



Holy Spirit Catholic School

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Dear Holy Spirit Parents and Families,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school term. We are looking forward to officially re-opening Friday, August 21st and welcoming back our students and families. As we are gearing up for school to resume, we are deep in detailed planning, not only for learning, but also to protect the health and safety of students and staff. Our school division has posted our detailed relaunch guide on the [Elk Island Catholic website](#) and you can read more about it here: <https://www.eics.ab.ca/coronavirus-information-in-eics> or simply click [here](#).

At this time, we wanted to send initial communication sharing some of our division and school protocols. Next week, we will send more site-specific information on our school and classroom protocols at Holy Spirit Catholic School. In addition to the increased cleaning, sanitizing and the many other Alberta Health Services recommendations, we will have new routines specific to our school in order to keep students and staff healthy and safe.

Some of those items specific to our school will include the following:

- Changes to drop off and pick up procedures for buses and parents
- Changes to entrances and exits that students will use
- Changes to use of coat hooks, boot racks and movement of students around school for class changes and breaks
- Recess and lunch times will be organized to maintain cohort groupings
- Establishing student and teacher cohorts i.e. grade groupings
- New visitor/parent visiting school policies
- Everyone entering the school will need to answer the screening questionnaire and will need to sign in at the office for contact tracing
- Mandatory masks for grades 4 to 12 and optional but highly recommended masks for kindergarten to grade 3
- Extra cleaning of school common areas and regular sanitizing of student spaces during the day
- Social distancing during the school day

I want to remind parents of one of the changes this year and that involves screening your children for symptoms every day before sending them to school. Students with symptoms should **not** be coming to school. We have a [screening guide](#) and would ask that you use it to ensure that any students with symptoms will stay at home. This is an Alberta Health Services rule and it is critical. We all do our part to ensure we are following it. Our staff will be doing the same for themselves and we have a process to follow before students or staff return to school if they do experience any symptoms. I have attached the screening tool with the list of symptoms at the end of this letter.

There are a great many changes to our routines and other processes for this school year. Some of the changes we have made are minor and some are much more significant. All together, they will combine to provide a safe environment for our students and staff and enable students to be able to learn effectively and to run our school safely for everyone. **In order to be able to work through all these new changes, all the schools in EICS are planning a staggered school start this year.** For the first four days of school, about a quarter of the students will attend each day. The first full day for all students will be Sept. 8th. This staggered start will help us make the adjustments to our daily routines, discuss PPE with a smaller number of students in our classrooms and buildings, and help transition our students to school. It will also give us a chance to connect with our students and attend to their mental and social-emotional needs in smaller groupings. **We will send out the staggered entry plan information early next week.**

Finally, there may be some of our students who have exceptional family situations that involve family members who are immune compromised. EICS is providing an online alternative for families from Grades 1-12. **If your family is in this situation, please contact me as soon as possible so we can talk about your situation and options available to support your children.** The school office will open on **Thursday, August 20**, please contact us directly at aoifec@eics.ab.ca or our school email hs@eics.ab.ca with an email outlining your request and a phone number that you can be reached at so as we can have an open discussion as soon as possible. We will be working through call backs starting **Friday, August 21st**.

I appreciate the support of each of our families as we navigate this difficult time. I want to thank you in advance for making the daily screening part of your morning routines. We all will be doing our part to keep our school community safe. I want to encourage you to contact me with any questions or concerns and thank-you for your prompt response to let me know if you have a high risk family situation that needs some individual problem-solving.

This year the faith theme we have chosen, as a Division, is “*Choose Joy*”. Our intent, even in the midst of much uncertainty, is to model Christ’s Joy to our community. We will be providing you with more information as it becomes available. In the meantime, take good care and enjoy those precious summer moments with your family.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Aoife Cahill
Principal, Holy Spirit Catholic School

“Where there is love, there is joy”.
~ Mother Teresa ~

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Screening Questionnaire

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENTS MUST USE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE DAILY TO DECIDE IF THE STUDENT SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL

Risk Assessment: Initial Screening Questions

| 1. | Do you, or your child attending the program, have any of the below symptoms: | CIRCLE ONE | |
|----|--|------------|----|
| | | YES | NO |
| | · Fever | YES | NO |
| | · Cough | YES | NO |
| | · Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing | YES | NO |
| | · Sore throat | YES | NO |
| | · Chills | YES | NO |
| | · Painful swallowing | YES | NO |
| | · Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion | YES | NO |
| | · Feeling unwell / Fatigued | YES | NO |
| | · Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea | YES | NO |
| | · Unexplained loss of appetite | YES | NO |
| | · Loss of sense of taste or smell | YES | NO |
| | · Muscle/ Joint aches | YES | NO |
| | · Headache | YES | NO |
| | · Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) | YES | NO |
| 2. | Has the person attending the activity/facility travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days? | YES | NO |
| 3. | Have you/your child had close <u>unprotected</u> * contact (face-to-face contact within 2 meters/6 feet) with someone who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days and who is ill**? | YES | NO |
| 4. | Have you/your child attending the program or activity had close <u>unprotected</u> * contact (face-to-face contact within 2 meters/6 feet) in the last 14 days with someone who is ill**? | YES | NO |
| 5. | Have you/your child or anyone in your household been in close <u>unprotected</u> * contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19? | YES | NO |

* "unprotected" means close contact without appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

** "ill" means someone with COVID-19 symptoms on the list above"

If you have answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, please **DO NOT** enter the school at this time. You should stay home and use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19.

If you have answered "No" to all the above questions, you may attend school.

