

The health and safety of our students and staff is our priority. We strive to create safe spaces for students and staff, and we are working with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) to make this happen. As a result, some regular routines, procedures and physical spaces will be changed to control and prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

Communicating effectively is also a priority. We will be sharing important updates in the coming weeks using email, and we will be posting all the applicable documents in the [Parent Resources](#) section of our website.

The most effective control to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 is to physically remove the hazard from the school. It is of critical importance that all our families, students, staff, and essential visitors are familiar with the following information:

Daily Screening

In order to prevent the spread of infection, students, teachers, and essential visitors who have signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (according to Ministry of Health and WDGPH) must stay home.

- **Parents and caregivers** must perform daily screening of their child(ren) for COVID-19 symptoms BEFORE leaving for school using the self-assessment tools listed below. If any signs or symptoms are present, the student must stay home, and the school office must be contacted.
- **All staff** must complete a daily self-assessment screen for COVID-19 symptoms BEFORE arriving at school. If any signs or symptoms are present, the staff member must stay home, and the school office must be contacted.
- Only **essential visitors** are permitted on the school property (e.g., plumber). Essential visitors must complete a self-assessment screen for COVID-19 symptoms BEFORE arriving/entering the school. If any signs or symptoms are present, the essential visitor must not enter the school.



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Symptoms List

In Version 6.0 dated August 2, 2020, the Ontario Provincial Government Ministry of Health has provided the following helpful list of the most common symptoms associated with COVID-19:

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8 degrees or greater)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath (dyspnea)

Other symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- New olfactory or taste disorder(s)
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Runny nose, or nasal congestion – *in absence of underlying reason for these symptoms such as seasonal allergies, post nasal drip, etc.*

Other clinical features of COVID-19 can include:

- Clinical or radiological evidence of pneumonia

Atypical signs and symptoms of COVID-19 should be considered, particularly in children, older persons, and people living with a developmental disability.

Atypical symptoms and clinical features can include:

- Unexplained fatigue/malaise/myalgias
- Delirium (acutely altered mental status and inattention)
- Unexplained or increased number of falls
- Acute functional decline
- Exacerbation of chronic conditions
- Chills
- Headaches
- Croup
- Conjunctivitis



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Atypical signs can include:

- Unexplained tachycardia, including age specific tachycardia for children
- Decrease in blood pressure
- Unexplained hypoxia
- Lethargy, difficulty feeding in infants (if no other diagnosis)

Symptoms associated with Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) may include:

- Persistent fever
- Conjunctivitis
- Gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain
- Rash

Self-Assessment Tools

Be sure to diligently screen yourself, and your child, daily for symptoms using the following self-assessment tools.

- [COVID-19 Screening Poster](#)
(Appropriate for the refrigerator)
- [COVID-19 Reference document for symptoms](#)
- [Ontario's COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)

Summary: A self-assessment must be completed by all individuals prior to entering the school.

Management of Symptomatic Persons

As stated above, it is of critical importance that parents and caregivers become familiar with the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and that they diligently complete self-assessments at home. Students, staff and essential visitors must be symptom free before arriving/entering the school.

As we partner together, it is very important that all our families provide truthful information both for their child and others' safety.



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At School – Exclusion/Isolation:

- **During school hours**, staff will continue to monitor themselves and their students for symptoms. Staff will be provided with information on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 in children, and they will teach students how to identify symptoms. Students will be encouraged to speak to their teacher if they are experiencing any symptoms.
 - **A child who shows symptoms** will be moved away from other students and supervised in a designated room/space, and his/her parents or guardians will be called right away and asked to come pick up their child. If they cannot return home immediately, they will be isolated in a designated room/space until their departure.
 - **The supervising staff** will try to keep a 2 metre (6ft) distance from the ill child, and both staff and child (if tolerated) will wear a mask. Staff will wear other appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), as necessary.
 - **Symptomatic staff and essential visitors** must go home immediately. If they cannot return home immediately, they will be isolated in a designated room/space until their departure.
- The designated room/space, and any items touched by the symptomatic individual, will be cleaned and disinfected.

Summary: Students will be monitored for symptoms and signs of COVID-19 during the school day. A low threshold for symptoms will be used.

Returning to School – Testing/Tracing:

- Symptomatic individuals, or anyone who has come into close contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days, should be tested for COVID-19 and remain excluded from school pending test results. Information about Assessment Centres can be found on the WDGPH website.
 - Anyone who was in close contact with the person who developed symptoms will remain grouped together until more is known about the test results or further direction is received from WHGPH.
 - As each situation is unique, the school will work closely with WDGPH on exclusion and isolation requirements for close contacts and other individuals from the same cohort.
 - In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, WDGPH will notify the school and provide further information on contact tracing and outbreak management.
 - Daily records of anyone entering the school setting and their screening results will be maintained and kept on-site.
 - This will include staff, students, parents/guardians and essential visitors).
- Please note, the school must report any known, or lab confirmed cases of COVID-19 to WDGPH.

Summary: Students must be symptom free before returning to school. Parents must notify the school office and provide an update on the status of their child before the student will be allowed to return to school. The school reserves the right to require confirmation that the student is symptom free from a family physician and/or proof of a negative COVID test.



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Educational Support

We are committed to providing support for students who need to stay at home due to sickness or who need to isolate themselves due to exposure. Supplies and materials will be provided using scheduled pick-up and drop-off dates and times, and a list of assignments will be provided by the classroom teacher.



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HAND HYGIENE & RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE PROTOCOLS

INTRODUCTION

Symptoms List

COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses are primarily spread by respiratory droplet transmission. Reducing respiratory droplet transmission is an important focus of our preventative measures. As a result, routine, frequent and proper hand hygiene (soap and water or hand sanitizer) is critical to limit transmission. Proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of the virus, alongside respiratory etiquette, particularly during the pre-symptomatic phase of illness.

Hand Hygiene

Children and youth must be taught how to clean their hands properly with age-appropriate material. It is also important to teach them to try and avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible. This instruction should be done in a non-judgmental and positive manner.

It is important that parents and staff encourage and teach proper and frequent hand hygiene practices. These practices include hand washing:

- With soap and water for at least 20 seconds (note: Alcohol-Based Hand Rub (ABHR) may also be used if hand washing is not possible.)
- Regularly throughout the day
- Before/after eating food
- After using the washroom
- After outdoor play

The hand washing signs and posters listed below will be posted near the sinks located in our washrooms and classrooms throughout the school. Parents are also encouraged to review the signs at home with their child(ren).

- [How to Wash Your Hands](#)
- [Handwashing with Soap and Water](#)

Hand hygiene products will be available in all our classrooms, washrooms, and at the main school entrance (i.e., hand wash sink or ABHR). All staff, students, and essential visitors will be required to conduct proper hand hygiene upon entering the school. Staff will also provide supervision/assistance for student hand hygiene practices, when necessary.



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Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff are reminded to use proper respiratory etiquette. Respiratory etiquette includes:

- Covering nose and mouth during coughing and sneezing with a tissue or sneezing or coughing into their sleeve or elbow.
- Disposing of used tissues into the garbage immediately after use.
- Practicing proper hand hygiene immediately after coughing or sneezing or touching one's face.

Children and youth who have symptoms of a respiratory tract infection must stay home and should be reminded to sneeze or cough into a tissue followed by hand hygiene, or their elbow/sleeve if no tissue is available.

The respiratory etiquette education poster listed below will be posted at the entrance and in areas where they are likely to be seen.

- [Cover Your Cough](#)

Parents are also encouraged to review the sign at home with your child(ren).

Scheduling & Resources

For practical reasons and to avoid excess traffic in and outside of our classrooms, regularly-scheduled hand hygiene breaks will be implemented by our classroom teachers. Many of our classrooms are equipped with sinks, and hand sanitizer will be readily available as well. Hand sanitizer (60-90% USP grade alcohol, not technical grade alcohol) will be available in all classrooms, and safety precautions to avoid toxic exposure (e.g. ingestion) will be followed. Adequate resources and a replenishment process will be in place to ensure supplies are available to perform proper hand hygiene frequently. No-touch waste receptacles will be available for disposal as well.



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PHYSICAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS

INTRODUCTION

The objective of physical distancing is to reduce the likelihood of contact that may lead to the transmission of the virus. This strategy has been widely used during the pandemic.

In the school setting, several control measures can be put in place to encourage physical distancing, especially when prolonged exposure is expected (e.g. in the classroom). It is also important to highlight, that while physical distancing and its role in the prevention of infection transmission should be discussed with students of all ages, it is not practical to enforce strict physical distancing in elementary school children, especially during periods of play. Cohorting is an additional strategy that will be used to facilitate close interactions, while minimizing the number of potential exposures.

SickKids wisely comments in its *Updated: Guidance for School Reopening* (July 29, 2020) that, "Interaction, such as playing and socializing is central to student development and should not be discouraged."

Education

The role of physical distancing to prevent infection transmission will be discussed with all the students. All students will also be informed about how physical distancing has been implemented in the school (e.g. desks separated, expected behaviours) and the expected practices in the school environment. Physical distancing will likely be difficult to strictly enforce, but developmentally and age-appropriate education will emphasize the importance of hand hygiene, avoiding body fluid exposure, avoiding putting toys in mouths, good respiratory etiquette and avoiding close contact especially for long periods of time (e.g. touching, hugging, hand holding).

Classrooms

Although the Ministry of Education and SickKids Hospital has not set a new guideline for class sizes, we still regard the principle of smaller class groupings as an integral part of our layered protection strategy. In addition, although the recommended minimum from SickKids for physical distancing students is 1 meter, we will continue to strive for 2 meters of physical distancing. When students are in the classrooms, efforts will be made to arrange the classroom furniture to leave as much space as possible between students, with seats facing the same direction.



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Smaller class sizes of 16 students and cohorting are our priority strategies as it will aid in physical distancing and reduce potential spread. Non-traditional spaces will also be used including the gymnasium and an outdoor tent.

Nutritional & Recess Breaks

Students will continue to enjoy their nutritional breaks in their classrooms. Hand hygiene will be performed prior to nutritional breaks, with easy access to hand sanitizer. If weather permits, lunch and nutritional breaks will be held outside.

Nutritional and recess breaks will follow a staggered schedule. Students will be divided into two groups for recess breaks. During outdoor activities, such as recess, physical distancing will not be strictly enforced. Students will be encouraged to play in their cohorts using the outdoor equipment assigned to their classroom. Individual classes (cohorts) will be able to enjoy our playground, gaga ball, and four-square courts following a daily schedule.

Microwaves

Students will not be allowed to share microwaves at the school. They will need to use a thermos if they desire a warm lunch.

Sharing of Food for Class and Birthdays

Students will not be allowed to share food for special events like birthdays, celebrations or class assignments from home or from outside sources.

Selection of Lunch Items

Parents are strongly encouraged to select food items that can be easily opened by their son or daughter. Please practice opening containers at home so your child can be confidently self-sufficient with the contents of their lunch. Our teachers will not assist students with their containers.

Washrooms

The number of students in our washrooms will be limited. Students who are waiting to enter the washroom must stand in the hallway on a physically distanced marker located in the hallway. Regular cleaning of the washrooms will occur throughout the day.



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Student Appointments

Parents will need to notify the school office of planned appointments in advance. All students will need to come to the front office and wait in the assigned chairs for parents to arrive. Students will exit through the main office area.

No parents will be allowed in the school building for pick up/sign out. Parents will need to park outside the main entrance doors and be visible to the front office staff. Students will be escorted outside by one of the front office staff. The secretary will record all appointments and communicate with teachers.

Early Pick Ups

All early pick-ups must be arranged by notifying the school office. No walk-ins are allowed. Early pick-ups will be allowed before 3:00 pm ONLY. No early pick-ups can take place between 2:50-3:15 pm. Parents will need to join the "Kiss & Ride" line and wait for dismissal for pick-up.

Drop Off Instructions

The number of students at OCS is growing and so is the number of vehicles in our school parking lot. In an effort to ensure the safety of everyone and to ensure physical distancing, we would like to remind our parents about the "Kiss & Ride" program.

If your children do not take the bus in the morning, and you drop them off, you will follow the "Kiss & Ride" lane that goes around the front of the school. At 8:40 am, an OCS staff member will supervise the front entrance of the school. Once there is a staff member on duty, your son or daughter may exit the vehicle from the side facing the school onto the concrete patio or sidewalk in front of the school. After your son or daughter has safely exited your vehicle, you will immediately follow the lane and exit the parking lot.

For the time being, you will not be able to park your vehicle in a parking spot and accompany your son or daughter to the school using the cross walk. There will be no cross walk until further notice.

The use of the "Kiss & Ride" lane for drop off will create a natural staggered start to our school day. Once students have exited their vehicles, they will proceed to their arrival lines as indicated on the following map. For the first week of school, classroom teachers will greet their students at their arrival lines to provide important instructions for entering the school building. Students will enter the school at 8:50 am.

- [Morning Arrival Map](#)



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Pick Up Instructions

If your children do not take the bus in the afternoon, and you pick them up, you will then follow the “Kiss & Ride” lane that goes around the front of the school. Parents may join the “Kiss & Ride” lane beginning at 3:15 pm by forming a line up in front of the school and along the grass line to wait for students to be dismissed. Please remember to stay in your vehicle while waiting.

At 3:15 pm, students that will be riding on busses will be dismissed from their classrooms first, with their masks on, to board the appropriate bus. Junior and senior kindergarten students will be lined up in front of the school on the concrete patio and students in grades 1-8 who are being picked up will remain in their classrooms until their family name is called. The school office will announce the next family in the “Kiss & Ride” lane, and all the children from that family will be dismissed from their classrooms and immediately join you in your vehicle. Once your children are safely in your vehicle, you will exit the parking lot using the lane.

For the time being, you will not be able to park your vehicle and come to the front entrance of the school to collect your children on the concrete patio. All families must use the “Kiss & Ride” lane.

If the line for pick up is too long to join, please park in the parking lot and join the line when it is safe.

Please review the attached map to become familiar with the flow of traffic in the school parking lot and direction of parked cars.

- [“Kiss & Ride” Program Map](#)

Please remember that the Drive Thru Lane, located immediately beside the “Kiss & Ride” lane is for bus use only. School buses will travel to their location on the north end of the parking lot using the drive thru lane. Students may NOT exit their vehicles from the drive thru lane.

Please be reminded:

- To stay in your vehicle and do not open the driver side door.
- To remind your son or daughter to enter the vehicle from the passenger’s side of your vehicle. Your son or daughter must be able to do this without assistance.
- To honour staff & volunteers on duty.
- To exercise courtesy and patience with other drivers and buses.
- To yield to buses departing at 3:20 pm.



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Before and After School Care (SHARE Program)

Our before and after school care SHARE program will continue as a daily option for parents, although the number and types of activities available for students will be limited. Our SHARE program will take place in our outdoor classroom (tent) located to the North of the school building to assist physical distancing. More details, including associated costs and availability, are available by emailing the school office (information@orangevillechristianschool.com).

