

Cornerstone Christian Academy's Safe Reopening Plan Re: COVID-19

August 6, 2020

It is important to note that this plan reflects the evidence available at the present time, and changes may occur as new evidence or differing guidelines emerge. It is a working document.

Introduction

Cornerstone Christian Academy has put together a plan for the safe return of students to school. This plan was created after an investigation of the Ministry of Education's suggestions, along with advice from the Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto, and the KFL&A Public Health Unit. It is designed to meet the needs of both students and parents. It allows for children to return to the classroom fulltime, with a diverse curriculum to help them reach their God given potential. It also gives parents the opportunity to return to their regular work schedule.

"...It is critical to balance the risks of direct infection and transmission of SCARS-CoV-2 (the causative agent of COVID-19) in children with the harms of school closure on their physical and mental health." (COVID-19:

Recommendations for School Reopening, June 17, 2020, SickKids, page 2, sickkids.ca). Although it is not possible to remove all risks of infection, as COVID-19 is already established in our country, Cornerstone will strive to keep your child healthy as they return to the classroom. We have implemented the following policies and procedures in preparation for a safe return to school in September, 2020.

Pre-Screening

1. It is the parents' responsibility to screen children daily for fever, coughs, and other related symptoms. Check lists will be provided to assist parents with this home screening; signed statements will be returned daily.
2. Students, teachers, and parents who have signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (According to the Ministry of Health guidelines) should stay home and return should be guided by the KFL&A Public Health Unit protocols.
3. Should a child become ill during the day with signs/symptoms of COVID-19, he/she will be isolated in a safe place two metres apart from others. Staff will use vocabulary to not generate fear in the child. Staff will be provided with disposable safety equipment to wear while caring for the ill child. Parents/caregivers will be contacted and instructed to pick up the child immediately. The parent should maintain a safe distance from staff and other children when arriving to pick up the ill child. Ministry of Health and/or KFL&A Public Health guidelines should be followed by the family.
4. Should a staff member develop signs/symptoms, they will be asked to self-isolate, leave the school, and seek advice from the Ministry of Health and/or KFL&A Public Health.
5. Children who are required to stay at home due to COVID infection or exposure will be provided with learning from home opportunities via live stream, pre-taped videos, or zoom.

Masks

“...if worn incorrectly, it could lead to increased risk of infection and it is not practical for a child to wear a mask properly for the duration of a school day.” (COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, June 17, 2020, SickKids, page 5, sickkids.ca).

“Children and youth’s social development hinges upon their interactions, facial expressions and body language.” (COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, July 29, 2020, SickKids, page 13, sickkids.ca).

“When transmission in the community is low, the use of non-medical masks throughout the entire school day should not be mandatory...but use should always be respected if a student chooses to wear one.” (COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, July 29, 2020, SickKids, page 12, sickkids.ca).

1. The wearing of masks by children in grades Kindergarten-Readiness, JK, SK, grades 1, 2 & 3 is not required. Should a parent opt to have their child wear a mask, it is the responsibility of the parent to dispose of the mask and/or wash reusable masks.
2. Students in grades 4-8 are not required to wear masks while working independently at their desks. For activities in which a 1 metre separation between individuals may not be maintained, the teacher may request that masks be worn. Students will be instructed to sanitize hands before and after touching their masks.
3. The “homeroom” teacher is not required to wear a mask/shield when working within their own class cohort, unless they are working one-on-one in close proximity with a child. However, the teacher may opt to wear a mask/shield at all times.
4. Should a supply teacher be required to temporarily replace a teacher, the teacher would be required to wear a mask for the duration of the time inside the school.
5. Masks will not be required while out doors.

Hand Hygiene

“...proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of most respiratory viruses...” (COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, June 17, 2020, SickKids, page 4, sickkids.ca).

1. Children will be taught proper handwashing techniques on the first day of school.
2. Hand-sanitizer will be available in each classroom.
3. Age appropriate signage will be placed throughout the school to remind children to sanitize/wash.
4. Handwashing/sanitizing breaks will be included in the daily schedule.
5. Hand-sanitizer will be stationed outside the washrooms and children will be encouraged to sanitize before entering, and to wash with soap and water before leaving. The outer washroom doors will be propped open.
6. Children will be reminded of respiratory etiquette – sneezing into elbow/sleeve.
7. Each classroom will have disinfectant wipes to wipe down communal things (ie. iPads) before and after use.
8. Children will perform hand hygiene prior to gym class and recess.

Cohorting

“The purpose of cohorting is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that if a child/youth or employee develops infection, the number of exposures would be reduced. (COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, July 29, 2020, SickKids, page 14, sickkids.ca).” Each class will become a ‘cohort’. Pre-COVID, Cornerstone routinely had small class sizes of 15 or less, and we will continue to maintain small numbers in each class.

1. The cohort will be in one class, with the majority of the subjects being taught by their homeroom teacher, in the same room.
2. If another teacher enters the room to teach a speciality subject, they must hand sanitize before entering and upon exiting the room, and wear a mask/shield. In the case of French, where the students might need to see the facial expression/phonetic formation, the teacher might remove the mask temporarily, if at least 6 feet away from the students, to teach the concept.
3. For the immediate future, activities involving the entire school working on a single project (ie Power Hour) will be put on hold.
4. Should an all school assembly/chapel be held, students will be physically distanced with each cohort set apart from other cohorts.
5. Leadership training is of high importance at Cornerstone, but some practical sessions will be on hold for the immediate future:
 - Older students will not serve as lunch buddies to the primary students. Parents are asked to provide training for their young children regarding the opening and closing of lunch containers, juice boxes, peeling of fruit, etc. It is best if no one other than your child touches his/her food.
 - Older students will not routinely serve as helpers with shoe tying, jacket zippers, etc. as they have in the past. Parents are asked to provide clothing that the child can manage with minimal help. Exception: If a young child requires immediate assistance, an older sibling may assist the younger, who will be set apart from their cohort, or an older, non-related student will sanitize hands and wear a mask to offer the needed assistance.
 - Should an older student serve as reading buddy for a younger, the two will meet in the hall and will be separated by a standing piece of clear plastic or plexiglass.

Physical Distancing

“...Strict physical distancing should not be emphasized to children in the school setting as it is not practical and could cause significant psychological harm.” (COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, June 17, 2020, SickKids, page 6, sickkids.ca).

The objective of physical distancing, maintaining a minimum of two metres between people, has been a widely used strategy during this pandemic. Physical distancing with children is not practical; interaction with peers is an important part of development. We do not want this to become a stressful situation for the children or the teachers and thus, strict physical distancing within the cohort will not be strongly enforced. However, things will be implemented to assist with some natural physical distancing within each classroom.

1. Desks will be scattered throughout the room, with spacing between each desk.
2. When weather permits, classes may be held outside.

3. Children will have 'individualized supply bins' to house their own art utensils, thus reducing the need to borrow or share.
4. Students will eat lunch and snack at their own desks, or potentially outside, should weather allow. Food sharing will not be permitted.
5. Physical distancing will not be required for recess outside; close contact activities between cohorts will be discouraged.
6. As children enter and exit the building, care will be taken to avoid one cohort passing closely by another cohort.
7. The number of students at anyone time in the washroom will be limited, unless from the same cohort.

Physical Education

"Sports and physical education classes should be encouraged and continue according to available protocols."

(COVID-19: Recommendations for School Reopening, June 17, 2020, SickKids, page 6, sickkids.ca).

1. Physical education classes will continue.
2. Attention will be taken to avoid close contact activities and games.
3. Equipment will be cleaned or isolated between use.
4. When possible, classes will be held outside rather than in the gymnasium.

Cleaning of the Building

1. All rooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily, using a product that safely kills germs. This includes sanitizing desk tops, door knobs, light switches, handrails, and other high touch areas.
2. High touch areas in the washrooms will be disinfected mid-day, with a complete cleaning at the end of each day.
3. Checklists will be created to monitor completion.
4. Doors will be propped open, as much as possible, to eliminate the touching of door handles when entering or exiting a room.
5. School toys will be of material that can be easily cleaned. Children should not bring toys or trinkets from home.
6. Phones, photocopier, computers, etc. are to be wiped down with sanitizer after use.

Ventilation

The ventilation system will be set to bring outside air into the building, rather than recirculating air, as much as possible.

Parents in the Building

Parents have always been a welcomed and valued addition to our classrooms. However, for the foreseeable future, it is best if parents do not come into the school unnecessarily. Parents who have chosen a tuition plan to assist at the school, will be given specific instructions as to where he/she may work; unfortunately, it will not be in a classroom. Parents will be required to wear a mask while inside the building.

Children with Compromised Immunized Systems

Returning to school could present a unique challenge to children with underlying health concerns. Upon consultation with your child's doctor, parents are welcome to speak with Cornerstone staff to discuss details of how we can best meet your child's health and educational needs.

Record Keeping

The school will keep daily records of anyone entering the building, including names and times, to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case. School principals are mandated to report infectious diseases under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. The KFL&A Public Health could recommend additional testing, self isolation, cleaning advice, or a temporary closure.

Miscellaneous

1. Hot lunch sales will not occur for the immediate future
2. The children will not have access to the library, but a variety of books will be placed in the classrooms for the children to borrow and take home. Upon return, the books will be placed in isolation for 48 hours before being returned to the shelf for further borrowing.
3. If teachers take assignments to their own homes for marking, they will be returned to the school and left in isolation for 48 hours before being returned to students.

COVID-19 Second Wave

Should the COVID-19 situation worsen, and schools be forced to close again, Cornerstone is prepared to quickly return to online learning with videos being prepared by the classroom teachers. Internet capabilities at the school are being upgraded to allow for a live streaming option, as well.