



**Addendum #1
Return to School Protocol**

**COVID-19
SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

Update: August 28, 2020

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Introduction and Background

Dear students, families and staff,

We are getting ready for a new school year in unprecedented and uncertain times. Our priorities during the upcoming school year are as follows:

- (1) making sure our workplace is safe for our children and staff;
- (2) ensuring that our students and their families continue to benefit from the cutting edge, flexible, and adaptable learning we already provide at KWBS.

As part of “priority #1”, this COVID-19 School Safety Plan (“**SSP**”) supplements KWBS’ COVID-19 Return to School Protocol (“**RTSP**”) and is focused on keeping you, your children, and our staff members safe.

As the events surrounding COVID-19 continue to evolve, KWBS will continue its commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff and students as well as any other authorized personnel who may be required to be present at the school. KWBS is committed to ensuring that all students, teachers, authorized personnel as well as any other third parties required to be on-site are, and remain safe.

As our working and learning environment is changing, please rest assured that we will continue to ensure that our policies and procedures are up to date and aligned with the leading guidance on COVID-19. Should you have any questions or concerns about the contents of this SSP, or any other COVID-19 related policy, procedure or guideline, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

We are all in this together - we are here to help!

Sincerely,

Mona Balea
Principal / Directrice
On behalf of Kitchener-Waterloo Bilingual School

Recent updates from the Provincial Government

In preparing our RTSP and this SSP, KWBS has referred to many supplementary resources made available by local health authorities as well as the Ontario Government to ensure that our plan is compliant with any applicable workplace safety standards.

Most recently, the Ontario Government has published the following resources that relate specifically to our school:

[COVID-19 Guidance: school outbreak management](#)

[Guide to reopening Ontario's Schools](#)

Because of these new processes and guidelines, we have revamped and updated our pandemic response protocols to address two (2) major issues:

1. **COVID-19 Outbreak Management in the school setting;**
2. **Return to school following an outbreak.**

Both of these issues, and relevant sub-issues related thereto are discussed in detail below.

COVID-19 Outbreak Management

KWBS will at all times comply with the Ministry of Health's Guidelines for the management of probable and confirmed COVID-19 cases. In addition, this Outbreak Management Protocol complies with the Ministry of Labour's most recent guideline for the [Management of COVID-19 in Schools](#).

a) Case Definitions

The Ministry of Health maintains case definitions for a probable case and a confirmed case of COVID-19. These definitions are maintained on the Ontario [Ministry of Health website](#) and are subject to updating. KWBS will refer to the Ministry of Health website in the event of any outbreak for the most current version of these key definitions.

b) Provincial School Closure Protocols

The Waterloo Region Public Health Unit (PHU) is responsible for determining if an outbreak exists, declaring an outbreak, and providing direction on outbreak control measures to be implemented by KWBS. The outbreak case definition is listed below.

However, even though an outbreak may be declared in the school, the PHU will assist in determining which cohort(s) may be sent home or if a partial or full school closure is required based on the scope of the outbreak. Please note, there may be variability in scenarios based on local context and epidemiology, and the information below is intended as guidance only.

An outbreak in a school is defined as two or more lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in students and/or staff in a school with an epidemiological link, within a 14-day period, where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection in the school.

The PHU will work with the school to determine epidemiological links (e.g., cases in the same class, cases that are part of the same cohort, cases that could be related due to carpooling, etc.) The PHU will determine which cohorts are high risk contacts requiring isolation.

c) Re-opening the School

Based on provincial guidelines, the outbreak does not necessarily need to be over for KWBS to re-open the school. Cohorts without evidence of transmission can be gradually returned to school as additional information and test results become available. Consideration should be given to implementing additional preventive measures and active surveillance as part of re-opening.

d) Outbreak declared over

A declaration as to whether an outbreak is over must be made by the PHU. This may be based on:

- at least 14 days from the last outbreak associated case (including in a student, staff, essential visitor, or anyone else in the school during the outbreak)
- no further symptomatic individuals with tests pending

e) Outbreak Responsibilities

KWBS is responsible for:

- reporting a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case associated with the school to the local PHU and to the Ministry of Education through the **daily reporting tool** where they have become aware of such a case
- reporting absenteeism to the PHU and to the Ministry of Education through the daily reporting tool, in accordance with provincial and/or local PHU direction

The Waterloo Region PHU is responsible for:

- determining if an outbreak in KWBS exists
- managing the outbreak in collaboration with KWBS and other relevant partners
- determining when the outbreak can be declared over

f) Management Responsibilities

In order to safely return our staff and students to school, management must:

- implement prevention measures found in guidance from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Waterloo Region PHU
- cooperate with the local PHU, and other stakeholders as required
- maintain accurate records of staff, students and essential visitors
- on request by the PHU, KWBS must produce information regarding the students and staff members in any and all class cohort(s) (for example, classroom, schedules, affected siblings / family members, etc.).

This information should include up-to-date attendance records and contact information for those groups and will be provided to the PHU **within 24 hours** of request to ensure timely follow-up.

Please note: in general, KWBS will not report all instances of ill individuals in the school setting to the PHU, as these are frequent occurrences and typically students have non-specific symptoms. However, as required by Section 28 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, KWBS will be required to report to the medical officer of health (in this case the Local PHU) if they are of the opinion that a pupil has or may have a communicable disease (*i.e.* COVID-19).

KWBS will connect with the PHU if there are concerns about student(s) related absences or attendance concerns within their school community.

The PHU is responsible for conducting case and contact management activities and measures will be taken to ensure privacy and avoid disclosure of details to the school community that would lead to identification of a COVID-19 laboratory confirmed case.

g) Communicating with the School Community

Parents, students and staff have an understandable interest in knowing when a COVID-19 positive case has been identified at KWBS.

KWBS will create a **COVID-19 advisory section** on its website.

KWBS will **post information** if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 that involves a student or a staff member in a school setting.

Students or staff members must withdraw from school if a family or household member has a confirmed case of COVID-19, but information will not be posted in these instances to preserve individual privacy and prevent stigma.

In the interests of privacy, information provided to our families and posted on our website **will not** identify the student or staff member that has received a positive COVID-19 test.

If the local PHU advises that a class, cohort or any part of our school should be closed for a period of time, parents, students and staff will be notified immediately.

Notice of any closures of classes, cohorts or schools will be posted on our website (COVID-19 advisory section).

Management of ill individuals during school hours

This protocol will be triggered in any situation where a staff member or student becomes sick on KWBS' premises. It includes identifying the individuals who could participate in the process, response procedures and considerations for an Isolation Room and PPE. This section applies to students, staff or other members or essential visitors, who become ill during the school day and on school premises.

- Students should be made aware, in age-appropriate and non-stigmatizing language, how to identify symptoms of COVID-19 and should be instructed to speak to a staff member immediately if they feel ill.
- KWBS should maintain a personal protective equipment (PPE) kit specifically for managing students or others who become ill during school hours.

a) Isolation protocol

- If an individual, including students, staff, essential visitors, etc., becomes ill while at school, KWBS will trigger the following protocol:
 - anyone providing care to the ill individual should maintain as much physical distance as possible
 - the staff person caring for the individual should wear a surgical/procedural mask and eye protection
 - if tolerated, the ill individual should also wear a surgical/procedural mask
 - hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the ill individual is waiting to be picked up
 - cleaning of the isolation room area and other areas of the school where the ill individual was will be conducted as soon as reasonably possible after the ill individual leaves
 - advise the ill individual and/or their parent or guardian to have the ill individual seek medical advice, including the recommendation of testing for COVID-19 as appropriate or as advised by their medical provider. Ensure direction is aligned with screening and return to school guidelines provided.
 - initiate communication protocols and plans to update and inform necessary stakeholders within the school community while maintaining confidentiality of the ill individual
 - regular school functions can continue unless directed otherwise by the local public health unit

A list of students and staff in the school who were in contact with/in the same cohort as the ill individual will be prepared. Those who are identified as potential close contacts should remain cohorted. The local PHU will provide any further direction on testing and isolation of these contacts, if deemed necessary, and in the local PHU's sole discretion. In most instances, testing and isolation will only be recommended for contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.

b) Isolation Coordinator

- KWBS has appointed Isolation Coordinators, who can help move through the response procedure and other important parts of the Isolation Protocol. Isolation Coordinators are selected by KWBS, based on the staff member's knowledge, training and experience. The Isolation Coordinators will be:

- Keesha Dickson or Mona Balea depending on availability

The Isolation Coordinator on site will ensure that the following steps are taken as part of an appropriate Response Procedure:

1. Leave a set of face coverings (or a medical-grade mask, if available) in the Isolation Room for the suspected infected person.
2. Once the suspected infected person arrives in the Isolation Room, immediately instruct the person to put on a face covering (or a medical-grade mask, if available).
3. The Isolation Coordinator can complete Ontario's COVID19 self-assessment tool <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/> with the suspected infected person at a safe distance (i.e. minimum of 2 meters apart), or via telephone. Contact the local public health authority regarding next steps.
4. Where communication at a distance is not possible, the Isolation Coordinator and any others attending to the suspected infected person should wear a face mask and face shield, gloves, and any other available PPE to prevent possible transmission.
5. The Isolation Coordinator, in coordination with KWBS will:
 - a. Contact the local public health authority and follow their advice.
 - i. Identify persons who may have been in close contact with the suspected infected person. Unless required by the local public health authority, the name of the infected person should remain confidential.
 - ii. If warranted under the local public health authority's advice, KWBS will advise staff members that may have been in close contact with the suspected infected person, to stay home and self-monitor for 14 days. Those who exhibit symptoms must immediately self-isolate (quarantine) and contact the local public health authorities, a healthcare provider, and KWBS.
 - b. Instruct the supervisor to cordon off areas where the suspected infected person has come into contact.
6. Initiate the **Deep-Cleaning Decontamination Protocol** in areas where the suspected infected person has come in contact in the school (i.e., the Isolation Room, workstation, common areas / surfaces.)

c) Isolation room / area

If a person feels ill or if someone observes that another person is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 at school, staff members must contact the Isolation Coordinator(s) by telephone. The Isolation Coordinator on site will be responsible for directing any suspected infected person to a designated Isolation Room immediately by the most direct route in order to prevent further exposure in the school.

Communications will occur at a safe distance or via telephone to minimize the risk of exposure to other staff members, including the Isolation Coordinator. The designated Isolation Rooms are:

- Small music room – first floor
- Library - upper floor

Note: These spaces are available to be used as Isolation rooms in September. When the number of students attending Face-to-Face increases, the change rooms may be used as Isolation rooms.

Quick Reference – Recommended Actions

a) Recommended action by teacher

The teacher should:

- be aware of symptom descriptions and alert the principal if a student is ill
- continue to monitor students and themselves for symptoms

b) Recommended action by management

The Principal should:

- coordinate immediate student pick-up and isolate the student until parent/guardian arrival
- advise student and any staff attending to them to use provided PPE kit
- advise student to remain at home and continue with remote learning, if they are well enough to do so
- if required, advise entire staff of the concern while protecting confidentiality and responding with sensitivity in the circumstances
- ensure/coordinate environmental cleaning and/or disinfection of the space and items used by the individual(s)
- monitor school population for possible new/additional illnesses
- report in the daily attendance tracking tool as necessary

c) Recommended action by parent and student

Teachers / Management should advise parents and students to:

- follow guidance of the local PHU or their health care provider
- not return to school or attend on premises unless cleared to do so by the local PHU
- if a student is tested for COVID-19, follow the guidance of the health care provider and related direction for isolation and returning to school. If there are other siblings or members of the household that attend KWBS, advice of the health care provider should be followed on returning to school.

Management of individuals exposed to COVID-19 outside of the school

This section applies to individuals closely related to a school community, such as members of a student's or staff member's household, who test positive for COVID-19 outside of KWBS.

Situations may arise where students, staff, or teachers may be exposed to COVID-19 outside of the school environment (for example, family members that don't attend the school, social contacts outside of school).

At a minimum, household members and others who live with the individual who has tested positive must self-isolate for 14 days.

KWBS will have necessary arrangements in place to support continuity of education for students who require isolation.

KWBS will reference case contact management in these circumstances, in accordance with the [Ministry of Labour's guidelines](#).

Management of a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 in the school community

This section applies to a student, staff member or a member of the school community who is regularly in the school, who informs KWBS that they have tested positive for COVID-19.

- Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must not attend KWBS until they are cleared by the local PHU or their health care provider.
- Any individual(s) who test positive must remain in isolation for 14 days. Retesting is not recommended and will not alter this 14-day isolation requirement.
- Every individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 is contacted by their local PHU for further follow-up.
- The local PHU will notify the school of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. In some cases, the local PHU may not be the same local PHU as the school; and in these circumstances, coordination between different PHU's and the school is required for further direction. Having designated points of contact within the school and the PHU can assist with ensuring clear processes for communication are in place.
- Where the local PHU determines there was a transmission risk to others at KWBS, students and staff will be assessed to determine if they were at high risk of exposure (requiring isolation) or if they were at low risk of exposure (can self-monitor for symptoms and return to school).
- Classroom cohorts (students and staff affiliated with the cohort) will generally be considered at high risk of exposure.
- All students and staff determined to be at high risk of exposure will be directed to isolate and recommended to be tested (voluntary testing) within their isolation period.
- Negative test results do not change the requirement for isolation nor do they shorten the isolation period for close contacts.

Return to School

While an individual suspected to have COVID-19 is **waiting for test results they must be in isolation and cannot attend school in-person**. The individual can attend school virtually if they feel well enough to participate.

Individuals who have had a COVID-19 test because of symptoms, but who test negative should not return to KWBS until at least 24 hours after their symptoms have resolved.

Individuals who have traveled out of the country should isolate for 14 days.

Where a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, the local PHU will be in contact with the KWBS to provide further direction on returning to school.

a) If an ill individual does not have COVID-19

For an ill individual who has a known alternative diagnosis provided by a health care provider, return to school can occur when symptoms are resolved for at least 24 hours.

Commitment to Ongoing Support

The circumstances surrounding COVID-19 are rapidly evolving and require a flexible, adaptive approach. Please rest assured, we are committed to safeguarding the health and safety of your family, your loved ones, by prioritizing health and safety and rapidly implementing new guideline requirements published by our provincial government, the local health authorities, and other regulators including the Ministry of Education.

As always, our administration team is here to answer any questions and respond to any concerns you may have with respect to our Return to School process. September 8, 2020 is just around the corner, and we want you to know that we are taking every precaution in the circumstances to keep your children safe. This is our priority #1.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the contents of this Protocol, or any of the linked supporting materials, please contact Mona Balea at m_balea@kwbilingualschool.net, and we will respond within 24 business hours.

We thank you once again for your patience and flexibility as we prepare for the 2020-2021 school year.

Yours truly,

Mona Balea
Principal / Directrice
On behalf of Kitchener-Waterloo Bilingual School