

COVID-19:

Health, safety and operation guidance for schools 2021-2022

8/13/2021

John McGivney School Authority

Introduction:

The John McGivney School Authority (JMSA) will reopen for the 2021-2022 school year with both conventional in-person delivery of learning (with enhanced health and safety protocols) and one multi-grade virtual classroom.

- The delivery of instruction in the virtual classroom will adhere to Ministry of Education (MOE) guidelines for remote learning. Music therapy will continue daily.
- Students attending “in-person” will remain in one cohort for the full school day. Cohorted classes will remain with one classroom team where possible. Rotary arts instruction will be provided by one teacher who will rotate through each classroom daily.

The safe return/entry of medically fragile students is of the utmost importance to the JMSA. Parents/guardians are responsible for consulting with their child’s health care provider(s) to ensure a return to in-person learning is safe for their child.

Parents/guardians dropping off their child late/picking up their child early shall notify Mrs. Pace (519-977-2200). Parents/guardians shall call the school upon their arrival. School staff will meet the parent/guardian and pick up/drop off the child outside the school building.

School access remains restricted to essential visitors only. Exceptions/changes to essential visitor restrictions may occur during the school year, as directed by the MOE.

Three Different Scenarios of Learning:

There is always a possibility that we may have to access different modes of learning due to the spread of COVID-19 in our surrounding community. As directed by the Ministry of Education or our local health unit, School Boards and School Authorities need to be prepared to move seamlessly from one mode of learning to the next. Listed below are the different learning scenarios we may encounter for the 2021-2022 school year:

1. ***Conventional in-person*** learning with full student attendance
2. ***Synchronous Remote Learning*** with 300 minutes of learning opportunities for all students.
3. ***Adapted Learning***, which provides a mixture of conventional in-person learning with partial student attendance and remote learning opportunities. The adapted learning schedule will be provided when required.

Protective Strategies for In-Person Learning:

1. Screening

All JMSA staff and students must self-screen every day before attending school.

- All JMSA parents/guardians have been provided with the a) updated MOE Screening Checklist to be used when performing daily screening on their child and b) a calendar. Parents/guardians shall sign/initial the corresponding date on the calendar as proof of daily student screening. The calendar must be sent into school each day in the child's communication book.
- The calendar will be checked by school staff upon student arrival for verification of daily screening. Students who are not screened cannot remain at school. In addition, student temperatures will continue to be taken on entry into the School each day.
- The Ministry will continue to provide a mandatory daily student/staff screening tool, which may be updated throughout the school year.
- Permanent and long-term occasional school staff must self-screen daily and complete the electronic verification form daily as evidence.
- Occasional school staff shall complete the MOE self-screen checklist prior to arrival at the school.

All staff and students, who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 as identified in the screening tool, **must not** attend school and shall follow the guidance provided in the screening tool, which may include seeking appropriate medical attention as required, and/or being tested for COVID-19. If any student experiences any **COVID-19 related symptoms** while at school, they will be placed in the school's isolation room until parent/caregiver arrives at the school for student pick up.

2. Student masks

The majority of JMSA students are unable to safely wear masks for medical reasons, or they are unable to tolerate wearing a mask due to their developmental level.

- Students who are able to wear masks must wear properly fitted non-medical or cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes, as well as on school buses.
- Where masks can be worn safely based on the activity, masking is encouraged for engaging in physical activity.
- Masks may be temporarily removed indoors to consume food or drink, with a minimum distance of two metres maintained between students.
- Students are not required to wear masks outdoors, but social distancing of 2 metres must be maintained between students.

Parents/guardians will complete a mask exemption form if their child is unable to wear a mask due to a medical or developmental reason.

3. Staff Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) including both medical masks (surgical/procedural) and eye protection (MOE provided face shield/goggles/safety glasses) are required for staff working in close contact with students.

- Disposable gowns are to be used for activities involving bodily fluids.
- Note** Staff masks and eye protection may be removed outdoors if a distance of at least two metres is maintained from others. Staff masks and eye protection may also be removed in a closed environment OR for eating/drinking if a distance of at least two metres is maintained OR environmental barriers (e.g. plexiglass) are in place.

4. Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies used in the prevention of the contraction and spreading of COVID-19. The JMSA will continue to support students on using appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) if applicable, and reinforce its use.

- Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.
- Alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) can be used by children. It is most effective when hands are not visibly soiled.
- For any dirt, blood, body fluids (urine/feces), it is preferred that hands be washed with soap and water.
- Safe placement of the alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) to avoid consumption is important, especially for young children.
- Support or modifications will be provided to allow students to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.

5. Distancing and Congregating

Physical distancing measures will be layered with other public health measures such as screening, hand hygiene, cohorting, enhanced cleaning and masking.

- To the extent possible, a distance of two metres will be maintained between students during the school day.
- The JMSA has removed nonessential furniture.
- Periods of student movement will be limited as to limit student congregation in the hallways.
- Congregation of staff will be limited to minimize potential for adult-to-adult Covid-19 transmission.

6. Cleaning/Disinfecting and Shared Student Resources and Access to Shared Areas

- The JMSA will continue using the same standards of cleaning and disinfecting that we have used since the onset of the pandemic and as recommended by the MOE and Public Health.
- Shared materials are important for some learning activities for very young children (for example, toys for turn taking or imaginative play in kindergarten).

The use of shared materials will be permitted between two to three children within a cohort in the three Early Years classrooms this year.

- Class cohorts will commence using the multipurpose gym at designated times. Toys/resources will be disinfected between cohorts.
- At this time, no school assemblies are permitted for the 2021-2022 school year. If there is a need for staff and students to assemble in a large group for any specific activity or event, staggering cohorts and protective strategies will take place.

7. *Student Transportation*

- The use of non-medical masks for students in grades 1 to 12 is required on school buses. Exemptions are permitted for medical or developmental reasons.
- Students in kindergarten are encouraged to wear masks on school buses.
- Bus drivers continue to be required to wear a mask and eye protection while loading and unloading their school bus.
- Each bus is disinfected based on regulations set forth by the Public Services Health and Safety Association.

8. *Ventilation*

All JMSA areas are mechanically ventilated.

- As an extra measure of ventilation safety, one stand-a-lone ventilation unit is now in each classroom.
- In addition, air purification units have been placed in the school meeting room, lunchroom, and photocopy room.

9. *Specific Programs Changes*

- Music programs are permitted in areas with adequate ventilation. At the JMSA singing will be permitted indoors. Barriers and physical distancing will be maintained within a cohort.
- The JMSA physical education classes will take place indoor in the multipurpose gymnasium and outdoors. Disinfecting of equipment between cohorts is required.
- Staff and students may be permitted to partake in field trips/day trips this school year. Guidelines will be provided.

10. *Management of COVID-19 at JMSA*

These guidelines will change upon direction from Public Health or the MOE. According to Public Health at this time, a high-risk contact is a person or people that have been in contact with a person or people who have COVID-19 symptoms or who have COVID-19.

a. Case and contact management in schools for high-risk contacts

This section outlines guidance for case and contact management for high-risk contacts in schools.

Fully immunized individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms

If the individual identified as a high-risk contact is fully immunized or previously positive and have symptoms compatible with COVID-19, they should:

- isolate and get tested right away
- if they test **negative**, they can discontinue self-isolation once symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms)
- if they test **positive**, they must self-isolate for 10 days

Fully immunized individuals without COVID-19 symptoms

If the individual identified as a high-risk contact is fully immunized or previously positive and does not have symptoms compatible with COVID-19:

- The individual is generally not required to isolate.
- Self-isolation still may be required at the discretion of the local public health unit, especially for individuals who are immunocompromised, and residents of high-risk congregate living settings/inpatients.
- The individual should be recommended for testing but is not required to isolate while awaiting test results if they were not already directed to isolate.

Individuals not fully immunized

If the individual identified as a high-risk contact is **not** fully immunized or previously positive, the individuals should:

- isolate and get tested on or after **day 7** of their isolation period
- regardless of test result, they are required to **isolate for 10 days**

b. Case and contact management in schools for household members of high-risk contacts

This section outlines guidance for case and contact management in schools for household members of high-risk contacts.

Household members of a high-risk contact with COVID-19 symptoms

If the individual identified as a high-risk contact is fully immunized or was previously positive and has symptoms compatible with COVID-19:

- a household member who is fully immunized or previously positive is not required to stay home or isolate
- a household member that is **not** fully immunized or previously positive should isolate while the high-risk contact is awaiting test results or if they are not tested

- If the risk-contact tests negative, a household member is not required to isolate

If the individual identified as a high-risk contact and the household member of the high-risk contact is **not** fully immunized or previously positive and has:

- no symptoms compatible with COVID-19:
 - the household member should stay at home except for essential reasons (for example, work, school) during the high-risk contact's isolate period
- has symptoms compatible with COVID-19:
 - the household member should isolate while the high-risk contact is awaiting test results or if they are not tested.
 - if the high-risk contact test negative, the household member should stay at home except for essential reasons (for example, work or school) during the high-risk contact's isolation period

Household members of a high-risk contact without COVID-19 symptoms

If the individual identified as a high-risk contact is fully immunized or was previously positive and has **no symptoms** compatible with COVID-19 the household member is not required to stay home or isolate.