



Best Practices for COVID-19 South Shore Waldorf School 2020-2021

South Shore Waldorf School

Education of the Head, Heart, and Hands



August 5, 2020

Dear SSWS Families,

The Re-Opening Committee along with faculty have come up with Document of Best Practices regarding COVID-19 which we would like to share with all of you.

The Province's guidelines for schools re-opening in September was recently published in their Back to School Plan. Our goal was to resolve how to meet the Province's guidelines in ways that do not unreasonably impact our daily operations and the delivery of an authentic education while recognizing our school has a collective responsibility to reduce the risk of introducing and transmitting Corona Virus in our communities.

Please find attached our school's individual Document of Best Practices and a quick glance summary of Nova Scotia's Back to School Plan that references aspects of this official document that pertain to us. There are links to the full Back to School Plan document if you wish to read further.

Our next steps are:

- 1 - to hear from faculty regarding their ideas for home-based learning should our school be required to close
- 2 - to hear from the whole community at our next Town Hall
- 3 - to complete enrolment!

Respectfully,

The SSWS Re-Opening Committee

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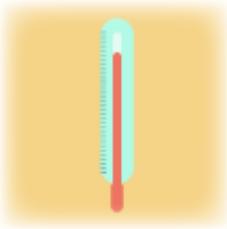
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Introduction:

At present, these practices are informed by the provincial regulations for reopening schools and early childhood centres as well as Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto, AWSNA and WECAN (our accreditation bodies), and what we have seen in other jurisdictions.

There will be more information coming from faculty regarding learning at home should that scenario occur. As with everything, this document is fluid and we will welcome your thoughts at the next Town Hall.

Health:



Before attending school each day, parents are required to give their child a health check. Please see the attached Health Check Chart. If a child is experiencing any of the symptoms related to COVID-19, they must stay home until they are free of symptoms or have received a negative COVID-19 test and are free of symptoms. If you have concerns or questions regarding your child's health, please contact 811 and follow their directions.

A child with a chronic stable cough, sneeze, runny nose or nasal congestion that is unchanged and clearly linked to a known medical condition such as asthma or allergies may still be able to attend school.

If a child becomes sick at school, parents or an emergency contact need to pick them up within 30 minutes of being called. If a child develops symptoms consistent with a possible COVID-19 infection, they will be taken to the staff room, to a comfortable healing space. A staff member will watch over the child until the parent/guardian comes to pick up the child. Common areas and toys used by the child will be cleaned.

Having a COVID-19 test for a child is at the parents' discretion. If a teacher or a child has a positive COVID-19 test, they are to inform the school immediately. The school will inform the rest of the school community (specifying which grade, not which person - much like our policy on lice), and follow the public health guidelines at the time of the outbreak. If you have concerns or questions regarding your child's health, please call 811 for directions.

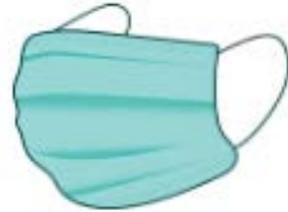
The most important thing that we can do as parents to minimise the spread of the virus, is to keep sick children at home.

Practices:

Personal Protective Equipment:

Children and teachers are not required to wear masks at school. Essential visitors, which includes parents dropping off their kindergarten children, are asked to wear masks and do a health check themselves if they need to go inside the school building.

Staff will maintain current practices for the use of PPE with respect to the hazards normally encountered in their work with the children, with one exception - staff will wear a medical mask when caring for a child who is exhibiting signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. Glove use is only required as per our regular practices and current policies.



Routine Change to Ensure a Safe Flow:



Miss Kaitlin will be welcoming the children from Robin's nest Kindergarten in the morning in the forest. Miss Moni will be welcoming the children from Chickadee Hollow in the morning in the Kindergarten playground. We invite parents to bring their child into the forest or the kindergarten playground to ensure a smooth transition for their child. Families who have a child in each kindergarten, may take the older sibling into the Kindergarten playground if needed. Please be mindful of social distancing with other families during this transition period.

Parents are asked to drop off Grades children at the fence, where they will then go straight to their classroom. If a child needs their parent to go further, please maintain social distance with others.

Best Practice Hygiene:

Children (and teachers!) will wash their hands when they first come to school. Chickadee Hollow Kindergarten parents can help their child with this in the Chickadee Hollow bathroom. Miss Kaitlin will attend to the Robin's nest children when they leave the forest.

All Teachers will educate children on good handwashing technique and coughing / sneezing etiquette.

Handwashing will also take place before and after going outside and before and after eating.

Essential visitors to the school will have access to hand sanitizer or a visitors-only bathroom to wash their hands.

Toys from home will need to stay at home. Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized at the start and end of each day, and during, when necessary. Children will use their own supplies (provided by the school) and if shared equipment is used, this will be cleaned between use.



We are ordering environmentally friendly and health conscious cleaning and sanitation products to be used in the school.

Lunchtime / Snacktime:



Grades children already bring their own lunches, and we already have a policy of not sharing food. During lunch and snack time, more physical distance between children may be created.

The Kindergarten will still offer our healthy snack program every day. We are not offering our Tuesday and Thursday lunch program presently, but will at a later time if it becomes feasible. Children's involvement in food preparation will be slightly altered but it will still be a part of the kindergarten experience.

Class Bubbles:

As much as possible, classes will remain in their own 'bubble'. We are blessed to have extensive outdoor space so that this can continue during recess and other outdoor time. The two kindergartens are considered to be one 'bubble'.



More time outside:

As per recommendations, our school will be spending even more time outside. Teachers are being inventive and looking forward to utilizing outside classrooms.

When children are inside, classrooms will be well ventilated.

Other Considerations:

We ask parents to be mindful of who they come into contact with and where they travel, so we can endeavour to keep our school community healthy. Even though children are not usually badly affected by the virus, we have to consider their more vulnerable family members, friends and the wider community.

For the time being, Aftercare will be for students of SSWS only. Please let the Aftercare coordinator know of your need for Aftercare and pre register.

Early Morning Care will be in your child's classroom with prior arrangement.

Of course, teachers will also have to go home / stay home if they are unwell. The reality of our school is that we have a limited pool of substitute teachers. In the event of no available teachers, it is possible (although this would be the last possible resort) for your child's class to be cancelled until the teacher returns or a substitute is found.

Teachers will have ready and on hand 'If I have to stay home, Student lesson plan folders' to be used by the substitute teacher for in-class learning or for the student, should they have to self isolate at home.

During this time of heightened stress in the wider world, we ask for everyone to be patient and understanding, as we endeavour to make our children's school experience an excellent one.

COVID-19 Daily Checklist

It is important to closely monitor your health and the health of those you care for. Please consider these questions each day before leaving home and entering public spaces.

If you are feeling sick, you should **stay home or go home immediately, and follow the instructions below.**

1

Are you feeling sick?

If yes, stay home and avoid public spaces, including work, school/child care, and shopping.

2

Do you have any of these symptoms?



Fever
(i.e. chills,
sweats)



Cough or
worsening of a
previous cough



Sore throat



Headache



Shortness of
breath



Muscle
aches



Sneezing



Nasal congestion/
runny nose



Hoarse voice



Diarrhea



Unusual
fatigue



Loss of sense
of smell or
taste



Red, purple or blueish
lesions (spots) on the
feet, toes or fingers
without clear cause

If yes, stay home and contact 811 to be screened for testing for COVID-19.

3

In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside Atlantic Canada?

If yes, you must stay home. You are required by law to self-isolate for 14 days upon return to Atlantic Canada.

4

In the last 14 days, have you had close contact (within 2 metres / 6 feet) with someone confirmed to have COVID-19?

If yes, you must stay home. You are required by law to self-isolate if you have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19. If you haven't spoken with Public Health or been tested, you should contact 811 to be screened for testing for COVID-19.

5

Are you waiting for results from a COVID-19 test?

If yes, stay home. You are required by law to self-isolate while awaiting COVID-19 test results. Please follow instructions given by Public Health.

Revised July 15, 2020