



SAINT MATTHEW CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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[http: stmatthew.wcdsb.ca](http://stmatthew.wcdsb.ca)

January 14, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The staff at St. Matthew's is very excited to welcome back our students on Monday. We know that there are many questions but as always know that the health and safety of our students is, our first priority.

You have received information on the recommendations and protocols that have been developed by the WCDSB, the Ministry of Education and Public Health. The following measures will be implemented at St. Matthew's to ensure the safety and well-being of **all** our staff and students.

Safety protocols

- staff will review and rehearse all new safety protocols with students
- routines and rules are necessary to keep everyone safe

Self-Assessment

- all staff will be required to engage in a daily self-assessment before coming to work to ensure they are well and ready to perform their full duties
- all students, with assistance from parent/guardian, are asked to perform a daily self-assessment before coming to school and signing a form to acknowledge that you have done so.
- the self-assessment information can be found at the following link, <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>. Should the self-assessment indicate the possibility of having the virus, protocols set out by public health are to be followed.

What if a child seems unwell at school?

- staff will be vigilant throughout the day with students and report any student who shows symptoms of being un-well
- the student will be sent to the office and supervised in our health room
- the child's parents will be notified to come to the school immediately to pick up their child
- the parent will then be encouraged to follow public health directives
- the child will be able to return to school once these steps have been followed

For the safety of everyone at St. Matthew, please do not send your child to school when they are sick. This includes a cough, runny nose, low grade fever, upset

tummy, etc. We are not medical professionals and we cannot determine the difference between a common cold and COVID-19.

Face masks

- students from grades JK to 8 will be **required** to wear masks, as stated by the Ministry of Education, we will be providing 3 layered masks to students, once they arrive. Until they are distributed, students should wear 2 layered cloth masks, as we know that one layer masks are not sufficient protection.
- all staff will be wearing face masks provided by the school board (n95's or medical masks)
- some staff will also be wearing face shields as part of their job requirement
- although students will not be required to wear masks outside at recess, we would recommend that they do so if they cannot social distance; masks will be worn in the hallways until the students are outside, please make sure that students can place masks in their pockets, or somewhere else (eg. a lanyard)
- students will wear masks while in the gym.

Classroom set up

- grades 1 to 8: desks are set up in rows facing forward with 1 metre distance between students

Chromebooks

- for those families which have borrowed a chromebook from the school, we will not be collecting these chromebooks. We are asking that students bring these chromebooks back and forth every day, so as to access them during the day. This also ensures that **if** the child has to pivot back to online for a short time, they are able to.
- students who can bring their own personal device for learning purposes are encouraged to do so.

Kindergarten classrooms

- in Kindergarten, tables will be staggered and each student will be assigned an individual spot
- students will use their individual cubbies to ensure their items are kept separate from one another

Lunch/ Snacks

- students will eat snack/ lunch at their own desk and will help ensure that surfaces are kept clean throughout the day

- students will be asked to not speak while their masks are off and they are eating. Once they have finished their snacks/lunch and have put their masks back on, they will be free to speak to each other.
- We will move to staggered lunch recesses to allow for greater physical distancing on the yard.

Remote Continuity

For a limited period of time, during this Omicron surge WCDSB will be allowing the option of learning remotely. A student who chooses to do so will be committing for blocks of 2 weeks (10 school days) at a time, with the option to repeat for a 2nd 2-week block. (Potential for a maximum of 4 weeks and we will re-evaluate if this strategy needs to continue beyond the Family Day Weekend.)

There will be brief check-ins twice a day (early morning and early afternoon) and students will find their work on their class Google or D2L site for their learning. For those students that are working remotely this may lead to disruptions in delivery. In this circumstance, students are asked to work asynchronously on preassigned work or on materials posted on their LMS system. Please note that teachers will not be online with students throughout the day, they will be checking in twice a day, and the students will be completing the work that is on Google Classroom/D2L and submitting it.

Please notify your classroom teacher and Mrs. Voisin at michelle.voisin@wcdsb.ca if you would like to do this.

Change to Inclement Weather Policy

I would like to bring to your attention a change in WCDSB Inclement Weather Policy. Starting next week, if the weather, with the windchill, is -20 to -27 degrees Celsius we will move to a modified recess of no more than 15 minutes. If it is colder than -27 with the windchill, we will move to an inclement weather procedure.

PA Day

Please note there is a PA Day on Friday, January 21st.

St. Matthew staff and I are looking forward to seeing all our students on Monday. Together, we will do everything we can to provide a safe and healthy environment for all our students and staff. We will continue to share information as it becomes known.

Take Care,

Gilda Johnstone, Principal