

COVID-19 MITIGATION STRATEGIES AND PROTOCOLS

Last updated September 2021



We have paid close attention to the changing landscape through the summer to ensure that our return to school this September complies with the most effective health and safety measures. Our goal is to not only reopen our campus, but to continue to provide in-person learning throughout the new school year.

We will continue to adhere to our plan for the last school year which is to take the utmost precautions and therefore follow all recommended and mandatory precautions as directed by the Ontario Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and York Region Health. As was the case in the 2020-21 school year, as we progress through the year, we will make changes where appropriate. Our staff is looking critically at every aspect of the reopening that impacts the health and safety of TWS students and staff. Given the evolving nature of this pandemic, our plans must be flexible and will be adjusted as new or updated information and guidelines are issued by public health authorities.

Accessibility: To read the text of this web page, click [here](#) for the PDF version.

Guiding Principles

Our reopening plans will be guided by the following principles:

- We will place the health, safety, and wellbeing of students, staff, and families at the centre of how and where we learn and operate;
- We will provide the best possible Waldorf Educational program for our students;
- We will make decisions that consider TWS's immediate needs and long-term sustainability.

Working Assumptions

- Additional waves of infection may continue to affect the Province of Ontario;
- Ministry of Education and Public Health guidelines are applicable to independent schools;
- As the school reopens, physical-distancing, students grouped in class cohorts, and the wearing of PPE is required;
- The campus facility will be used to accommodate teaching and learning in response to the [COVID-19: Health, safety and operational guidance for schools \(2021-2022\)](#) and in conjunction with York Region Health guidelines.

TWS's Safe Reopening Plan Highlights

- All staff and students must be screened daily using the [Ontario COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#). Proof of daily screening is required for all staff and students from kindergarten to Grade 12 for the first two weeks of school and following the first two weeks, daily proof is required for all staff and high school students.
- All students from Grade 1 to 12 and staff are required to wear masks indoors. Staff are required to wear medical masks indoors and outdoors when unable to maintain 2m distancing and eye protection whenever they are within 2m of an unmasked individual.
- York Region Health recommends that kindergarten children wear masks in the classroom and they are required to wear a mask when in shared areas of the school such as hallways and washrooms.
- All parents and visitors are required to wear masks while on the school grounds.
- All TWS students will return to campus in-person once schools reopen. We will not offer a hybrid model.
- Activities will be conducted outdoors to the greatest extent possible.
- Students will be placed in a full class cohort whose size varies according to the size of the classroom that is available to accommodate them. A distance of at least 1m between students will be maintained in the classroom setting.
- All employees are required to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status to the school nurse and those who are not fully vaccinated are required to be tested at least twice per week.
- Parents of students aged 12 and above are asked to disclose their child's vaccination status to the school nurse, Gail McDowell, to facilitate the smooth management of responding to an instance of a person in the school testing positive for COVID-19.

For a full list of mitigation strategies and protocols see below.

The content of this document will be updated regularly as decisions are made and protocols are changed. We encourage you to visit this page often.

COVID-19 Vaccination



Vaccination is one of our best tools for protection against COVID-19.

- Parents of students aged 12 and above are asked to disclose their child's vaccination status to the school nurse, Gail McDowell, to facilitate the smooth management of responding to an instance of a person in the school testing positive for COVID-19.
- Please follow the following instructions to submit proof of vaccination for your eligible child if they have been vaccinated.
 - Email the school nurse at gmcdowell@torontowaldorfschool.com by Friday, September 10th to provide your child's vaccine status.
 - Subject line: COVID-19 vaccination <Student Name>
 - Include a screenshot or submit a copy of their official COVID-19 vaccination receipts.

Daily Screening for COVID-19 Symptoms



All students must be pre-screened before attending school every morning using the Government of Ontario [COVID-19 school and childcare screening tool](#) or the pdf checklist version of the tool. Parents should review the daily screening questions to complete daily screening of their children. Screening must be submitted to the school for all students daily for the first two weeks of school and then following the guidance below.

Kindergarten

- Parents will complete daily screening for students using the [COVID-19 school and childcare screening tool](#).
- Proof of the screening must be submitted via email daily for the first two weeks of school to kgscreen@torontowaldorfschool.com and then at regular intervals such as following the Thanksgiving holiday etc. Details will be provided via the weekly newsletter.

Grades 1 to 8

- Parents will complete daily screening for students using the [COVID-19 school and childcare screening tool](#).
- Proof of the screening must be submitted via email daily for the first two weeks of school to lsscreen@torontowaldorfschool.com and at regular intervals such as following the Thanksgiving holiday etc. Details will be provided via the weekly newsletter.

High School

- Students will complete daily screening for students using the [COVID-19 school and childcare screening tool](#).
- Proof of screening must be submitted daily to hsscreen@torontowaldorfschool.com prior to leaving for school.

Parents should review the screening questions with their children and ensure their children are not attending school with any COVID-19 symptoms.

If students have any COVID-19 symptoms or an identified COVID-19 concern they should follow the screening guidance and notify the School Office that their child will not be at school.

For assistance with what to do when there are risks identified on screening, please contact the school nurse for assistance at gmcldowell@torontowaldorfschool.com

The school nurse will contact every family whose child has a new COVID-19 symptom or concern on daily screening. Please email gmcldowell@torontowaldorfschool.com with any questions related to screening or returning to school after illness or exposure.

If any student is unwell at school, they will be sent to the Health Room, where they will be assessed by the school nurse, and isolated with suitable supervision. Students must be picked up from school by a parent/guardian as soon as possible.

Parents/guardians should aim to schedule appointments at the beginning or end of the school day. Parents/guardians will need to pick up students at the front of the school, since they are not permitted to enter the building.

Additional Health and Safety Measures

Air Filtration



TWS has installed a number of mitigating technologies to ensure quality air filtration, in accordance with benchmark guidelines and research:

- Classrooms have been fitted with air purification devices with DFS filters and UV-C light, neutralizing bacteria and viruses.
- Windows and doors will be open as much as possible when temperatures permit and will be opened a crack or completely every hour for five minutes in cold weather to air the room to allow fresh air ventilation.
- All students should come to school every day prepared to spend lots of time outside. Appropriate outer wear for the weather is a must for all students. Bring a hat on sunny days, rain gear when needed, warm layers as it gets colder, etc.

Face Masks



- Students in Grades 1 to 12 are required to wear properly fitted non-medical or 3-ply cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes, as well as on school trips.
- Students in kindergarten are encouraged but not required to wear non-medical or cloth masks in their classrooms, but are required to wear masks in shared spaces.
- Masks with valves are not allowed at school.
- Masks may be temporarily removed indoors to consume food or drink, with as much distancing as possible between students.
- Students are not required to wear masks outdoors, but distancing will be encouraged between cohorts.
- Where they can be worn safely based on the activity, masking is encouraged for engaging in physical activity.
- Students are expected to bring their own masks to wear at school and on field trips. Non-medical 3-ply disposable masks will also be made available by the school for students if needed.
- We request that parents wear masks and maintain distance during drop-off/pick-up whenever they exit their vehicle. Your cooperation sets a good example for our students and further curbs the possibility of the spread of COVID-19 or other viruses.
- Information about use and care of masks can be found at [Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings](#).
- Medical exemptions permitted with documentation from a licensed and practicing physician (M.D.) that meet the current Ontario College of Family Physicians guidelines for mask exemptions.

Visitors in the School



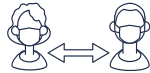
To minimize exposure to COVID-19, parents will not be permitted to enter the school. Only essential contractors, regulatory officials, or persons providing individual student support will be permitted to enter the building once they have complied with our screening and immunization disclosure policy and/or testing protocols.

Hand hygiene



- Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies.
- Students will be provided with targeted, age-appropriate education in proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Teachers will plan age-appropriate breaks to encourage scheduled hand hygiene.
- Hand hygiene should be conducted by anyone entering the school and incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, beyond what is usually recommended. Hands should be washed before and after the use of shared equipment.
- Alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks, and paper towels in dispensers will be available.

Distancing and Congregating



- As much distancing as possible between students, and between students and staff will always be encouraged.
- Physical distancing measures are to be layered with other public health measures such as screening, hand hygiene, cohorting, enhanced cleaning, and masking.
- Periods of student movement will be staggered, if possible, to limit student congregation in the hallways.
- Activities will take place outdoors, where possible.
- Students will enter the school through their designated entranceway.
- When possible, students should arrive at school close to the start of the school day to avoid congregating in common spaces. Student arrival and departure flow details are explained more fully later in this document.
- Directional signage will be used in hallways and stairwells to maintain a steady flow of traffic and minimize congestion. Signs enforcing physical distancing will be posted throughout the school.

Cleaning



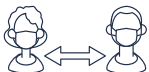
- Cleaning supplies approved by the Public Health Agency of Canada are available in every classroom.
- Hand sanitizing units with an approved solution by the Public Health Agency of Canada have been installed throughout the school.
- All washrooms and high-touch areas will be cleaned a minimum of twice a day and bins emptied frequently. Additionally, all surface cleaning will be completed every night.

Washrooms



- Students must read and adhere to the signage and guidelines posted outside washrooms.
- The signage outlines how many people are permitted in each washroom at one time.
- Students must sanitize their hands before entering the washroom and wash their hands with soap and water before leaving.
- No eating or drinking is permitted in washrooms.
- No more than one student may be in a stall at one time.

Cohorting



“Cohorting” refers to minimizing the number of students and teachers any individual comes into close contact with, and to maintaining consistency within those contacts as much as possible. This is done to limit the potential spread of infection should an individual contract the virus that causes COVID-19.

KG to Grade 12 will be placed in cohorts that include all students enrolled in their class. Class sizes will be limited. Students will be at school every day and interactions between cohorts will be minimal. Some activities such as, performance arts or sports in the middle and upper grades, will involve some mixing of cohorts. The mixing will occur in ways that takes account of appropriate covid protocols for the activity.

Supporting Student Wellbeing

TWS has a long-standing commitment to health and wellbeing. Further, we recognize the importance that positive relationships and positive mental health have on our students' learning. With Covid-19 and the return to school, we are acutely aware that some students may require additional social-emotional support.

Support for our students will continue to be guided by our school counsellor and supported by our class teachers and class advisors, other faculty members, and the school nurse. The focus of the work of our school counsellor is on self-reflection and the development of emotional intelligence to build healthy relationships and to build resilience.

Arrival and Dismissal Processes

Access to the school building and outdoor teaching spaces is restricted to students, faculty, staff, and essential contractors or student support services only.

- All students close enough to walk or bike to school are strongly encouraged to do so. As usual the back entrance will be open to pedestrian and bicycle entry before and after school
- All parents are encouraged to drop students at the Bathurst Street lot and have the students walk down the hill
- If this is not possible, parents may drop off students at the front door quickly and efficiently.
- Parents who walk students down the hill are asked not to gather on the school grounds but to drop off their child and leave.
- Students arriving late should ring the buzzer and an administrator will let them in.

Lower School

- Students should arrive at school prior to 8:20am to have time to get to the exterior door of their classroom, wash hands, and be ready to start class promptly at 8:30am.
- Pick up of LS students will take place between 3:15pm and 4pm each day.
- Students in Grades 1-6 must walk up the hill to be picked up.
 - Other students may be picked up at the front door quickly and efficiently – parents must remain in their vehicles.
- Students not picked up at the end of the day will be brought to the front door of the building where they will wait to be picked up.

High School

- HS Students should arrive at school prior to 8:20am to have time to get to the exterior door of their classroom, wash hands, lock their phone in their Yondr Pouch and be ready to start class promptly at 8:30am.
- Pick up of HS students will take place between 3:35pm and 4pm each day.
 - Students with siblings in Grades 1 -6 must walk up the hill to be picked up.
 - Other HS students may be picked up at the front door quickly and efficiently.
- Students should go directly home after school and should not congregate on the school grounds.
- Students driving themselves to school must have completed and submitted their driving form and must park past the Woodwork Shed as usual.

Lunch

- Lunch time will be outdoors everyday unless inclement weather necessitates otherwise.
- This will be a time when students can connect with students in other grades/cohorts with distancing measures maintained.
- Every student must bring a waste-free packed lunch to school with them each day.
- Lunches cannot be dropped off at school during the school day.
- All food waste/wrapping must go home with the student, recycling and compost pickup in the classrooms is limited at this time.
- Bringing a personal picnic blanket is recommended.
- Use of the microwave is NOT permitted according to Public Health guidelines.
- The café will not be open, Uber eats and other delivery services will not be permitted.
- Sign out privileges will not be granted. Sharing of food is prohibited.
- If eating inside the classroom, talking is not permitted until masks are reapplied.

Gym

- All gym/games classes will be outdoors – rain or shine, exceptions made for thunderstorms.

Athletics

After school cross grades athletics program will begin in October. There are no plans for inter-school athletics activities currently. Students and parents will be informed should the SSAF make a change.

Aftercare

- Aftercare will be provided from the end of the school day until 6:00 pm if arranged ahead of time, month by month.
- At this time the drop-in option continues to be suspended.
- All students in aftercare will be mixing with students from other cohorts so they will need to be masked indoors and always reasonably distanced.
- Aftercare will take place outdoors whenever possible.
- Every child staying for aftercare should bring a snack – no snack can be provided at this time.

Field Trips, Live Performances, and In-person Events

- Teachers will communicate on a class-by-class basis as day and/or overnight field trips are arranged. We will only use guiding companies whose COVID-19 protocols meet the standards set by the province for camps.
- There will be no live performances or indoor in-person events until further notice.