Safe Return to William King Elementary School



August 2020

Table of Contents

Page 3………………………. Welcome Back

Page 4………………………. Before Coming to School

Page 5………………………. Hygiene Practices

Page 6………………………. Monitoring for Symptoms

Page 7…….................... Traveling to School

Page 8………………………. Arrival and Departure from School

Page 9………………………. Bus Transportation

Page 10…………………….. Breakfast Program

Page 11…………………….. Lunch Time Procedures

Page 12…………………….. Recess and Outdoor Learning Time

Page 13…………………….. Classroom set up

Page 14…………………….. Flow of the Building

Page 15…………………….. Specialist Classes (Music, Physical Education, Core French, and Library)

Page 16…………………….. Student Belongings/School Supplies

Page 17…………………….. Parents/Guardians coming into the School

Page 18…………………….. Outbreak Consideration

Page 19…………………….. First Day of School

Page 20…………………….. What will Learning Look Like?

Page 21…………………….. Usage of Protective Masks

Page 22…………………….. Access to Technology

Page 23…………………….. At Home Learning

Page 24…………………….. Responses to Changes in COVID19

Page 25…………………….. Field Trips and Gatherings

Page 26…………………….. Physical Distancing

Page 27…………………….. Compréhensive Guidance

Page 28…………………….. Late Arrival Procedures

Page 29…………………….. Emergency Procedures

Page 30…………………….. Access to Internet

Page 31…………………….. Resources

Welcome Back!!

We hope you are enjoying the beautiful summer weather and some nice family time.

We are working hard to provide you with information that we hope you will find useful and supportive. As detailed in the provincial Return to School Plan ([https://www.ednet.ns.ca/backtoschoo)l](https://www.ednet.ns.ca/backtoschoo%29l) , it is natural for parents to have questions. We do not have answers for everything, but I want you to know that work is underway to answer your questions and the priority will be given to the most common questions. This information is based on our most current understanding of where we are with the pandemic at this time. I would like to thank the William King staff for help in the creation of this document. We hope you find this information useful as we prepare to start a new school year unlike any we have had before!

**\*\*Please note the following information that is being provided is based on our most recent information and guideline from Public Health. This information could change and/or be modified as we respond to the COVID19 pandemic.**

Before Coming to School

• All parents will be required to screen their child daily for any symptoms of cold, flu, or other symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19, prior to sending their child to school using the COVID-19 Daily Checklist.

• Students and staff are asked to STAY home if they exhibit any signs of illness.



Hygiene Practices

● Staff will teach and review hygiene routines in their daily practice

● Staff will schedule handwashing/trips to bathroom throughout the day, particularly around staggered eating times (recess and lunch)

● Hand Sanitizer stations will be located throughout the building and at every threshold within the school



Monitoring for Symptoms

As stated on page 4, you are expected to use the COVID-19 Checklist daily before sending your child to school each day. Teachers will also be instructed that if a student in their classroom is exhibiting COVID like symptoms to send that child to the office for further screening. In this situation, it will most likely result in a phone call home to get more information, and may result in you being asked to pick up your child from school.

Please remember, we are not health professionals, we will do our best to monitor students in the building for symptoms related to COVID-19, and this is something we will need your co-operation with. If we do call you to pick up your child because they are exhibiting COVID like symptoms, it is imperative that you come to pick up your child immediately and have them screened using 811 assessment <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/symptoms-and-testing/>

If COVID-19 testing is required, student must follow public health advice for returning to school. If testing for COVID-19 is not required, student can return once fever (with no medications) and other symptoms have resolved for 24 hours

Students assessed to have only chronic stable conditions (ie. cough, sneeze, runny nose, or nasal congestion) due to a medical condition such as asthma or allergies are not required to be excluded from school. If your child has any conditions, such as seasonal allergies, that may present as COVID like symptoms, please reach out to your child’s teacher or administration to let them know. Students with new or worsening symptoms must not enter the school and should be reassessed.

If a child does need to be sent home because they are exhibiting COVID like symptoms, they will wait in an isolated room near the office with an adult until they are picked up.

Traveling to School

Walking or being driven to school:

Once arriving at the school, parents will be encouraged to say goodbye in areas off school grounds to protect the safety of students and staff. Parents/Guardians and visitors are asked not to gather in groups and always maintain a 2 Meter/6 foot separation from other families.

All students may arrive between 8:15 and 8:35 am. Please do not send your child before this time as no staff will be outside prior to 8:15, and students will not be able to enter the building. Staff will be outside at 8:15 am daily to accept your children as they arrive on the yard. Upon arrival, students will come in through the main entrance of the building and head directly to their classrooms where their teachers will be waiting.



Arrival and Departure from School

Non-essential visitors, including parents/guardians, will not normally be permitted in the school and on the school grounds. This includes not being able to come into the school to pick up your child. If you need to pick your child up early, we ask that you call ahead and have them meet you at the main entrance door.

Parents/guardians will be considered essential visitors if they are providing a service or support that is not, or cannot be, provided by school staff, and if it is determined that the interaction cannot be achieved using virtual, telephone or other means.

Parents/guardians that are deemed “essential visitors” will need to have a prescheduled appointment to access the school or be invited into the school by the principal or designate and appropriate COVID-19 protocols will be observed.

After school, we will be dismissing our busing students first, starting at 2:30 pm. We anticipate this process will take some time during the first couple of weeks of school but will speed up as we get used to the end of day routine. Walking students will be dismissed AFTER the busses have left the school ground, followed by EXCEL students. We will notify you what door your child will be dismissed from if they are a walking student. If you are meeting a walking student, please have a meeting spot selected off of school property.

Bus Transportation

For students who take the bus to school, the moment they get on the bus is the moment their school day begins in terms of ensuring they are following Public Health protocols in relation to schools. Students will need to put their mask on before getting on the bus and leave it on. Siblings will also have to sit together on the bus this year.

School staff will receive your child when they arrive at the school and will supervise them while proceed to their meeting spot.

If you are looking for other bus information please visit the Halifax Regional Centre for Education’s transportation team at <https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/student-transportation>

Breakfast Program

Just like in previous years, our breakfast program will start up in late September/early October. Once again, we will operating a breakfast cart (or 2) in the front entrance of the school. Students, following the directional arrows, can stop at the staffed cart to “grab and go” before proceeding to their classroom.

We will once again be offering the breakfast program 5 days a week.

Hot Lunch Program

The Lunch Lady lunch program will likely be up and running again this year. Parents/guardians are able to order from a select menu via an online account. Food arriving at school will be delivered to the student’s classroom. Last year our delivery days were Monday and Friday. At this point we anticipate it remaining the same. More information about setting up an account will be sent out in September.

Lunch Time Procedures

We are still working out details in terms of lunch hour times. We will communicate those times with you once they are set. During lunch our students will have approximately 25 minutes outside to play and 25 minutes inside eating their lunch. All students will eat lunch in the classroom. When outside, students will be with their classroom cohort.

Students will …

* Eat their food in their designated classroom area.
* Only take their mask off to eat their food, once they are finished eating, they need to put their mask back on (mandatory for grades 4-6 and 3/4 combined classroom).
* Stay in their designated area within their classroom during the inside portion of lunch. They will be permitted to read, draw, color or play with individualized items provided by the teacher while waiting for others to finish eating.
* Have time during the lunch hour to go outside (weather permitting) with their class.
* Take home all lunch items everyday including uneaten food and waste material.

\*Please ensure that your child is able to open all food and drink containers independently

Recess and Outdoor Time

Students are going to have a lot more time outside this year than what they would have normally. Teachers are encouraged to take their students outside as much as possible during the day. Students will be staying with their class throughout the day and the teachers will schedule times where students will go out for recess to play and also times where they go outside for learning. Please apply sunscreen at home each morning and ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for outside learning (i.e. hat, boots, warm clothes etc.). Once outside, students will be able to take off their masks as long as they are 6 feet or 2 meters apart.

Each class will be able to go outside together but if there are other classes outside at the same time they will NOT be able to play together. Please review that with your child prior to school starting.

Classroom Set Up

Classrooms are currently being redesigned to meet Public Health requirements. Because of this, classrooms will look a lot different from what your child was used to. Currently, we are working on maximizing space in our classrooms to allow for as much social distancing as possible. Classrooms with individual desks will have them spread out throughout the classroom to allow for as much space between children as possible. In other situations, we have students using large tables and sitting as distanced as possible. This will allow students to feel connected with their peers and maximize safety at the same time.

Students will also have an assigned seat in the classroom, which will be their seat for the year. All of their belongings will need to stay in their area (or brought to them by the teacher) and will need to be taken home daily while each classroom gets thoroughly cleaned and ready for the next day.

Students will not be able to share materials this year either. They are discouraged from bringing items from home unless it is for personal use. Teachers will individually prepare students materials and they will be in their assigned locations prior to their arrival each day.

Students Who Receive Learning Centre Support

For students who receive Learning Center support, the EECD and HRCE Student Services Department are developing a detailed plan. This plan will be shared with schools in the coming days. Our Learning Centre Teacher and classroom teachers will be reaching out to our families to discuss how this will look for the coming year.

Traffic Flow of the Building

Creating a flow to the building is an important element to help students and staff socially distance while traveling around the building throughout the day.

Entry into the building will be through the main entrance, staying to the right. If this changes once school begins, teachers will communicate this to you.

Hallways will be dual track with students needing to stay on the **right side, following the arrows**. We will be doing creative scheduling to minimize traffic flow during instructional hours.



Specialist Classes (Music, Physical Education, Art, Core French and Library)

As indicated previously, teachers are going to try to get students outside as much as possible this year. This will be particularly important for music and physical education classes as they have classrooms that are normally shared by all members of the school community. All specialist classes will take place in their regular classroom or outside. Activities planned for specialist classes will involve minimal equipment this year.

Student Belongings/School Supplies

School supply lists were forwarded by teachers to parents/guardians in June. They are also located on our school website under the parent section. The supplies listed are a basic list in order to get started. Teachers may request additional items as the year unfolds. Teachers will reach out to you before the first day of school to let you know what materials they need to bring for the first day. Please keep in mind that students will need to bring their belongings back and forth to school each day, so they will need to be able to carry their backpack.

**Please send a reusable water bottle (filled with water from home) every morning**. We are still waiting to hear if fountains will be able to be used for filling up water bottles.

Parents/Guardians Coming to the School

As Following the Public Health mandate we require parents/guardians not to enter our school grounds unless it has been deemed essential and approved by administration. Please call or email your child’s teacher if arranging a meeting.

A visitor area will be set up in the main office for essential visitors only.

-Clear signage and markers for physical distancing will be used in this area.

-An Administrator or Admin Assistant will be responsible for supervision of the visitor area.

-All essential visitors entering the building will be required to check in to the visitor area and then be directed to the appropriate area if required (i.e. alternate location).

-A visitor/screening log will be maintained by Admin Assistant.

-All essential visitors will be required to wear a non-medical mask while on site.

If you do need to come to the school for an early pick up, you need to call the office at 902-479-4200 and set up a time for pick up. We will then have your child meet you at the door when you arrive.

We have to record every person who enters the building for contact tracing and because of this we are minimizing school entry to essential personnel only.

Outbreak Consideration

A detailed outbreak management protocol is being developed by Nova Scotia Public Health for use by all schools in the region. Any case of COVID within a school setting will be considered an outbreak and we will follow Public Health’s direction.

As for responding in the moment:

•As indicated earlier, if a staff member is concerned that a student is exhibiting signs of illness, this will be reported to the school administration for follow-up.

•The parents or guardians will be contacted and asked to pick up their child immediately.

•Students will be taken to the isolation room, where they will be supervised until they can be picked up by a parent. The student will be provided with a disposable mask to wear while waiting and they will be provided with assistance.

•The space will be disinfected once the child has departed.

•Parents will be required to follow Public Health protocols. The student should be kept home until they are symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours or they are able to provide a medical note indicating that they can return to school.

\*\*This same protocol will be in place if a staff member in the building has COVID like symptoms.

First Day of School

As expected, the first day of school will look a lot different this year. This year your child’s teacher will be reaching out to you by either phone call or email the week before school starts to introduce themselves, let you know what school supplies you need to bring the first day and where your meeting spot will be when you arrive on the first day. This will minimize the confusion from the typical first day of school and prevent the need to gathering when we arrive on September 8th.

When your teacher contacts you prior to the first day of school they will also let you know what dismissal door your child will be using each day.

When arriving by car, please do not drive onto the school grounds as we have busses arriving in that area and students walking onto the property. We have a drop off zone marked on the street in front of the building (students can use the paved path to enter grounds). You are permitted to drive/drop off using the lower parking lot. We ask those bringing their child to school on the first day to not gather in groups, maintain physical distancing at all times and be prepared to “kiss and go” ☺.

Not having parents/guardians on school grounds is VERY different for all of us. Please explain this to your child as you help prepare them for how their first day will look. Pre-Primary and Primary families will receive further direction about what this will look like for our new little ones once the teachers have been contact.

Students new to our school will be provided with support by a staff member as they enter the school. We will have plenty of staff present to direct students to their classrooms.

Days Following September 8th …

When students arrive (after 8:15), they will go directly to their class through the main entrance doors. If this procedure should change for the school or your class, it will be communicated via classroom teachers

What will Learning Look Like?

•Our initial learning time will always focus on building relationships and creating a safe and welcoming class community.

•Instructional time will focus on all curriculum areas. A number of curricular areas will be modified, including Music, Core French and Physical Education as already indicated.

•As usual, staff will begin assessing students and they will receive ongoing feedback to help move their learning forward.

•Students who previously received support through the learning center and resource will be supported in these programs again this school year.

•Students who have previously benefited from scheduled body breaks will continue to receive this support.

•These are unique times, requiring a lot more traditional teaching practices than the ones we have implemented over the past decades. A lot of our students are used to working in a collaborative setting but that will not be possible this year. Staff will aim to create engaging activities that do not require partners, moving around to different stations in class or the sharing of material and equipment. This will be a shift from our previous practices but student and staff safety is our number one priority at this time.

•Where possible, classroom windows will remain open for improved air quality. Send your child dressed with a sweater when the fall and winter seasons arrive.

•The gym and library will not be open for their usual purpose.

•All support teachers will come to students’ classrooms to teach their respective subjects, following hand hygiene expectations.

Usage of Protective Masks

•All students in grades pre-primary to 6 must wear their mask on the bus.

•All Grade 4 to 6 students must wear their mask on the bus, and in the school when they are not able to social distance. This includes the grade 3/4 combined class. Students in these grades will also have to wear them in the classroom as we are unable to create appropriate distancing between students at this time.

•All students in grades pre-primary to 3 must wear a mask while in common areas (hallways, stairwells, and bathrooms). Students in grades pre-primary to 3 will be ***encouraged*** to wear a mask in their classroom.

* We will be providing each student with 2 reusable masks on the first day of school. Some parents have been purchasing fanny packs or break away lanyards for students in order to hold their mask when not in use (i.e. outside).
* We will provide disposable masks, at school, in the event that one is lost or forgotten.
* Parents are encouraged to help their children get used to putting on and removing their mask safely, and practice wearing their mask for extended periods of time before September 8th.

**\*\* Medical exemptions can be discussed with the principal.**

Access to Technology

All grade levels will continue to have technology outcomes. Students will be encouraged to use their own devices (chromebook or tablet) in school, if possible. They will be asked to bring them back and forth to school each day. Students without personal devices will be provided with devices to use while at school. Devices will be cleaned between each use.

Technology will be used to support teaching and learning in all subject areas. This will help students be better prepared to continue to use technology should there be a need to transition to at-home learning. We are working to make sure ALL students who don’t have technology will be able to borrow a device from the school to take home if we move to at home learning.

At Home Learning

With the events of last spring and the lessons we learned while embarking on home learning for term three last year, we feel we are better prepared at William King in the event that we need to go in that direction if there is a change in COVID19 epidemiology this coming school year.

We will have more consistency across grade levels and classrooms when it comes to what type of instruction EVERY student receives while at home. Teachers will deliver classes online regularly so that all students are able to participate in a combination of real-time instruction and self-directed learning. All teachers will use Google classroom, teacher videos/demos, and provide teacher feedback to students. Teachers will also be assessing students’ work as they complete it. Students will also have opportunities to engage virtually with their peers and opportunities to engage with their teacher on a regular basis.

Teachers will use many of these same strategies during in session classes to make sure all students are better equipped in the case we need to move into an at home learning model. This will become part of the daily routine in the classroom so students are ready if they need to take their learning out of the classroom.

Responses to Changes in COVID19

The province announced a three phase approach to schools responding to the COVID 19 pandemic. These decisions will be made by public health and could potentially be done as needed in particular schools, family of schools, or regions. Below is a description of each phase and how it impacts the students and staff at William King.

Phase 1 – 100% Participation – all students from William King will come to school each day following Public Health directions.

Phase 2 – 100% Participation with reduced class sizes for your children – In phase two, class size is reduced to approximately 15 students to allow for better social distancing. The reduction of class sizes means creating more classes. Our current projections allow for all students to remain on site in different learning cohorts utilizing all existing space in our building. Instead of 10 classroom spaces, we would have approximately 15 learning spaces under phase two.

Phase 3 – At Home Learning – all students within a school, family of schools, region, or province would move to an at home learning model. Please see page 23 for a description of at home learning.

Field Trips and Gatherings

Under Public Health orders there will be NO field trips or large group gathering this year. The events cancelled this year in person include curriculum night, parent teacher interviews, holiday and spring concerts, dances, spring fair, etc.

Teachers will reach out to you virtually for curriculum night and parent teacher interviews.

If Public Health changes the directive on field trips and gatherings at any point during the school year we will communicate that with families in our monthly newsletter.

Physical Distancing

This year students will be with their class all day every day. We will not be bringing any classes together at any point of the school day. Classes will spend classroom time, recess, and lunch together. Students within a class will be able to interact with each other without a mask while physical distancing outside and with a mask while inside the school and classroom.

Please review with your child the importance of physical distancing, especially in common areas (like the washroom) in the school. This is an important element in keeping everyone safe at William King Elementary School.

Comprehensive Guidance

Our school counsellor will continue seeing students and help support classes transition back to school by creating and supporting lessons on feelings, building relationships, and overall well-being. If parents wish to contact Ms. Stewart about counselling referrals, please email: stewartja@hrce.ca

Late Arrival Procedures

Students arriving late will need to enter the school from the main office doors and notify Mrs. Bowers so she can sign them in. Students can then go directly to class.

Emergency Procedures

As part of our emergency management planning we will continue to have evacuation drills, lock downs, and hold and secure drills. With Public Health guidelines those drills will look a little different this year. Our evacuation drills will occur with individual or small groups of classes to allow them to practice the procedures while maintaining proper physical distancing. In the event of a real emergency, students will evacuate the building as per normal, as student safety in that regard will be prioritized to get students safely out of the building as quickly as possible.

Access to Internet

Below are some links to some sites that may support you in getting home internet access if that is something you need financial support with.

Home - Connecting Families

<https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/111.nsf/eng/home>

Frequently asked questions: Connecting Families - Connecting Families

<https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/111.nsf/eng/h_00002.html>

Welcome - Connecting Families

<https://www.connecting-families.ca/welcome>

Low-income families qualify for $10/month internet in new program

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/cheap-internet-low-income-family-1.4695281>

Resources

COVID-19 Daily Checklist (Screening Tool): <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/Daily-COVID-checklist-en.pdf>

Guidance for the use of Non-Medical Masks:

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/stayinghealthy/#masks>

Handwashing poster: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/>

Nova Scotia Corona virus webpage: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

NSHA Public Health Offices: <http://www.nshealth.ca/public-health-offices>

Physical Distancing poster: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/>

Risk mitigation tool for child and youth settings operating during the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirusinfection/guidance-documents/covid-19-riskmitigation-tool-child-youth-settings-operatingduring-pandemic.html>

Halifax Regional Centre of Education Webpage for Updates: <https://hrce.ca/backtoschool>

William King Elementary School Webpage for Updates: <https://wke.hrce.ca/>