

Return to School: Your questions, answered (mostly).

A short while ago we asked you (via Facebook) for questions you have related to specific Gledhill operations for the return to school.

Our School Administration, staff and teachers are working very hard to get everything ready – and safe – for our students. Much is still unknown, and things could change at any time based on ongoing developments from the Ministry of Education, TDSB, or other variables. Your patience and understanding are so appreciated during these challenging times.

We will provide updates and fill in blanks as more information becomes available. In the meantime, we hope you will find the below information, provided by the school administration and/or from the TDSB, helpful in getting ready for a safe and successful return to school. You can always contact the school directly with further questions as well.

We can't wait to see you (from a safe distance, of course)!

PPE

Are face shields ok instead of masks for JK-grade 3?

Face masks are required for all students. Masks will be provided to students who arrive at school without one. Face shields may be used in ADDITION to masks if desired. Reasonable exceptions regarding the requirement to wear masks will be made on a case-by-case basis. Students will have regular outdoor breaks where use of masks is not required.

What are your PPE numbers? How often will items be replenished?

All staff members will be provided with required/appropriate PPE (medical masks and face shields) as per the board/ministry. The school has also purchased additional PPE, including clear face masks where required, for staff to ensure there is plenty available. The school administration is also providing kits to all teachers/classrooms with extra supplies, including masks, shields, gloves, sanitizer, soap, paper towel, tissues, tape, etc.

How and when will masks be distributed for children?

According to the board/ministry, children arriving to school without masks will be provided with one before entering the building.

Washrooms/Hygiene

How often will washrooms be cleaned/sanitized?

Caretaking staff will perform routine cleaning of general facilities through the day and will conduct enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces (light switches, hand rails, door handles, etc.) twice daily.

Gledhill's caretaking staff is highly responsive and will respond quickly to cleanliness/supply issues in washrooms as they arise/are alerted throughout the day.

How often will washrooms be checked for supplies and cleanliness? Will we have enough of all cleaning supplies to replenish immediately?

Caretaking staff will perform routine cleaning of general facilities through the day and will conduct enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces (light switches, hand rails, door handles, etc.) twice daily.

How will washrooming work on the first floor for children not in Kindergarten classrooms?

Washroom breaks will be scheduled in consultation with teachers and linked to (yet to be determined) staggered recess and lunch break routines. Teachers will be responsive to additional student washroom needs. Classes without washrooms in them will be using other shared washrooms in the school – NOT the Kindergarten washrooms. (Only students assigned to classrooms with washrooms in them will have access to those washrooms.)

Handwashing times will be built into daily routines, including after washroom use, recess and lunch breaks.

How will washrooming work on all floors? (Will there be schedules, etc.?)

Washroom breaks will be scheduled in consultation with teachers and cohorts and linked to (yet to be determined) staggered recess and lunch break routines. Teachers will be responsive to additional student washroom needs. Handwashing times will be built into daily routines, including after washroom use, recess and lunch breaks.

Signage will be placed outside of washrooms with maximum capacity and distancing reminders.

The toilets, sinks, and stalls that were broken – have those be fixed and will they be maintained?

All maintenance has been completed.

How do we ensure soap and paper towel is properly available and used? (A long-standing problem, as we know)

Soap and paper towel supplies will be readily available in washrooms. Classrooms will also have supplies for regular hand cleaning (soap/sanitizer, etc.)

Will more water bottle filling stations be installed? Will water fountains be turned off?

Currently schools with at least 1 water filling station will not receive more. Gledhill currently has one near the gym. Water fountains will be bagged. The administration is looking into ways to have filtered water available in classrooms.

How will hand washing/hygiene be made available to classrooms without sinks?

Hand sanitizer and hand cleaning will be part of regular practiced hygiene routines, and regular washroom breaks will be scheduled. (All classrooms on the 1st floor have sinks.)

Ventilation

Can you provide a summary of Gledhill's HVAC/heating system, and its functionality at the moment?

Mechanical HVAC systems have been checked during the summer months to ensure they are operating as designed. All air intake screens/grates have been cleaned. Frequency of filter changes has been increased. In addition, the intake settings will be adjusted to increase the amount of fresh air and reduce recirculation.

Do all classrooms have windows? Do all of those windows open?

All Gledhill classrooms have windows that can open to approved regulations.

What will happen for ventilation in winter if windows can't be opened due to weather?

The HVAC system will provide ventilation.

Use of external spaces

We have a huge schoolyard -- can classes go outside at all?

Yes, classes will be going outside regularly. Teachers can take classes outdoors within school grounds or to surrounding areas with proper permissions.

How will outdoor classes and cohort recesses be separated/scheduled?

This plan is still in the works, and will depend on final numbers provided by the Board. Our current plan is to staff recesses and lunch times so that students remain with their cohort. More details to come.

Is the school planning to use community spaces to socially distance the student population and accommodate smaller class sizes?

We do not expect that we will need to use community spaces outside of the school for classes.

Are there any other plans in place to try and increase the ability to distance that you can share?

Students and staff will practice physical distancing and remain 2m apart to the maximum extent possible. Classrooms will be organized to encourage the maximum space possible between students (aiming for 1m minimum). Floors will be marked with stickers to designate a one-way traffic flow and identifying 2m distances. Signage will be placed throughout the building to reinforce safety protocols. Exterior doors will be designated as either entry or exits points.

Current details around Health and Safety can be found at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Health-and-Safety/Health-and-safety-measures>

We are still working on details regarding drop off/pick up, as well as working with before and after school care providers.

Classes/Streams

Is French Immersion happening this year?

Yes! (Available for in-person and remote options)

How do I remove my child from French immersion this year? Will there be an opportunity to enter French immersion in grade one instead?

Please contact the school/principal to do this. Entry to the French Immersion program can only be made in SK – there is no grade 1 entry point.

Can my child entering SK be put in French Immersion for grade one if she's not already registered FI SK but spends this year with a native French speaker (at home learning)

Entry to the French Immersion program can only be made in SK – there is no grade 1 entry point. There is a later junior grade entry point in grade 4.

How are the subjects that are normally rotated - French, music, PE, etc. working?

Teachers will be moving to the cohorted classes rather than students moving through hallways to specialized rooms.

For remote learning in kindergarten: Are children required to log in for 'x' hours a day? Is there a paper/non-screen option?

This is outlined by the TDSB (not by individual schools). Information on the remote learning requirements can be found at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Learning-and-Instruction/Elementary> – see Elementary Virtual Learning.

When will the 'switch points' be for remote to in-class options? What will the procedure be? Are all Gledhill students ensured a spot back in class if they want it at a later time?

It is important to note that, for health and safety reasons, and because of the impact switching would have on staffing, physical distancing and space allocation, it will not be possible to immediately transition between the two models. As a result, an opportunity to enter the Virtual School or to return to in-person learning will be provided at three key dates during the school year as follows:

October 13, 2020. **Request Deadline: Sept 30**

November 23, 2020. **Request Deadline: Nov 6**

February 16, 2021. **Request Deadline: Jan 29**

Movement from one model to another will be requested through the Principal of the student's home school (ie: Gledhill). If a switch is required outside of the designated times, a limited number of exceptions may be made and will be reviewed by Principals on a case-by-case basis.

As there are hard caps for classes, we expect that it may be necessary to put students on a wait list in order to switch to in-class teaching at Gledhill. We are awaiting further direction on this procedure.

Daily Processes/Logistics

What time will school start/end times be this year?

Start time is 8:40am.

End time is 3:20pm.

Expectations for the school day are that students will receive 300 minutes of instruction time per day. So, though a given class may not get in to the building right at 8:40am to prevent crowding, etc., the school day will begin for all students at 8:40am.

When/where can we expect class lists/teacher assignments to be posted?

Schools are still awaiting final numbers from the TDSB to designate staffing and create class lists. Families will receive a communication from their child's teacher once this has been established – hopefully no later than Sept. 11th. This communication will include first day procedures including start date (staggered start dates were approved by the Ministry and the TDSB), where to meet, what to bring to school, etc.

What will be the procedure for morning on the first day of school?

Students will meet their teachers outside at a designated meeting point which will be communicated prior to their first day. Further details for the first day and routines are still being determined at this time.

Please expect that it may be required to limit the number of adults/family members allowed in the school yard for drop off to reduce crowding and promote distancing.

What will arrival and dismissal procedures be/look like in general?

We will have staggered entry and exits from the school to allow for physical distancing. Further details are still being determined at this time.

What will the 'staggered start' look like?

The TDSB has provided the following as a guideline, however schools may make individual determinations based on their numbers and classes, which have not yet been finalized.

DATE	KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 5 SCHOOLS	KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 6 SCHOOLS	KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 8 SCHOOLS	GRADE 6-7-8 SCHOOLS	GRADE 7-8 SCHOOLS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15	SENIOR KINDERGARTEN GRADE 5 ALL ISP CLASSES	SENIOR KINDERGARTEN GRADE 6 ALL ISP CLASSES	SENIOR KINDERGARTEN GRADES 4 AND 8 ALL ISP CLASSES	GRADE 6 ALL ISP CLASSES	GRADE 7 ALL ISP CLASSES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16	JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN GRADES 1 AND 4	JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN GRADES 1 AND 5	JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN GRADES 1 AND 7	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17	GRADES 2 AND 3	GRADES 2, 3 AND 4	GRADES 2, 3, 5 AND 6	GRADE 8	

Teachers will notify students/families of their confirmed start date in their initial email (by Sept 11th).

Will breakfast club operate?

Breakfast Club will not be running for the first two months of school at least. We are looking in to other options as we understanding the importance of such programs. Several models (not requiring food preparation e.g. snack program/grab-and-go) are being discussed. We will provide updates as they become available.

Can children go home for lunch?

While permitted, it is preferable that children stay at school for lunch.

Who's staying in the classrooms with the kids over lunch?

We are waiting for details/guidance on this from the board. Supervision requirements, staffing regulations, teacher breaks and cohort scheduling are all being taken in to account.

Another Gledhill family is part of our 10-person bubble. Can make a request that our children be in the same class if possible?

Social bubbles are unfortunately not part of the consideration for organization of classes. There are many other variables to coordinate and very tight timelines.

Should we be supplying our children with their own markers, pencil crayons, pencils, paper - any specifics? Will families receive a list in advance of the start of school?

We are awaiting details on what specifically children will be allowed to bring from home. Students will be provided with required materials (pencils, paper, etc.) at school for personal use. Teachers will communicate any other needs with families/students. (Please note that no soft items will be permitted.)

What if...?

What happens if there is a positive case in the school? What happens if there is a positive case in a class/cohort? Will families be notified of any positive cases in the school?

From TDSB Website: “The TDSB takes its lead from Toronto Public Health, which is responsible for determining if an outbreak exists, declaring an outbreak, and providing direction on outbreak control measures to be implemented. It’s important to note that even though an outbreak may be declared in the school, Toronto Public Health 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. For more information on this and other safety measures, visit the [TDSB website](#).”

As per TDSB/Toronto Public Health guidelines:

In the case of a Covid-19 Positive case, school administrators will verbally inform staff. The school will report the case to Toronto Public Health (TPH) and the Superintendent of Education. TPH will contact positive cases directly and provide a letter directly to other staff/students identified as at high risk of exposure. TPH will provide direction to the board/school on next steps, including letters to the community (only as directed by TPH).

Students/employees who test positive for Covid-19 will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. No negative test is required for the return to school after this period.

What are the protocols for when kids get sick with colds?

If children display symptoms that are consistent with Covid-19, children should not attend school, even if the parent suspects it is only a cold. Families are asked to do the TPH Covid-19 screening before sending children to school each day. This screening will be done again by staff when children arrive at school.

If a child (or staff) is unwell during the school day, they will be taken to the school Wellness Room. Parents/Guardians will be called. It is important that the child be picked up as soon as possible. If Covid-19 is suspected, it will be strongly recommended that the guardian goes to an assessment centre for testing and self-isolate at home until results are available.

How can we help?

Are there any COVID-specific supplies and materials that the administration/teachers need right now? Anything that Council is allowed to fundraise/crowdfund for, or that parents are allowed to gift/donate to the school or to individual teachers?

We very much appreciate the generosity of the parent community. We will consult with teachers about specific needs, but want to be clear that supplies specifically related to Covid-19 (like PPE) are to be provided by the board.