



Gledhill Public School

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Cathy McAleese, Principal Janet Bambrick, Vice-Principal

September 4, 2020

Dear Gledhill Families,

We want to start by thanking you for your messages of support. We also want to acknowledge your patience and trust as we organize the school and prepare to receive our students back. The partnership between home and school has never been more important than now! Here are a few updates that we have in preparing for a safe school return.

Now that the parent survey has closed, we have received our school numbers, and based on those numbers, **we will need to realign classes** to meet the current Ministry caps of JK/SK -27; Grades 1 to 3 – 20; Grades 4 and 5 – 27. Please note that all class changes will be done in consultation with our teachers, who know their students well.

Students will start attending school on Tuesday, September 15th. There will be a **staggered start** according to the following schedule, which is board-wide:

Tuesday, September 15 - SK, Grade 5 and Primary ISP

Wednesday, September 16 - JK, Grade 1 and Grade 4

Thursday, September 17 - Grade 2 and 3

Please note that all of our students will be attending school by Friday, September 18. Our start and end time for the school day remains **8:40 am to 3:20 pm** (no change). Please note that during school hours (8:30 am to 4 pm) **the playground equipment may not be used** for health and safety reasons (direction to schools from the TDSB facilities). Parents cannot allow children to go on the playground equipment during these hours.

We will be working with our staff to map out more specific plans, and families will be contacted by their child's teacher. This contact will be by **Monday, September 14th** (or earlier if possible) as the board has until that time to give schools their final staffing. Parents should check their emails for the welcome letter from their child's teacher prior to attending school on their designated day.

All Gledhill staff has been back to work and have completed three PA Days of training that were designated for professional development related to:

- Health & Safety Protocols in Response to COVID-19
- Student Mental Health, Well-Being and Anti-Bullying
- Remote/Online Learning Strategies and Tools
- Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Training
- New Math Curriculum

As we return to school, Health and Safety and student well-being will be everyone's number one priority. We will also be building the foundation of re-establishing academic rigour. We are aware that it will take time for us to adjust to our new school reality.

Here is a glimpse of what to expect once we return to school. (Please know that more details will come and some plans may need to be adjusted).

Entry to the school building will be limited to staff, students, and essential workers/delivery personnel. Students will wait to enter the building with their class at the designated outside area. Classes will enter the building one at a time. Teachers will conduct a COVID-19 screening as outlined by TPH for each child before entry, and EVERYONE is expected to put on their masks before entering the building. **Parents will be asked to stand away from the designated classroom area and promptly leave the schoolyard once our staff supervises their children.**

Social Distance will be expected in all areas of our school grounds. More details about where to drop-off your child and other important information will be in the teacher letter.

If you are **late bringing your child to school**, you will have to wait outside (front door) until we can screen your child. Parents will be expected to maintain social distance while lining up with their child while waiting. **Students will be entering the building alone.**

Kindergarten students will be brought to their classrooms by a staff member.

Everyone entering the building will sanitize their hands as part of the onsite screening and will be expected to wear a mask.

Classes will look different, with desks facing forward and strategically positioned apart. There will be assigned seating. Students will be expected to have their backpacks at the back of their chairs. The hallways will have signs to outline the traffic flow to support social distancing.

We will be working on plans to socially distance at recesses and lunch to reduce the number of students interacting in each yard area. Classes will be assigned a specific area of the yard.

Every day parents will be asked to complete a COVID-19 screening at home. Students will go through a second screening by staff at school. Students who arrive at school with symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted by staff to the Wellness room, and parents will be notified to pick up their child. Your help with screening at home and keeping your child home if they are sick will go a long way towards keeping our school open and safe.

The use of **masks** will be required for EVERYONE in the building, including students from kindergarten to Gr 5. Students should **bring their own masks from home** (the school will have disposable masks for emergency purposes). Teachers will be incorporating "mask breaks" (outdoors) into their daily schedule. Please note that students will be responsible for carrying their own mask once outdoors; having a waist belt/pouch/breakable lanyard/fanny pack can help keep their mask protected.

All our water fountains have been "bagged" and are out of bounds. Fortunately, Gledhill has one water-bottle filling station available for our students. We encourage students to bring a **filled water bottle(s) from home.**

We ask families to send their child to school with a **litterless bagged lunch** at the start of the day. **(Please be aware that all litter and leftover food will be sent home.)**

Students will be eating their lunch in their classrooms with their teachers and supervised by our lunchroom supervisors for outdoor time. If lunches need to be dropped off, there will be a table outside for the lunch so please make sure it is labelled. We will be trying to minimize contact/exposure for our staff, so ensuring your child comes to school on time and with their lunch will reduce exposure. If you

choose to pick up your child, or your child goes home for lunch, **they must return at the end of lunchtime**. Please pre-screen them before return to school.

At the end of the day, teachers will walk their classes to the same entry line-up spots for dismissal. If picking up your child, we ask that one parent/guardian wait at a distance until the entire class is at their designated outside location. Again, there will be more specific information to come. For now, here are a few tips for preparing your child for a safe return to school that will help foster the excitement of being back at school:

- Practice mask-wearing and work through some of the issues your child may experience. Allowing your child to choose a mask they like; adjusting the correct fit; modelling a positive attitude around wearing a mask
- Please go over how to wear the mask (covering nose and mouth completely) and how to carry the mask while outdoors as they will have to don the mask again upon re-entry into the school
- Practice handwashing often
- Practice walking/moving while social distancing
- Make sure your child has a reusable water bottle and lunch containers
- Remember to label your child's belongings (including their masks)
- Be proactive and positive while teaching your child independence with hygiene habits

As we start the 2020-21 school year, there will be many strict protocols and procedures in place, including no field trips and **no volunteers**. Please know that we value your offers of support and desire to be involved. We look forward to continuing the very important partnership between the school and Gledhill families. We will start the year focusing on the routines for a safe return to school and, once we have a solid foundation following our safety protocols, we will be adding to the rich learning environment that makes Gledhill a "Great place to be"!

Please continue to visit the TDSB website <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School> for information pertaining to all schools, including maintenance of ventilation systems and caretaking sanitization procedures. Remember to look for a letter from your child's teacher at the end of next week for more details about the return to school.

With sincere appreciation for your understanding and support,

Cathy McAleese
Principal

Janet Bambrick
Vice-Principal