



## COVID-19 Health & Safety Protocols @ Montcrest

**To maximize the health and safety of all community members, Montcrest is taking a “layered” approach with multiple measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and its spread. We are focused on the key tenets outlined by medical experts and Ministers of Health. This includes, but is not limited to, physical distancing in classrooms, increased health and safety measures, air quality, ventilation and plenty of time outdoors.**

This manual outlines the Health and Safety measures applied to aspects of our daily life in school and includes new measures to address COVID-19 specifically.

To support our model, it is helpful to have an understanding of the language we use for groupings and contact tracing:

**Pods** - All adults and students that come into direct/indirect contact with one another.

**Homerooms** - All adults and students in a grade homeroom.

**Cohorts** - A homeroom that is divided into smaller groupings for distancing.

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## **A) Protective Measures**

### **Adapted school environment**

Montcrest has adapted our school environments, both physically and operationally, to support the multiple protection strategies available. This includes posting signs to reinforce self-screening and hand hygiene, directional signage and classroom set up to support distancing in hallways and learning spaces, adjustments to entrance and exit practices, adjustments to the use of playgrounds and school grounds, signage in bathrooms and common areas to indicate maximum capacity and availability of hand sanitizer.

### **Signage**

Directional signage will be used to assist with student traffic flow and movement throughout the buildings and to help maintain physical distancing of two meters. Wall signage will be used throughout the campus to educate students on proper hand washing, hand sanitizing, and cough and sneeze etiquette.

Montcrest has designated routes for students to get to and from classrooms, including different and separate entrance points for students in different grades.

Montcrest has established visual cues/physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs/posters on walls, to guide appropriate distances in lines/queues and at other times (for example, guides for creating "designated routes" in hallways).

Periods of student movement have been staggered to maintain physical distancing in the hallways. Congregation of teachers/staff has been limited to minimize potential for adult-to-adult transmission.

### **Hand hygiene**

Appropriate hand hygiene is one of the most important protective strategies. Montcrest is prepared to train students on appropriate hand hygiene, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub, and to reinforce its use. This involves scheduling breaks to allow students to wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the school day.

Additional hand washing stations have been installed in classrooms and spaces where existing plumbing configurations could accommodate.

Portable hand washing stations have been purchased and will be placed throughout the campus.

We have added hand sanitizing stations with an alcohol-based hand rub throughout the campus. Hand sanitizing stations are available at all building entrances and exits, all classrooms, and additional locations throughout the campus.

Touchless sensor operated faucets and single touch faucets have been installed throughout the campus.

## **Masking**

As a community that cares for the health and well-being of all, wearing masks is strongly encouraged for *all* students. It is important that you work with your child to practice the independent use of a mask and learn what type of mask is most comfortable for them. Students may wear their own non-medical masks, and Montcrest will also make non-medical masks available for students.

## **Students**

*Students should have three masks with them at school and two sealable bags (like a ziploc). One labelled “clean” and the other “used”. Children can then place their masks in the used bag when they are changing to a fresh mask.*

Students in **Grades 4 to 8** will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks indoors in school, including in hallways and during classes where physical distancing of 2M is not possible. Outdoor times, like recess/breaks, can be used as opportunities to provide students with breaks from wearing masks within their “cohort”.

Students in **Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3** are strongly advised but not required to wear masks in their classroom spaces. We advise wearing masks to enter and leave the building and if they are moving about the hallways. Masks must be used independently; teachers will not be able to assist children with their masks. **This policy can be amended at any time.**

## **Teachers and Staff**

The following PPE is provided for Montcrest faculty and staff on a daily basis:

- Medical grade face masks
- Disposable 3 ply face masks
- Cloth non-medical face masks
- Clear face masks
- Clear face shields
- Gloves
- Hand Sanitizer

All faculty and staff are required to be masked with students and during their time in the school hallways and when physical distancing of 2M is not possible. Individuals may also choose to layer multiple approaches (i.e. mask and shield). Training of appropriate PPE use and care will be given prior to the start of school.

## **Exceptions**

Reasonable exceptions or accommodations may be made with regards to the requirement to wear a mask, guided by school policies. Families, Staff and Faculty must contact the Head of School directly to discuss this.

## **Cohorting**

“Cohorting” refers to the practice of keeping students together in a small group throughout their school day, with limited exposure to multiple teachers or a wide variety of classmates.

This practice limits the number of other students that a single student is in contact with.

This practice will also facilitate contact tracing should that be necessary.

Montcrest has implemented adapted timetables that support “cohorting” of students to the greatest extent possible.

Our students have been cohorted with their classmates and their homeroom teacher, with limited contact with other subject teachers for specialty classes as well.

## **Distancing**

Physical distancing between all Montcrest community members will be promoted. Physical distancing measures will be supplemented with other public health measures supported by health and safety strategies, such as screening, adapted school environment, cohorting, hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning, and masking.

While physical classroom sizes vary, Montcrest has taken steps to remove unnecessary furniture and placed individual desks in all classrooms JK - Grade 8, to support physical distancing measures. As well, desks are placed facing forward rather than in circles or groupings.

## **B) Cleaning Standards**

### **Facility and Classroom Cleaning**

Current cleaning protocols include routine cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces with an increased focus on high touch areas such as door handles, handrails and all washroom fixtures. These high touch areas will be disinfected a minimum of six times per day; three times between 8:30am to 12:00pm and three times between 12:00pm to 3:30pm.

We have four ULV Fogging machines and one Electrostatic Backpack Sprayer that will enable our team the ability to quickly and efficiently apply a disinfectant solution to all surfaces.

Our disinfectant products are Health Canada approved and contain a Drug Identification Number (DIN).

### **Classroom Cleaning (Daytime)**

Each classroom will be equipped with a disinfectant solution and microfiber cloths. Teachers, or students where appropriate, will be required to disinfect each student desk after lunch prior to students reentering the classroom and at additional times as determined by the teachers and/or the student

### **Classroom Cleaning (Evening)**

Our facilities team will disinfect using a ULV Fogger machine, all student and teacher desks, student and teacher chairs, hand washing stations, counter tops, cupboard door handles, and any other surface that may come in contact with a student or teacher. Once the room has been disinfected, signage will be placed outside the classroom door indicating the room has been disinfected and is ready for occupancy.

### **Verification Checklist**

Our facilities team will sign off on a disinfectant verification checklist each time a room is disinfected and throughout the day as high touch points are disinfected.

### **Air Quality**

Our buildings' HVAC systems have been recently inspected to ensure they are all functioning at optimal performance. In our buildings with mechanical ventilation systems where we can adjust the percentage of fresh air intake, we allow for 100% fresh air into our buildings. To reduce the potential of airborne particles circulating through our mechanical ventilation systems, we have upgraded our air filters (where possible), to a higher efficiency filter rating of MERV 13 and will increase the frequency of replacement.

Air purifiers with HEPA filters have been purchased and will be positioned strategically throughout the campus.

### **Bathrooms**

Bathrooms will be cleaned and high touch points within the bathroom will be disinfected a minimum of six times throughout the day, three times between 8:30am to 12:00pm and three times between 12:00pm to 3:30pm. As part of our evening cleaning protocols, the bathrooms will be cleaned and the entire space disinfected using our ULV Fogger machine.

Our facilities team will ensure there is an adequate supply of soap and paper towels at all times. Individual students will not be prevented from accessing bathrooms as needed, but we will also timetable bathroom breaks in the school day to stagger use of bathrooms and we will monitor physical distancing. Signage will be posted that indicates the maximum number of people

simultaneously using the bathroom at any given point and lines will be placed on the floor to ensure 2 metres of distance while waiting.

## C) Safety Protocols

### Self-screening

All Montcrest staff and students must self-screen every day before attending school.

We request that parents/guardians screen their child(ren) **prior to arrival** at the School each day. In addition to daily active screening, please note that all students will be monitored at School for possible signs or symptoms of illness.

As a Parent/Guardian, you must prevent the spread of illness by keeping your child home from School if you or your child experience **any** of the following signs or symptoms:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
- Chills
- New or worsening cough
- Barking cough, making whistle noise when breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Runny nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known causes or conditions)
- Stuffy or congested nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known causes or conditions)
- Lost sense of taste or smell
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Headache that is unusual or long lasting
- Digestive issues, such as nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain
- Muscle aches that are unusual or long lasting
- Extreme tiredness that is unusual (fatigue, lack of energy)
- Falling down often
- For young children, sluggishness or lack of appetite

If your child experiences any of the symptoms while at the School, within reason, staff will contact you or one of your emergency contacts to pick up your child **immediately**. While your child waits for you or your designate to arrive, s/he will be separated from the other children.

Signs will be posted at entrances to the school to remind students, staff, parents/caregivers, and essential visitors of screening requirements. If a student or staff member is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, they must stay home from school and should seek testing and appropriate medical attention.

All staff and students who are experiencing new or worsening symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must not attend school and should seek appropriate medical attention as required, including getting tested at a COVID-19 testing centre.

Staff and students feeling sick should remain at home while waiting for test results. If a symptomatic individual tests positive for COVID-19, they should continue to remain in isolation at home and follow the directions of their local public health unit.

## **Resting Rooms**

We have Administrator supervised rooms in each building that will be used should a student or staff member become ill.

A “kit” will be available in the resting room in case a student, staff, or essential visitor becomes ill while at the school. The kit is for use by the staff member attending to them and will contain alcohol-based hand rub, disposable gloves, surgical/procedural masks, eye protection, and a gown. Instructions on proper use of PPE will be available on the outside of the kit.

Immediate disinfection of these spaces will occur following use.

- Once the space has been vacated, our facilities team will disinfect the entire room using a Health Canada approved disinfectant.
- Signage will be placed on the outside of the door indicating the room has been disinfected and is ready for use.

## **Visitors**

Montcrest will suspend non-essential visitors on campus until further notice, including parents.

Visits to ensure school safety, such as inspections by the Fire Marshal’s office or by public health, will continue to take place.

Any visitors to a school will be required to self-screen and to wear a medical mask while on school premises.

Local protocols for school access by regulated health professionals, regulated social service professionals and paraprofessionals for the purpose of delivering school-based supports and services have been developed with any external community-based agencies providing these supports and services.

## **Monitoring and Responding to Reports of COVID-19 Symptoms**

Any student or staff member who develops COVID-19 symptoms while in school will be immediately separated from others, in a separate room. In the case of a student, parents will be contacted to pick them up immediately. They will not be allowed to take public transportation home.

Isolated students will be supervised per usual school policy, with physical distancing maintained and PPE provided consistent with public health guidance. Documentation will be kept and a follow up with the family prior to a return to school. The same protocol will be followed for all staff and faculty.

Persons who test positive may not return to school until they are cleared according to public health direction. Persons who retest negative (after an initial positive test) can return to school once they are symptom-free for 24 hours. Montcrest will ensure records of classes, including seating charts, bus cohorts, and daily records of any approved visitors to the school, are maintained and readily available to be provided to public health for contact tracing purposes.

Montcrest will immediately report any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school to the local public health unit as required under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, and provide any materials (e.g., daily attendance and transportation records) to public health officials to support case management and contact tracing and other activities, in accordance with all applicable privacy legislation. Public health officials will determine any additional steps required.

All Montcrest staff will receive training on outbreak management procedures. The Head of School will be the sole contact person for families and Toronto Public Health to ensure privacy and consistency.

## **D) Health & Safety**

### **Training**

Montcrest staff will be provided with training on the health and safety protocols and required adaptations before the school year begins.

### **Task Force for Reopening, Health and Safety Committee**

Our Re-Entry Task Force will communicate the reopening guidelines to Montcrest's Health and Safety Committee. Once we reopen, the Health and Safety Committee will assist the task force and provide feedback as needed.

## **E) Mental Health & Well-Being**

Mental health and well-being are core elements of Montcrest's reopening plan. Montcrest has adopted a tiered approach for mental health supports that will capture all students and target intensive help to those who have been most affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Montcrest collaborates with child and youth mental health agencies to support strong connections and make the best use of mental health resources and supports across the integrated system of care.

## **F) Modified School - Day Routines**

### **Travel**

#### **Late Arrivals/ Early Departures**

Due to COVID-19, there will be designated drop off and pick up times for each cohort. These times will be provided by the homeroom teachers.

For safety reasons, all students must arrive at school no later than 10 a.m. While late arrivals cannot be accommodated at school, students are encouraged to participate in MGM from home for the remainder of the school day.

If students are picked up early from school (i.e. appointments), they must remain off-campus for the remainder of the school day.

#### **Pickup/Drop Off**

Montcrest has developed school arrival and departure procedures that support physical distancing where possible. We have put in place staggered start and finish times as well as maximizing the use of all possible entrances/exits to support the beginning and end of the school days.

Details of your pick up and drop off times will be communicated to you before the first day of school.

### **TTC**

When using the TTC for travel to and from school students and staff must wear a mask and practice physical distancing. Community members should use the [TTC's COVID-19: Staying safe on public transit guidelines](#).

### **Beforecare, Aftercare, Afterschool Programs & Private Music Lessons**

#### **Beforecare**

Beforecare is suspended until further notice.

#### **Aftercare**

Aftercare is suspended until further notice. If there is an emergency and a parent is unable to get to school in time, isolated care will be provided for the child.

## **After School Programs**

All third party after school programs are suspended until further notice.

## **Private Music Lessons**

On campus private music lessons are suspended until further notice. Private music lessons will be offered virtually during non-school hours through the Beats and Bars Music School. For more information please contact <https://www.beatsandbars.ca/>

## **School - Life Adjustments**

### **Recess/Breaks**

Recess/breaks will be staggered throughout the day for the whole school to allow for physical distancing. Students will be given many opportunities throughout the day to get outside in dedicated zones. Students will need to come to school dressed appropriately for their day and the weather.

### **Rules for Personal Belongings**

Personal belongings brought to school should be minimized. Personal items being brought to school (for example, backpack, clothing, sun protection, water bottles, food) should be labeled and will be kept with the child at their desk area. Lockers and cubbies will not be used at this time.

### **Field Trips**

Off-site field trips are suspended until further notice.

### **Clubs**

Montcrest will offer clubs and activities virtually and face to face where physical distancing is possible and health protocols can be followed.

### **Athletic Teams**

Athletics are suspended until further notice.

As set out in the Conference of Independent Schools of Ontario Athletic Association ("CISAA") CISAA Return to Sport Plan 2020-2021, sport activities may be carefully resumed in a phased approach, depending on the nature and risk level of the sport. Research is continuing to further develop the plan.

The safety and health of students, coaches, officials, and families will be at the forefront of all return to sport decisions. All return to sport guidelines are subject to the guidance of the Ontario Ministries of Education and Health, and local public health authorities. They may change on short notice.

## **School Assemblies**

In person assemblies are suspended until further notice, however, virtual options will be continued weekly and for special events.

## **Food & Water**

### **Lunch**

As per regular routine, students will eat lunch in their classroom with their cohort. All lunch garbage must return home with the student. There will be **NO** third-party lunch programs until further notice. Students will be required to bring their own lunches to school every day. Lunch times will be staggered to allow students to wash hands before eating, without creating congestion in washrooms or at hand washing stations. If weather permits, consideration will be given to having lunch breaks outside.

With respect to eating and drinking at school, it is expected that:

- Staff and students will perform proper hand hygiene before and after eating.
- Each student will have their own individual meal or snack with no common food items.
- Microwave use will not be permitted.

Montcrest will not plan non-instructional activities that involve students in preparing or serving of food.

### **Water at school**

Each student will be required to bring their own drink bottle that is labeled, kept with them during the day, and not shared. Water fountain mouth pieces will be disabled. Water bottles can be filled at stations throughout the school.

## **G) Health & Safety Resources**

- [Ontario Ministry of Health COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms](#)
- [Public Health Ontario's How to Wash Your Hands Fact Sheet](#)
- [Toronto Public Health Handwashing Guidelines](#)
- [Public Health Ontario's Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings](#)
- [Province of Ontario Online COVID-19 Self Assessment](#)