



WRCA School Restart - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Update: Feb 24, 2020 - Highlighted

Update: Oct 7, 2020 - Highlighted

Update: Sept 18, 2020 – Highlighted

Update: Sept 8, 2020 – Highlighted

Several parents have asked questions regarding the [WRCA Restart Plan](#), so we have developed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. We hope this will be helpful in providing valuable information for parents and our school community.

1. Environment Measures

1.1 Are the portable classrooms an appropriate environment for learning?

The new Senior School building will be ready for occupancy on 1 January 2021 and we are hoping to move into the new facility earlier, if possible. The portable classrooms are environmentally safe; however, we have asked teachers to keep the doors and windows open for optimal ventilation. The library will also be moving out of the portables.

2. Administrative Measures

2.1 How long will the temporary off-site learning program be available?

Our off-site program is intended for families who are reluctant to return to school due to safety concerns. We will assess parent attitudes at the end of each month to determine if safety concerns have been addressed sufficiently for families to return to the in-class option.

2.2 Will the off-site learning option be available for students who have COVID symptoms and need to self-isolate for 14 days?

Yes.

2.3 Will there be an option for part-time Kindergarten?

Not at this time.

2.4 Will a hybrid learning model be made available (mixture of learning at home and at school)?

The Ministry of Education has indicated the transitional option should not include programming that would provide partial in-class attendance since it is based on a reluctance to return to school due to safety concerns.

2.5 Will there be an off-site option made available for Junior Kindergarten?

Not at this time.

2.6 What will the off-site program look like?

Off-site learning for Senior School students will mirror the in-class option so students are current with the class. Off-site learning for Junior School use the SeeSaw platform but also with efforts to match the in-class learning program.

2.7 How will off-site students connect with their teachers?

Teachers will be able to answer questions where appropriate online via MS Teams, Zoom, Managebac and/or through email.

2.8 Will it be the same Senior School off-site learning program as last year?

No. Project-based learning will not be the primary focus of instruction for Senior School students.

2.9 How long do families wait to return to school if they decide the off-site learning option?

Families can choose to send their children back to school when they feel safe to do so, however it is our desire (and the BC Ministry of Education's desire) to have everyone on-site as soon as possible.

2.10 Are we correct in assuming that if the Ministry of Health suspends on-site learning during the school year our students will have the opportunity to transition to off-site learning?

At the beginning of this school year, the Ministry of Education has determined we will enter Stage 2 of re-opening schools. The Stage approach provides an opportunity to move forward or back to a Stage if necessary, safely and securely.

2.11 Are there provisions in the IB Diploma programme with regard to functioning during the pandemic? Is Pamoja an option?

As we enter Stage 2 of reopening WRCA, IB Diploma students are invited back to an in-class program. Last spring, during Stage 3 and 4, IBDP students were provided instruction as a

separate group. Pamoja is not considered a viable option if students are provided in-class or off-site instruction by an IB teacher.

2.12 If COVID continues to get worse, would it be helpful to have a hybrid model (half on-site and half off-site) or all off-site if needed?

A hybrid model could be used if the Ministry of Education determines we should be forced back to Stage 3 or 4.

2.13 Are visitors allowed at WRCA during the pandemic?

Visitor access during school hours will be prioritized according to those supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g. substitute teachers, public health nurses, etc.) All visitors are required to confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering the building, and we will record the date, name and contact information for all visitors.

2.14 Can before and after school care be provided?

We are currently taking another look at the Club Care program to see if we provide this opportunity during Stage 2 of school re-opening.

2.15 Will students be able to use their phones during the school day?

No. We want to continue implementing the [Technology Use Policy](#) with no cell phones being used by students during the school day.

2.16 Will students be allowed to leave for lunch?

During the pandemic, students will not be allowed to leave the school campus at any time, including lunch.

2.17 When will the hot lunch program be provided?

We will revisit offering the hot lunch program at the first few weeks of school.

2.18 We would love to see the school consider creating sports teams within the school. For example, the Grade 9 class has enough volleyball players to make 2 equal co-ed teams that could compete against each other. I think we need to get creative with the athletics as to not lose the benefits that come with team sports.

Our new Athletic Director may explore this option - thank you for the suggestion. Extra-curricular activities, including sports, arts or special interest clubs, can occur if physical distance

can be maintained between members of different cohorts and reduced physical contact is practiced by those within the same cohort.

2.19 If parents able to support the learning of their children temporary, can they get the learning materials and plan from the homeroom teacher and they still keep paying the school tuitions?

Yes. Our off-site learning program will provide all learning materials to support students.

2.20 Will the school change the protocols?

As a school, we have developed safety protocols that we feel are appropriate for our community. We recognize some of the protocols may not work effectively, and so we are open to re-visit all of the protocols if the implementation of the protocols is problematic.

3. Personal Measures

3.1 How will the school ensure student safety?

We are committed to providing the safest possible environment at WRCA. As such, we will diligently adhere to the standards, guidelines and protocols from the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC, as required. We are also committed to fulfill all expectations as outlined in the COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings, again, as required.

3.2 How will the school provide daily health checks for students?

Every day, students will be asked if they are feeling well, in addition to a temperature check.

3.2.1 What happens when a student at school feels unwell?

We really appreciate our families and students following all of our safety protocols as we feel they are helping to keep our WRCA community as safe and healthy as possible. At this time we are exercising an abundance of caution. Because of this, if a student at school begins to feel unwell and develops symptoms such as coughing, sore throat, fever, etc we will isolate them at the school and request that they be picked up. We do not diagnose students under any circumstances. The student will be allowed back at school once the symptoms have gone away. If a parent decides to have them tested for COVID, we will follow recommendations from the Health Unit.

It has come to our attention that some our students are giving a COVID label to children who are asked to go home if they are feeling unwell. Please help us to discourage these inaccurate comments as they are potentially harmful to the student who is sent home, and creating more fear and distraction.

WRCA Protocol: *Those who become sick while at school to be sent home as soon as possible. Some students may not be able to be picked up immediately. As such, we will provide a space where the student or staff member can wait comfortably, which is separated from others*

3.3 What should families do if children have underlying health issues?

Students should not come to school if they are sick at all. It is a difficult decision for families to send children with serious underlying health issues. We would suggest accessing the off-site learning option.

3.4 When should a student return to school if they demonstrate COVID-like symptoms?

Any student who has a cold, influenza, or COVID-like symptoms should seek assessment by a health-care provider. The student should stay home until they feel well and it is confirmed they do not have COVID-19 and cleared by a medical professional.

3.5 What kind of learning program can be available for students who demonstrate COVID-like symptoms (not officially diagnosed)?

Students who stay home because they demonstrate COVID-like symptoms can access the off-site learning program.

3.6 What should happen if a student is officially diagnosed with COVID?

If a student is officially diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, the student must follow the directions of the health-care provider, stay home for the 14-day quarantine, and only return to school when they feel well. The local public health office will notify the school regarding communication protocol.

3.7 How will the school maintain physical distancing in the classroom?

During Stage 2 of re-opening our school, physical distancing (2m) is required for students and staff when interacting outside of their cohort (learning group) which includes, but not limited to, outside learning and break times (lunch, recess, classroom changes, etc.). Physical distancing protocols will be enforced by all teachers and staff.

3.8 How can younger students maintain physical distancing from one another?

Younger students (K-G2) may find it a challenge to exercise physical distancing, but the classroom teacher and staff will reinforce physical distancing as much as possible.

3.9 If possible, can the faculty be tested for COVID before September 8 to ensure wellness and safety?

Unfortunately, testing for COVID is reserved only for those experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Regardless, testing is only valid on the day being tested.

3.10 Can students/staff still attend school when a member from their household confirmed COVID-19 positive, if the student/staff is asymptomatic?

The WRCA Restart plan is based on Ministry of Education guidelines which has been developed in consultation, and approved by the Provincial Health Office. We will work with the local health authorities to determine future actions regarding COVID-related issues. Please remember we will be doing daily individual health checks on all staff and students.

3.11 Is there a checklist that parents and caregivers can use to assess their child, since not every parents / caregiver will have the same understanding?

Thank you for this good suggestion. A “Daily Health Check Example” has been provided in the [BCCDC/Ministry of Health COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings \(Updated July 29, 2020\)](#) on Page 16. This can be used by parents and caregivers to complete before sending their child to school.

3.12 Will temperature readings be taken on the forehead? The inside of the wrist is safer, and some studies are revealing that some thermometers pointed at foreheads emit radiation. Wrist readings provide as accurate, if not more accurate, readings than the forehead. With clear communication to the families, we believe WRCA could be instrumental in showing the world a more honouring and humane way while still complying with the government's requests.

Thank you for your suggestion to take temperature inside the wrist. We agree this is a better place and the studies seem to support this as well.

3.13 There is discussion (in the media) that schools have been asked to contact the health authority FIRST, if a WRCA employee has any reason to believe that a child is exhibiting COVID-like symptoms. What is WRCA's policy in such a situation? Who would receive notice first?

As is our policy, and how we have always done, we will contact the student's parents first when students are ill. Within the Ministry Health and Safety Guidelines, there is a section on Illness & Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols. It states: 'If a student, staff or other adult has any symptoms, they must not enter the school.' 'Any student, staff or other person within the school who has a cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms should seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they wait the results.'

3.14 There has also been discussion (in the media) that schools may be asked to have students tested for COVID. Has this topic come up at WRCA? What policy does WRCA have in the event that our government makes these requests?

There is nothing in the Ministry of Education guidelines that suggests schools would be asked to test for COVID.

3.15 What is WRCA's policy and obligations regarding reporting cases (or suspected cases) to the community? For example, if someone in the WRCA community (teachers, students, or even family members) is known to be self-isolating because they are experiencing COVID symptoms? Will other members in the WRCA community be notified?

We would be working closely with the local health authorities if a student or staff member was diagnosed with COVID-19. Notification of anyone associated with our school directly or indirectly will be in consultation with the local health authority. BC Privacy laws would also be taken into consideration.

3.16 Inspectors have been randomly appearing at businesses in the area to "check up" on compliance of COVID safety measures. What policy does WRCA have in place should health officials request a temperature check of our children?

We will be ready to receive a random visit from an official to confirm we are in compliance with our School Restart Plan, as required, which includes compliance with all Ministry of Education guidelines. Currently, the MoE does not require schools to check temperatures so we do not expect a health official to request a temperature check, and if they did, we would contact the parents. It is our decision to conduct a temperature check as an extra precaution.

3.17 What is the WRCA viewpoint and policy concerning "Mature Minor Consent" and immunizations?

The Mature Minor Consent is something WRCA would be legally required to adhere. Currently, WRCA does not have a policy on immunizations.

3.18 The symptoms checklist in Appendix C of the Public Health Guidance for Schools and School Districts, Sept. 11 is different from the symptoms listed on the BC Centre for Disease Control website. What symptom list should we be asking students and staff to use for their self-assessment?

The Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12, Sept. 3 Self-Assessment states, "Schools could recommend using BCCDC's Daily Health Check Example." The COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings it states, "An example is included as Appendix C." Schools may use either the Daily Health Check Example in Appendix C or the BCCDC website list.

3.19 Why was the health check in Appendix C shortened?

The science continues to be refined regarding the symptomology of COVID-19. Some symptoms such as headache and sore throat do not seem to be indicative of COVID-19 when other key symptoms are absent.

3.20 What is the difference between the symptom list in Appendix C and the BCCDC website?

Appendix C daily health check list:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough or worsening of chronic cough
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting

BCCDC website list:

The symptoms listed in Appendix C and the following:

- Sore throat
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle aches
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Dizziness, confusion
- Abdominal pain
- Skin rash or discolouration of fingers and toes

3.21 What check list is being used at WRCA?

We will use the Appendix C health check list; however, we strongly ask parents to not send children to school who are sick, even with symptoms listed in the BCCDC website. For example, parents should keep children home who have a sore throat, serious runny nose, bad headache, etc.

3.22 Is the Appendix C daily checklist for students? Staff? Both?

The checklist says, “The following is an example of a daily health check to determine if you should attend school that day.” The word “you” makes it applicable to all – students, staff, visitors, etc.

3.23 Scenario: One of our teachers experienced mild symptoms and decided to get tested. They felt better before the test results were available and wanted to return to school, but the

health assessor said they were not to return to school until the results were received. This seems to go against the information at the top of page 17 in the Public Health Guidance for Schools and School Districts, Sept. 11 “A person with mild symptoms may elect to seek COVID-19 testing, even when this is not required according to the above guidance. Having a pending COVID-19 test result should not, by itself, be a reason to exclude a person from school if there are no other reasons to exclude them.”

This is a situation where the Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12, Sept. 3 **overrides** the Public Health Guidance for Schools and School Districts, Sept. 11 which states, “Seek assessment by a health-care provider and **self-isolate while they await the results** if they have cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms.”

3.24 Will the school be careful to use Hand sanitizers that are not potentially harmful products?

We have reviewed information provided by the Government of Canada’s recalls and safety alerts pertaining to hand sanitizers. The health and safety of our students and staff is our highest concern. WRCA has and will continue to ensure that the hand sanitizers used within WRCA are Health Canada compliant and safe for use within our community.

4. Personal Protective Equipment

4.1 How will our children be protected if not required to maintain physical distance or wear a face mask in the class homeroom?

The WRCA Restart plan is based on Ministry of Education guidelines which has been developed in consultation, and approved by the Provincial Health Officer. It is believed the cohort approach limits contact between students, and as such, will provide more protection for students. At this time, the MoE has indicated face masks are not required to be worn in the cohort classroom. Students still have the option to wear a mask inside their cohort if they want to and this will be respected.

4.2 Will the school decide if students wear masks in cohort classrooms?

At this time, the MoE has indicated face masks are not required to be worn in the cohort classroom.

4.3 Is wearing masks compulsory?

No. At this time (which may change), the Ministry of Education has indicated face masks are required for all students and staff where physical distancing cannot be maintained outside of the classroom. All schools are expected to comply with Ministry guidelines.

4.4 Could our school install protective shields on every desk?

We are exploring the use of Plexiglass. We are researching whether Plexiglass in our Jr. School classrooms would be effective. Currently, we think that training in physical distancing for our young students inside the classroom should be our main focus. Physical barriers are recommended where an individual is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a cohort. As the students in a classroom are within their cohort, BCCDC/Ministry of Health do not require Plexiglass.

4.5 Will JK students be required to wear masks?

JK students will not be required to wear masks in the classroom. In common areas and at drop off and pick up, parents may choose to have their children wear masks. For now, this will be up to the parent's discretion and will be respected.

4.6 Why require plain-coloured masks?

Our intention was to discourage masks with scary or inappropriate figures or designs. We have revisited this requirement so masks with some small patterns will be acceptable. While we will ultimately make the decision on whether or not a mask is inappropriate, we ask that parents help their children to judge what constitutes an acceptable pattern on masks for WRCA (and please help us on this... we have age 3 – 18 in our community on campus on any given day). Let's be considerate of others in our choices.

4.7 Does the Ministry of Education require elementary students to wear masks?

The Health and Safety Guidelines does not require non-medical masks to be worn by elementary students (K – G5). As a school, we have developed safety protocols that we feel are appropriate for our community. This is also similar to other independent schools and some public schools.

4.8 Does the school consider medical issues related to wearing masks?

Yes. We know that a non-medical mask does not contain the virus, as the virus is smaller than the pores of a cloth mask, but it does block the spread of droplets which can increase the spread of the virus. We are also aware of some of the issues surrounding prolonged mask wearing and is one of the reasons we want to only mandate the wearing of masks when it is necessary to limit exposure between cohorts.

Our teachers have reviewed all of the protocols and are ready and prepared for discussion and implementation at our school. We should also be reminded of the need to encourage critical thinking (an IB Learner Profile attribute), even as it pertains to the mask issue.

4.9 You started with the idea that students need to wear masks outside when playing in their cohort play zones. Will you continue this policy or have you reconsidered this policy?

We have reconsidered this policy. As a school, we have developed safety protocols that we feel are appropriate for our community. We have interpreted the following statement: all students and staff 'are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group (cohort).' So, while traveling to their cohort play area (or lunch area) students need to wear a mask. But once there, they can remove their mask. We recommend having a sturdy zip lock bag to store their mask when not in use. A lanyard could also be used if a pocket is unavailable.

Allow us to clarify:

Masks are required any time there is a risk of cohorts coming in to contact with one another. Because of this, masks are required:

- *When students are dropped off until they enter their first class*
- *When students leave a portable and are traveling to their next class*
- *When students are traveling to and from the bathroom*
- *When students leave their portable after eating and go to their assigned lunch zone*
- *When students travel from their assigned lunch zone to their first class after lunch*
- *When students are walked out by their last period teacher to their assigned pick up spot and until they are picked up*

Masks are not required when students are within their cohort and there is no risks of cohorts coming in to contact with one another. Because of this, masks are not required:

- *When students are in their classrooms during class time and during lunch*
- *When students are in their assigned zone, with their cohort, during the lunch break (outside they don't need masks **in their cohort**, in their lunch zone)*

4.10 When should parents/caregivers wear face masks at school?

Parents are asked to wear face masks if you leave your car and accompany your child to a drop off location or entering the school. The Ministry of Education has indicated face masks are required for all students and staff where physical distancing cannot be maintained outside of the classroom. We believe the same expectation is required for parents or other adults on the school property.

4.11 If lunch time outside is now in cohorts would you consider letting the kids eat lunch outside in the cohort outside non mask area?

If lunch time outside is now in cohorts would you consider letting the kids eat lunch outside in the cohort outside non mask area? Students can eat outside in their cohort area. Teachers have been assigned for supervision for both the classroom and the outdoor area, and student still have to wear the mask to and from their assigned lunch area.

4.12 Have we consulted with a medical professional regarding the use of non-medical masks?

See Dr. Mazurek's article ([Click Here](#)) regarding mask use at WRCA. Dr. Mazurek is also a parent of students at WRCA.

4.13 What are the new protocols introduced after the February 4, 2021 notices from the Ministry of Health?

Please view our [WRCA Protocols](#) document on our website, updated with additional measures highlighted.