Hello, Parents and Caregivers of École Victoria School.

Welcome back to our new and returning families for the 2020-21 school year. We are excited that the time is soon coming to have students back in the building. It has been a long few months, and you have all been missed dearly. We are excited to be back and doing what we love—working with you and your children!

As you are already aware, this school year will bring a number of changes and challenges in the way our school will operate due to current COVID-19 pandemic guidelines set from our province and school division. This newsletter will highlight how the provincial and Saskatoon Public School Division’s guidelines will be applied specifically at École Victoria School.

Staff have been working hard to consider so many different perspectives in the creation of this plan. We have strived to place the health, safety and mental well-being of your children at the forefront of our planning. Thank-you for taking the time to carefully read this document. Links for the provincial and division guidelines are also provided within.

If you still have questions that you would like to discuss, please don’t hesitate to email, call or stop by the schoolyard before or after school when you’re picking up your children. We will be out there to greet you daily and we’d be happy to try to answer all of your questions.

Respectfully,

Gwyn Fournier, Sarah Rollo and EVS Staff
Please refer to the Parent and Caregiver Reopening Handbook for general information on Saskatoon Public Schools reopening plan.

This parent handbook provides detailed information on many important topics including:

- Safety Precautions
- Curriculum and Assessment
- Support Services
- Food and nutrition programs
- Facilities
- Students

The guidelines of the Parent Handbook will be adhered to by our school along with elements specific to our school. The following information represents our school specific plan for a safe return to school at École Victoria School. Please note that the plan is subject to change at any time based on direction from Saskatchewan’s Chief Medical Health Officer. Changes will be communicated as they occur.

The provincial guidelines for education can be found here.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

This plan relies on all of us doing our part to keep our community safe. Thank-you for doing a daily check for symptoms and having an emergency plan in the event your child needs to leave school immediately due to symptoms. Please also consider a plan in the event you need to keep your child home for a more extended period of time.

Please monitor your children for symptoms and KEEP THEM HOME if they are sick or experiencing symptoms as described here.

To report your child as late or absent, please use one of the following School Messenger options:

- Call Toll Free—1-833-284-2719
- https://go.schoolmessenger.com
- Use the School Messenger mobile app
- OR—call the school directly—306-683-7470
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL / PARENT ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL

At this time, visitors to the school are discouraged unless absolutely necessary. All visitors attending to the school will be required to fill out a health questionnaire. The form can be filled out by using a smartphone to scan the QR code posted at the front entry door of the school. Paper copies will be made available as needed at the front door. Visitors will be required to wear a mask and use hand sanitizer upon entering the school. Entry to and exit from the school for all visitors will only be at the front doors.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact the main office to make an appointment if they need to come to the school. At this point, we request that this occur only if necessary. If you need to pick up your child due to illness or other reason, please park and phone the school from outside. We will bring the student to you at the appropriate door.

At this time, please consider alternate modes of communication with the school other than a personal visit: email, phone call, connection with teacher before or after school at muster points, connection with school administrator in the school yard, use of Google Classroom or See Saw to connect with classroom teacher etc.

The school phone number is 306-683-7470 and email is victoriaschool@spsd.sk.ca.

ISOLATION ROOM LOCATION

All schools are required to have an isolation space for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms who cannot leave the facility immediately. Our isolation space is the room behind our library office. We have developed the space and clarified procedures for the use of this space that align with the guidelines. Mrs. Roach, Ms. Fournier and Ms. Rollo will be responsible for supervising students who may require the use of the isolation space until they are picked up. Mr. Maffenbeier will disinfect the space after each use.

For the purposes of communicating with students, we will call this space the “Quiet Room”.
SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

COHORT OVERVIEW

All schools are unique in their available physical space, and EVS is no exception. We have an expected enrolment of about 400 students this year, only three exterior doors and a relatively small playground and park area for students. To ensure that we are able to reduce the number of people that students and staff have direct contact with at school, we have designed a cohort model for staggered entrances, recesses, noon breaks and dismissal.

Our 3 cohort model has the following considerations:

- All classes start at 8:55 and the school day ends at 3:30 for everyone—this is unchanged from last year
- Each cohort consists of 5 classes of both varying and similar age groups
- Each cohort has its own recess breaks; classes are assigned to specific doors to use so that no more than two classes are using a door at any recess break
- The school yard has three defined play areas at recess and four for the noon hour. Classes will be organized into areas for play
- Cohorts are organized for staggered entry and exits from the school at the beginning and end of the day
- Teachers have identified muster points on the playground to act as their meeting spaces for their classes—students meet their teachers and classmates at these points before school and will finish their day in these spaces at dismissal; this is a place where you may opt to escort your child for drop-off and meet them for pickup.
- Students will be escorted into and out of the building by their classroom teachers for transitions throughout the day
- Please note that based on the number of families who are able to have their children at home for the noon hour, we have been able to align the noon breaks for all cohorts at this time; this will allow for non-staggered lunch breaks as well as a full 30 minutes of outdoor play for students—yay!
- We are asking that students who leave for the noon hour, stay at home, returning just in time for the bell at 12:45
**RECESS BREAKS**

Our cohort plan promotes student groups staying together and physical distancing during non-instructional time. Cohort teachers will work out supervision schedules as well as play areas for students. Our school yard has been divided into three play areas: playground, tarmac/rink and field. These areas will assist in organizing students into opportunities for safe play, ensuring groups of approximately 60 cohorted students.

Students will be escorted to and from the schoolyard by their classroom teachers. Hand sanitizer will be available at each door for students to use upon all exits and entries to the school.

Shared recess equipment for play will be reduced. In class, PE teachers will focus on teaching games and activities that don’t require equipment so that students have new and exciting options during recess and noon breaks.

To support with reducing direct contact and the quick identification of cohorts at recess and noon breaks, all students will be supplied with a colour-coded breakaway lanyard to wear while playing or learning outside. This will help staff identify quickly if a student is in the correct play space during breaks. In addition, the lanyards will be a support in the event a substitute teacher is in the classroom and can be used in a variety of organizational ways.

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**NOON BREAKS**

Whenever possible, students should go home for the lunch hour and return just before the break is over.

Students going home for lunch will exit the building from their regularly assigned door only and younger students will be escorted to the playground to meet parents. Upon return to school at the end of the lunch hour, students should re-enter the school through their assigned door, sanitize their hands at the door and then return directly to their classrooms.

Students remaining for lunch in Cohorts A and B will have a supervised opportunity to wash hands, eat their lunches in their classrooms, head outside for 30 minutes of play and have supervised hygiene upon their return to the school. Students in Cohort C will play outside for 30 minutes before being escorted into the school for an opportunity to wash hands and eat in their classrooms.

All play during the noon break will follow the same plan as recess with regards to organizing play areas, limiting student contact, reducing equipment, and sanitizing upon exit and entry to the school.

**Thank-you to all of you for making efforts to have your child leave the school for their noon break if possible. It really supports all families in having a safe space for their children to eat lunch.**
BATHROOMS

Our single stall, gender-neutral bathroom remains available to all on the main floor. Other bathrooms for student use are in the basement. Physical distancing markers are on the floor outside the bathroom for students to wait if necessary.

For classrooms that are not equipped with a sink, we have organized and assigned sinks to classrooms for the purpose of hygiene breaks. Teachers are collaborating to schedule other opportunities to wash hands throughout the day.

ENTERING AND EXITING THE SCHOOL

Students and teachers will meet at their designated classroom muster points and enter the building using their designated doors. Students will be escorted in and out of the building, walking in single file and using distancing and masks as appropriate.

Hand sanitizer is available and will be used at each door upon entrance and exit from the school.

Students who are late to enter the building (at the beginning of the school day, noon and all recess breaks) will do the following: if classes are still in the process of entering, a student who is late can wait and follow the last class in at their designated door. If all classes have entered and the door is locked, the student will walk around the school to the front doors where they can enter, sanitize their hands and check in with Mrs. Roach before heading to class.
BUSSING

As in previous years, the bus drop-off and pickup lane is on 12th Street right beside the school. A teacher will be assigned to bus supervision duty starting at 8:40 so that they are in place to meet the bus when it arrives at the school. As students exit the bus, the supervisor will guide them to their class muster points where they will stay until their teacher directs their class’ entry into the school.

At the end of the day, students will exit the building with their classes using the procedures described in this newsletter. They will then head to the bus loading zone. The supervisor will arrange for students to line up in order to load the bus within the appropriate guidelines.

In the event of inclement weather for which we need to make arrangements for students to be indoors, bus students will be escorted to their designated door where they will proceed to their classrooms to meet their teachers immediately upon arrival. Students arriving to school by other means will go to their designated doors and follow the same entry procedure.

PARKING AND DROP-OFF

There are multiple drop-off points around the park of the school. Please use the drop-off point that makes the best sense for your family’s route to school. We ask that all students immediately make their way to their class’ muster point upon their arrival at the school yard.

We also ask families to be mindful of the spaces and drop-off points that may become congested and to find another drop-off point if needed to avoid crowds.

Entrances to the school yard include two points on 11th Street and two points on 12th Street. Please do not drop off at the front of the school and stay clear of bus loading zones.
Students who use Albert Daycare or Spadina Early Learning will have their own muster points outside for the beginning of the day and the end of the day. In the morning, the daycare employees will supervise their students until just before the bell when they will escort them to their homeroom muster points. Then, students will join their homeroom teachers and classmates. Similarly, at the end of the day, daycare workers will meet their students at their own muster points before proceeding to the daycare centres for after school care.

At noon, students utilizing Spadina Early Learning Center meal service will head directly downstairs upon class dismissal, and students attending Albert Daycare for lunch will meet their daycare employees at their muster points outside.

Any changes in any of our planning will be communicated with families. Updated plans will be located on our school portal and will be shared via email.
LOCERS

Classroom teachers will work together to create and practice procedures and routines to support the safe and distanced use of lockers to store clothing items such as jackets, boots, and gym shoes only. All other supplies including books, materials and backpacks will be kept in designated areas in classrooms. This will minimize the need to accessing lockers regularly throughout the day.

STORAGE OF STUDENT MATERIALS

Common materials will not be shared in classrooms; sharing materials is not acceptable. Students will have individual bins provided by the school for the storage of their materials in the classroom. Student materials will not be stored in lockers. Teachers will create and practice procedures and routines to support the safe storage and distribution of student belongings. All teachers will make efforts to minimize the amount of materials needed for learning.

STORAGE OF STUDENT-USED SCHOOL MATERIALS

Textbooks will not be used unless all students have their own. Classroom teachers will create and practice procedures and routines to support the safe storage of student-used school materials. For example, math manipulatives will be portioned into individual packages and will remain with the students’ supplies for the duration that is needed. Upon return, the math manipulatives will be sanitized appropriately before being re-distributed or used by others. Soft and porous materials will not be used.

Classroom rugs, pillows and excess furniture has been stored in an unused room in the school.

FLOW OF TRAFFIC THROUGH THE SCHOOL

Directional arrows and signage is used throughout the school generally to keep traffic to the right. Arrows have been placed on the floor outside of most doors to assist students in moving appropriately through the building. In the cases where there is not enough room to pass each other while maintaining an appropriate distance (hallway in the basement and stairwells to Art Room and Auditorium), we have added simple language signs, “Please wait until clear”.

![Image of directional signs and arrows]
**MASK USAGE**

- Grade 4-12 students are required to wear masks when appropriate physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Masks are recommended for Kindergarten to grade 3 students.
- Staff are required to wear masks at all times when appropriate distancing cannot be maintained.
- When physical distancing is achievable, mask breaks may occur (ie. Outdoor learning).
- All students are required to wear masks while riding the bus.
- All visitors must wear masks.
- Saskatoon Public Schools will provide one reusable mask for each student. Additional disposable masks will be made available to students and staff when needed and required.
- Students are welcome to bring their own masks.
- In some situations, wearing a mask may not be possible for a student. In these instances, school staff members will work with parents and caregivers to consider accommodations. More information can be found on the CDC Website.
- Staff members will also be provided with a reusable mask and face shield for use as necessary; staff members may also bring their own masks.
- More information about the proper usage of masks or face coverings is available from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

**MORE ABOUT MASKS**

- the CDC recommends the following about reusable masks (see link here)

  **Choose Masks:**
  
  - with two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric
  - that completely cover your nose and mouth
  - that fit snugly against the sides of your face and don’t have gaps

  **Do NOT Choose Masks:**
  
  - that are made of fabric that make it hard to breathe (eg. Vinyl)
  - that have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape
  - such as gaiters and bandanas as their effectiveness is unknown at this time
  - face shields on their own as their effectiveness is unknown at this time

  **We can provide students with disposable masks as needed!**
TEMPORARY STORAGE OF MASKS

There will be occasions when it is appropriate for students to remove their masks and take mask breaks. In most cases, this will be when the class is in an outdoor learning space and physical distancing can be maintained. Teachers will work with their classes to develop appropriate storage solutions for masks when they can be removed.

These solutions will be comprised of either 1) placing the mask in a clean, unused paper bag until needed again or 2) wrapping the mask in a clean paper towel and putting it into a container until needed again. Containers will need to be sanitized after each use.

We understand that LOTS of teaching and practice will go into appropriate mask use; we are prepared for this!

REGISTRATION AND STAGGERED START

In person registration will not occur this year as it has in the past. Instead, all EVS families will receive a phone call from one of our teachers on Thursday, August 27 or Monday, August 31 to confirm attendance at EVS for this school year and to reconnect with your family.

Once we have our registrations confirmed, we will be able to create class groupings and prepare for the arrival of our students. Homeroom teachers will then reach out to their families to let students know whose class they will be in and make personal connections with your family. They will also share what to expect the first days, what materials to bring and where their muster point in the school yard will be.

Education and support for health and wellness will be our first priority when schools re-open. We want students to be safe, healthy and excited to return to school and we want parents and caregivers to feel an equivalent amount of comfort with the reopening. Schools will have a staggered start so students and staff will have an opportunity to practice new routines and procedures. Staggered start dates for all Saskatoon Public Schools is September 8-11.

All students in grades 1-8 will attend two full days during the week of September 8-11. In general, we are expecting to have students with surnames beginning with letters A-M to come on Tuesday and Thursday, September 8 and 10. All students with surnames beginning with letters N-Z will come on Wednesday and Friday, September 9 and 11. Of course, we realize this may not create balanced groups in classrooms, so we may ask you if you are willing to change the start dates. We will also ensure that immediate families are kept together, regardless of surnames. We will work with you to determine the best possible scenario for your family and the school.

Kindergarten students will attend one half day during the week of September 8-11. Our Kindergarten teachers will be contacting families directly to share your child’s staggered start day and time.

Full classes for all grades begin on Monday, September 14 (except for Tuesday/Thursday Kindergarten, which will start on Tuesday, September 15.)
STAYING CONNECTED WHEN STUDENTS ARE ILL

All teachers will implement an online platform (either Google Classroom or Seesaw) to communicate with students/families to support in-class lessons when possible. If a child needs to stay home due to illness or due to contact tracing, they will be able to access their classroom teacher’s online platform and continue some of their learning at home with the support of the platform. Once they are well, they will return to in-person learning.

NOTE: Providing learning supports using an online platform is not the same as online teaching and learning. Google Classroom or Seesaw is not a replacement for in-class instruction.

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

Alongside physical health and safety, our first goals of the reopening plan at EVS are to help students feel safe, secure and connected at school. We know that the experiences of our students are as varied as they are, and it is our imperative to help them all feel secure and loved while they are at school. We know several steps that have to come first including connection, relationship, the establishment and practice of predictable routines and procedures, and practicing calming strategies when it all seems to be too much. That’s what we all need to get started. EVS teachers and staff know what to do to support students through the re-entry.

Currently, we are working on developing the enclosed procedures, deciding what procedural practice will look like in our classrooms, discussing how we will support our students, families, and each other when it gets tough, because it will get tough.

There may be a time when you feel it’s necessary for some additional supports for your child’s well-being. Keep in mind that, as always, you may reach out to your child’s teacher or school administrator to discuss your concerns. Our school counsellor will work with the school team to determine the appropriate supports, which may include direct support and/or assisting students and families to access other services in the community.

Please keep in touch with regards to how we can support your child in the best ways as we re-engage in learning.