



**St. Charles Catholic School Welcoming Our Students  
Back: Restoring Safe Schools**

**September 2020/Revised October 2020 to reflect the Response Level  
2/Code Orange for schools**

Welcome back to school! This letter is to inform you of the planning considerations that have taken place for the 2020-**2021** school year and COVID-19. Extra information has been attached to this communication letter to provide you with the updated government information, as well as with set protocols and procedures.

**As of October 2020, this plan has been revised to include St. Charles Catholic School's Response Level 2 Plan to reflect the government's mandate to have schools go to the Orange level. The expectation is that all students at SCCS are in school during the ORANGE RESPONSE LEVEL, unless ill or excused with a doctor's note and engaged already in Blended Learning from home.**

**Effective Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, SCCS will follow Public Health orders and move all Kindergarten to Gr. 8 students to a 2 metre socially distance classroom space. Parents will be advised where your child will relocated and what is happening with his/her grade level. Our goal is to be able to keep all of our students learning in our building during the Orange Response Level Plan.**

**Response Level 2-In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.**

**In-class learning resumes, five days per week, for students in Kindergarten-Gr. 8. Public health orders and guidance Specialists and Educational Assistants may be reassigned duties to help with this new response level.**

**Please note: Throughout this document, you will find additional information/protocols/procedures that have been implemented to reflect Response Level 2 planning for St. Charles Catholic School. All additions to the current document have been made in orange to help distinguish additions made.**

**If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in our school, and Public Health deems it safe to send your child to school, but a family chooses not to, that is your choice. Therefore, your child/family does not qualify for remote learning or homework.**

## **Planning Considerations**

This plan has been created based on the current information provided by both Public Health, as well as the government. It is subject to change and must be seen as a *flexible* plan for the 2020-2021 school year. This re-entry plan must follow provincial public health measures, as well as learning and school day structure. In creating this plan, the government document, **WELCOMING OUR STUDENTS BACK: RESTORING SAFE SCHOOLS** K-12 Guidelines for September 2020 was used as a resource. A plan was also submitted to the government in July outlining three scenarios, and the plans that would be addressed in each of them. At this time, the government has mandated Response Level 1, which is explained in this communication letter, as school re-opens on September 8<sup>th</sup>.

St. Charles Catholic School will stay up to date and ensure that these planning considerations follow Public Health guidelines, and will monitor staff, students, and parents, to make sure that all guidelines are being complied with.

Please take the time to read this document through carefully, as it includes a lot of information that is necessary for the beginning of a new school year during the pandemic. It is necessary to note that this plan must remain flexible, and is subject to change, as updated information from both the government and Public Health becomes available.

Current information about COVID-19 in Manitoba can be found at <http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/>

Or Manitoba Education's Latest COVID-19 Education News website at

<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html> for the latest news and for frequently asked questions.

## **September 2020-Return to In-Class Learning for All K-12 Students**

**Kindergarten to Gr. 8 students will return for 5 days of in-class instruction per week.**

**This is the plan that the government has decided to implement for the start of the 2020-2021 school year, beginning on September 8<sup>th</sup> for all students in K-8.**

### **Response Level 1**

**In this plan, screening, enhanced hand hygiene, physical distancing, use of cohorts will be very important to maintain the health and safety of both our students and staff.**

- **Students would return to classrooms with near normal conditions, and follow all Public Health measures while in-class learning takes place. Staggered recesses, assigned entrances/exits, washrooms, etc. would all be put in place as new protocols. Recesses/cohort entrances and exits/cohort washrooms continue to**

**be in effect.** Extra-curricular activities, BASC activities will be offered if they meet the safety guidelines and requirements. **BASC will continue to be offered as students have been put into cohorts to reflect their daytime cohorts as well.** Sports activities will be offered according to the guidelines set for sports teams/activities by the MHSAA, the Manitoba High School Athletic Association. The MHSAA's Return to School Support Plan allows school sports to return in a controlled, modified way, which is flexible. More information will follow when school begins. **Due to a division-wide agreement among Catholic School Principals, sports teams/activities were not offered to start the school year and will be reviewed for basketball season when the time comes.**

- Students will work in their classrooms as per usual, in their grade level. However, lunch, Phys. Ed, Music, Computer Lab, and French, will all be structured so that students are not overlapping with each other, but still able to utilize those speciality classrooms according to timetables. **Phys. Ed. continues to be offered outdoors as long as weather permits. Music is still being offered as classes are staggered so that cohorts do not come in contact with each other. While SCCS is in the Orange Response Level, Music will be offered in classrooms, or another designated space, as the Music room will be used as a classroom. French continues to be done in the classrooms, so students do not have to move. The Computer Lab has been closed except to Gr. 5 students who share this space. In Middle Years, Grs. 7 & 8 students have their own iPads, and our Gr. 6 students will bring their own technology when a teacher sends an email to parents requesting technology for research purposes. Our Grs. 3-4 students will share a travelling laptop cart, which will be sanitized after each class uses it. Kindergarten-Gr. 2 students have been provided technology for their classrooms to use in centres.**
- Recess will be staggered for all grades, as will lunch hour. Recess is important for all students' health, both physical and mental, so recess will be encouraged. **Students continue to have designated play areas to reflect their cohorts, and lunch continues in classrooms. Grs. 4-8 students are allowed to remove their masks to eat lunch, but when finished eating, are asked to put their masks back on. Masks are not worn during recess unless students choose to, but social distancing is continuously encouraged and reinforced by staff. All Middle Years students have been asked to wear their masks in and out of the school building, which will help maintain safety while they are moving in the hallways to go outside.**
- All students will eat lunch in their classrooms as we begin the new school year. Microwaves will be available in each hallway. Our hot lunch program will also be available to students. All hot lunches will be prepared/wrapped individually to adhere to safety guidelines. **An extra microwave has been added into each cohort hallway, except Kindergarten, to help with lunch heat ups.**
- Staff and students will remain at home if they are not feeling well. There will be no exception to this rule. Staff and students who get sick while at school will be kept isolated until they can be picked up. Immediate pickup will be necessary, and

emergency contacts will be contacted if parents cannot be reached, or cannot come to school to pick up their child in a timely manner. **Students are kept isolated in our sick room when ill and awaiting a pickup, as well as offered a mask if they do not have one. Once students have been picked up, the sick room is sanitized completely with our sanitizing fogger.**

- Both parents and non-essential visitors will be limited from coming into the school. We love to see parents! However, due to the new restrictions, no parents will be allowed access to the school building unless they have made a prior appointment via phone or email with a staff member, or Administration. If parents are picking up their child due to illness or an appointment, you will be buzzed in and must report directly to the office. Office staff may also deliver your child to the doors. Therefore, at drop off and pick up each morning and afternoon, parents will have to leave their children at the doors. Social distancing will be the parents' responsibility. Staff will be on hand at all doors to welcome in students, as well as to see them out of the building at the end of the day. Fobs will not be working on a regular schedule either to help with this new routine.
- BASC parents: If you are using the early BASC drop off or later pick up, you will have to contact Ms. Furutani, and a staff member will meet your child at the door, or deliver your child to the door.
- Students will not use water fountains, only water bottle re-fills, or water cooler options. Please send a clean water bottle daily with your son/daughter.
- Cleaning of washrooms and high touch surfaces, (ie) stair railings, will become daily protocol, and done consistently. **These surfaces continue to be done on a regular consistent schedule and done multiple times daily.**
- Teachers will teach students about personal hygiene practices, as per our standard procedure at the start of every school year. Parents are also expected to discuss these hygiene practices at home too. **Continuous on-going discussion and review are important and appreciated when reinforced by parents at home.**

*For example:*

- Discuss good hand washing with your child, and the importance of it. This is also good preparation for our upcoming flu season. **5 extra handwashing stations have been added to our current sinks, to help with daily handwashing.**
- Discuss the importance of hand sanitizing if your child is not able to hand wash. **All students participate in hand sanitizing as they enter the building, and at various times throughout the day. Hand washing is still encouraged multiple times throughout the day.**
- Remind your child that sneezing or coughing into his/her arm is the best option.
- Let them know that it's okay to wear a mask if they feel more comfortable, and some of their classmates and teachers will be too. **Even though masks are only mandated from Gr. 4 and up, masks are strongly encouraged for our younger students as well, as shared in previous communications with parents.**

- Let them know that school will be different this year, but all of the staff at SCCS will do their very best to keep everyone as safe as possible.
- Remind them that it's okay to ask their teachers or Administration questions for reassurance or clarity.
- Talking with your child prior to school starting will ensure that all expectations are clear and understood. Teachers will also be discussing them with their classes at the beginning of the new school year and will continue to reinforce the expectations/mandates as time goes on. **Vigilance is key and staff are continuing to share expectations with their students and reinforce all procedures and protocols to keep everyone safe. Consistent communication between home/school is necessary as protocols and procedures are implemented.**

### **Institutional Operations**

#### **Pandemic Response Team**

St. Charles Catholic School has established a Pandemic Response Team, which includes Administration, Executive Board members, our Maintenance Manager, IT specialist, as well as other key staff members. This team met regularly during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to do so. All recommendations from the Public Health Office are followed, and plans are built around these recommendations. As Principal, I am involved in multiple meetings which involve the latest COVID-19 pandemic information, mandates, planning templates, and discussions. **These meetings I attend are on a weekly basis and increase if there are concerns in the province that need addressing/sharing with schools.**

#### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

- Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing will continue on a daily basis, as well as encouraging all students to wash their hands more frequently. This includes going in and out of their classroom, when visiting the Computer Lab, Music room, etc.
- Daily sanitizing of "high touch" areas will be done. Teachers will also be sanitizing more frequently in their classrooms each day.
- Each classroom has hand sanitizer/cleaning supplies available.
- Our night cleaner will also pay more attention to sanitizing details throughout the school building.
- Our building Maintenance Manager will continue with implementing the daily cleaning and disinfecting.
- **SCCS has also purchased a sanitizing fogger to help with disinfecting spaces that are harder to clean, for example, gym equipment, the sick room, etc. Each weekend, the entire school is fogged by our cleaning company to ensure that everyone is kept safe. I also have approval from the Board to contact a company that is COVID certified to deep clean/sanitize if a case of COVID**

**happens in our building at any time. A new evening cleaning crew has been implemented and the importance of cleaning/sanitizing has been stressed.**

### **Hand Hygiene**

- As students enter the building, they will be required to hand sanitize.
- Each classroom also has hand sanitizer in it. Students would be encouraged to not only use hand sanitizer, but also to wash their hands frequently and this would be scheduled into their school day at regular intervals.
- If students are moving between classrooms (ie) to the Music room, hand sanitizing would be a requirement.

### **Screening**

- Screening for symptoms of COVID-19 must occur each day prior to coming to school.
- Parents must follow home screening measures according to the government website prior to sending their child to school. The screening tools developed by the Province of Manitoba are to be used as a reference. (Manitoba COVID-19 Screening Tool)
- **An up-to-date list of symptoms can be found at:**

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>

[https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/.](https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/)

Use the Self-Assessment tool to check if your child should be tested for COVID-19. Call Health Links at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 if you notice symptoms or if you need more information. **Since we are not medical professionals, we always direct parents to contact Healthlinks with any medical questions they may have.**

- Any students who report to school and are unwell will be sent home immediately. If they are already at school, parents will be called, and students will be kept isolated in a quarantine room until they are picked up. The student's workspace would be disinfected immediately.
- Mandates and information provided by Public Health will be followed diligently. **This will continue and there are no exceptions to this.**

### **Physical Distancing In and Around the School**

- Signage regarding physical distancing, proper hand hygiene and symptoms of COVID-19 are all around the school, and have been in place since our soft re-opening in June 2020. Signs are also found on all of the main doors of our school. **Since school began, we have added many more signs to reflect social distancing, proper hand hygiene and COVID-19 symptoms.**
- Physical/social distancing will enforced wherever possible. Again, signage has been displayed in multiple areas in the school, and students will be encouraged to move along one side of hallway/staircase, etc., as per usual.



- Classes will experience staggered flow with regards to recess, classroom breaks, lunch, etc.
- Staggered drop off and pick up will be implemented.
- Since physical distancing may be difficult to do all the time in a school setting, cohorts will be established at SCCS. Cohorts involve keeping groups of students together and avoiding interaction with other cohorts.
- Middle Years students will not be changing classes this year. Instead, teachers will change classes which will help with cohorts in Middle Years.
- **Public Health has advised that schools should continue all efforts to ensure as much physical distancing as possible, (2 metres), and respond to classroom space adjustments. Cohorts or remote/blended learning is required when that is not possible. Excess furniture is to be removed from classrooms to create additional space. Students/classrooms may have to utilize different areas in school to help maintain the 2 metre physical distancing protocols.**
- **Personal Protective Equipment**  
As of August 13<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Roussin, Manitoba's Chief Health Officer, has strongly recommended masks for children/staff in Grs. 5 and up. Parents who have children in younger grades may choose to have their children wear a mask as well.
- Since masks have not been made mandatory by Public Health at this time, it will be encouraged at the school level. However, SCCS is strongly encouraging the use of masks for the recommended grades. Masks are now available to order on our uniform website. Masks do not have to be uniform colours.
- If a staff member or a student chooses to wear a mask to school, it is important that the mask be worn properly. Instruction to staff will be given prior to school starting, and teachers will discuss with students when classes begin.
- Practicing how to wear a mask at home will be important prior to school beginning. Students will remove their mask when eating or drinking, but for the most part, will wear them for a good part of each school day.
- **Prior to school starting on Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Roussin mandated masks from Grs. 4 and up. SCCS continues to strongly encourage and recommends masks for our younger students in Kindergarten to Gr. 3. Our Gr. <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> students all wear masks and that meets the government suggestion of Gr. 3 students in a Gr. <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> split class should wear masks while at school.**

### **Limiting Non-Essential Visitors**

- Although parent involvement in our school community is important and widely accepted, provincial guidelines instruct us to limit the number of non-essential visitors in the school for the time being. As previously mentioned, if possible, parents are asked to conduct school business via email or telephone. Parents may accompany their children to the school doors, but we ask that parents refrain from coming into the school. **This will continue, as it makes both staff and students**

**feel more safe and comfortable when they are in the building teaching and learning.**

### **Nutrition Program/Food Sharing**

- Our school cafeteria prepares hot lunch meals in advance and in-house, and will be pre-packaging all lunches individually. This is already standard procedure at St. Charles Catholic School.
- St. Charles Catholic School has a no share food policy, which are students are well aware of. Please remind your child not to share food when having lunch or snacks.

### **Field Trips**

- Field trips will not be encouraged for the beginning of the school year, and will be brought forward to Administration on a case-by-case basis as the school year progresses. **At this time, due to the province going from yellow to orange, no field trips have been planned. Public Health has asked that if we have planned field trips to date, that they be postponed and if not, no field trips should be planned going forward at this time.**

### **Learning Preparedness**

#### **Music Education**

- SCCS Music teachers will follow guidelines set out for best music protocol, as well as do more disinfecting in their perspective classrooms. Unfortunately, singing will not be encouraged this year, due to concerns with transmission.
- Any instruments used in the Kindergarten to Gr. 2 Music classes, (ie) xylophones, will be disinfected between classes.
- Since all of our Grs. 3-8 students have their own instruments, (ie) violins, sharing will not be an issue.

#### **Physical Education**

- For Physical Education, SCCS Phys. Ed. specialists will work within the guidelines mandated, and will take Phys. Ed. classes outside whenever possible, as well as encourage social distancing wherever possible. **The majority of Phys. Ed. classes are outside unless our weather is inclement.**
- Usually our Grs. 4-8 students are required to change for Phys. Ed. classes, but this would not be implemented at the start of this school year.
- Toys/manipulatives/gym equipment, etc. will be used in cohort/classroom groups, and cleaned on a regular basis.
- Students will not be allowed to bring toys from home to play with during Phys. Ed., at recess, or in after school care.

#### **Assemblies/School Masses/School Gatherings**



- Large group gatherings such as assemblies and School Masses would not be held as an entire school community. Having smaller group meetings/activities would be implemented where possible. **At this time, we are doing our assemblies and School Masses virtually, and this seems to be working well at SCCS.**

### **Extra-curricular Activities/Sports**

- At St. Charles Catholic School, we offer a variety of option for our students, and as long as public health orders can be maintained, we will offer extra-curricular activities in small group situations. All sports activities will be reintroduced as we are able, and according to the mandate in place at the given time.
- We have an after school care program (BASC), which offers different extra-curricular programming. The BASC Director has already started planning activities which could easily incorporate social distancing/safety protocols. Also, limiting the number of students involved in these extra-curricular activities will be put into place. At this time, we will follow protocols and guidelines mandated regarding sports programming, (ie) sports teams.
- For the first term, Middle Years students will not be participating in Enrichment or Advisory Groups. Home room periods will be used for Recovery Learning during this scheduled time instead, and will focus on both Literacy and Numeracy outcomes. Enrichment and Advisory Groups may be implemented during Term 2 and 3. **Plans are being discussed for possibly implementing Enrichment and Advisory Groups during Term 2 and 3, while being able to maintain social distancing.**

### **Blended Learning**

- There is a great possibility that there will be students who must remain home for short or long periods of time during the pandemic due to illness, isolation, medical concerns. If this does occur, teachers will send and receive assignments electronically, or send learning packages as needed. **The expectation is that students will participate in online learning and submit assignments for assessment. Parents should be checking teacher websites/Powerschool on a regular basis to ensure that all deadlines are being met. Teacher contact is always encouraged.**
- If internet connectivity is a persistent issue, teachers and administration will strategize to find alternatives for families.
- Frequent email and phone communication with students and parents will be in place to ensure engagement during this remote learning. This will be facilitated by the classroom teacher, but may also require involvement from support staff and specialist teachers. **Currently, all teachers have a classroom website which is kept up to date and current.**

## **Recovery Learning**

- Recovery learning needs have already been identified in student report card comments this past June.
- Teachers have already engaged in discussions with each other regarding recovery learning, especially in the areas of numeracy and literacy.
- Supports will be given to all students who need it. Recovery learning discussions amongst teachers will continue, and both Administration and Resource have been involved in the discussions/planning for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Teachers will take time to assess all of their students at the beginning of the new school year, and see where the needs/gaps are.
- Support will be given to teachers from both Administration and Resource if need be.
- Support staff will also be called upon to help with supporting both teachers and students in the recovery learning process. **All students are participating in Recovery Learning where needed on a daily basis, and our at-risk students have a more formal plan being implemented for them, which includes Resource support, EA support, clinician support, or a combination of the above.**
- Consistent home/school communication will continue, as per our usual standard.
- Home/school communication is one of our strengths.

## **School Staff Preparedness**

### **Personal Risk Factors**

- Personal risk factors/medical accommodations for staff and teachers will be handled on a case by case basis, as per usual.
- Staff members will have to remain at home if they are ill, have any COVID-19 symptoms, or display any respiratory symptoms. Staff members will participate in a daily self-screening to check for COVID symptoms.
- Staff members may also have to remain at home if a close family member is in isolation, or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a staff member becomes ill while at school, they will immediately report to the Principal. The staff member's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected immediately. The Principal will arrange coverage and the staff member will be sent home immediately. **Staff have been following this protocol diligently since school began.**

## **STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

### **Attendance and Participation in Remote Learning**

- Students are expected to attend in-class learning unless they are ill or exhibiting symptoms. Families will be required to report any student absences to the school office as per our usual absentee procedure. If remote learning does occur, students

will be expected to participate, and school staff will be regularly following up with both students and parents.

- Students would participate in remote learning via packaged work, on-line websites, etc.
- As we did this past spring, teachers continuously reached out to both parents and students during remote learning via emails, phone, Zoom meetings and Microsoft Teams meetings. This protocol will continue if students are not in school, and because our school community is close-knit, this is not an unreasonable or unexpected procedure.
- Both Zoom and Microsoft Team Meetings will be used in the case of remote learning.
- **As stated previously, all teaching staff maintain current websites which are updated consistently. More IT has been purchased this year in preparation for Remote Learning, should our schools go to the Red Category.**

### **Illness at School**

- Students who become ill at school will be removed from their classroom, and sent to a quarantine room to wait for their parent or emergency contact to pick them up. Parents will be called immediately, and if parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. **It is imperative that pickup occurs as quickly as possible in all cases.**
- The student's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected immediately following their leaving the classroom.
- If a student does test positive for COVID-19, Public Health will become involved and will provide direction for Administration at that time. **Public Health will call me any day or time, as I had to provide my personal contact information to the government in case Public Health needs to contact me about a COVID case. There are set protocols which must be put in place, and therefore, information will be shared accordingly. I have developed a Flow Chart inline with the government and Public Health protocols which will be implemented should a COVID-19 case be identified in our school. Public Health will direct communication through me to the parent community.**

### **Other Important Information**

- Desks instead of tables have been ordered for the Grs. 1 & ½ classrooms to help with physical distancing.
- Kindergarten student tables will have shields around their space when they are at their tables. **Extra desk shields are available for small group and 1:1 use.**
- Three portable hand washing stations will be set up in each of the main classroom hallways to help with hand washing. **As stated earlier, we have added 2 extra hand washing stations.**

- Each classroom is equipped with hand sanitizer and disinfectant spray bottles.
- Teachers will stagger cubby/locker use for their class to avoid crowds in the hallways. **All cubbies and lockers are on the ongoing sanitization routine that is done daily.**
- Lunch and recess will be staggered. More information will be shared with parents prior to school starting on Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>.
- BASC will continue this school year, however, parents will not be allowed in the building to drop off or pick up their children.
- Daily sanitization of high touch areas will be implemented.
- Water fountains will be shut down, but water bottle refill stations will be allowed.
- School supplies will be allowed to be brought into school during the first week. (Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>-Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>)
- Teachers will incorporate some outdoor learning classes whenever possible.
- All staff will participate in Professional Development regarding new school protocols during the week of Sept. 2-4<sup>th</sup>.
- All parents/guardians must sign a waiver acknowledging their understanding of the new protocols at SCCS due to COVID-19. This waiver must either be emailed directly to the Principal at [tnarynski@stccs.ca](mailto:tnarynski@stccs.ca) or dropped off at the Family Information Day on September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Your support, cooperation and understanding of these new protocols are essential for this school year to be successful. We understand that everyone is anxious about the upcoming school year, and so are we. However, at SCCS, we will do our best to make the school the warm, friendly, and the safe environment that it has always been. Being kind to each other and showing patience is much appreciated as we navigate this unknown territory together.

You will find attached information from the government regarding the many protocols and procedures listed above, as well as some frequently asked questions that you may have.

As always, my door is always open.

Sincerely,  
Tammy

