



Robert Service School routines, schedules and programs for 2020-21

Adapting to COVID-19 at our school



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Starting the 2020-21 school year

After an unusual end to last school year, we are very excited to welcome students and school staff back into our classrooms at RSS. We know this school year will be different, but we have an opportunity to work together, to be creative and set a positive example for our students of how we can be resilient when presented with challenges. Working together to address an ongoing health issue is a community responsibility and we look forward to working with you in this in a constructive way.



The health and safety of students and school staff is our first priority. Our school is adapting our operations and programming to meet the [health and safety guidelines for K-12 school settings](#) set by Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

At Robert Service School, we *Identified* through consultation with staff, parents and School Council that we need to underpin what we do in our Safety Plan from a perspective of caring for each other. For our local First Nation, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the term Hqzq t'ëk'âtr'ënòcha) – taking care of each other through actions of respect, accountability, tolerance, open, clear and direct communication, accommodation to difference – are all evidence of a culture of care. We identify that anxiousness is a major current concern amongst our school community, and staff, students and parents/ carers will vary in their levels of anxiousness, and communicating our actions is a major process in reducing anxiousness.

The health and safety guidelines try to concisely outline our efforts. We know that:

- Keeping students out of school has negative impacts on their mental health
- Outbreaks involving children and youth are unusual and tend to only occur in areas where there are high levels of community spread
- There is no conclusive evidence that shows children who are symptomatic pose a risk to other children or adults
- Children and youth are not the primary drivers of COVID-19 spread in schools or community settings
- Proper health and safety measures still need to be in place to reduce risk

Staff at our school will be regularly reviewing the health and safety measures at our school with students to ensure safe and healthy habits. There may be adjustments to the plan as we progress.

Read this document to find out how we are adapting our school routines this school year. If you want access to the full plan this can be accessed on our website. <http://rss.yukonschools.ca/>

Health and safety routines for the 2020-21 school year

Contacting the school

Contact us at 993-5435 if you have questions about how we are ensuring the health and safety for students and staff this school year.

Staying home when sick

Students and staff must stay home if they are sick or showing symptoms. Parents should monitor their child every day for symptoms before sending them to school.

Parents should consider if there are new or worsening symptoms when monitoring, or if they are otherwise not explained. For example, a child with asthma may have a cough, which may not be new.



You can use the self-assessment tool on Yukon.ca to assess yourself and your child for COVID-19: service.yukon.ca/en/covid-19-self-assessment/

Symptoms include:

- Fever/chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Muscle aches

Health officials recommend students get tested for COVID-19 if they are showing symptoms. Students and staff must stay home until they are symptom free, or if tested, until they have a negative test.

We'll be monitoring student absences and we need you to inform us if your child is away, especially for flu-like symptoms. Monitoring absence allows to take proactive measures mitigating any flu or COVID-19 spread.

Always phone 811 or your family physician before going anywhere to get tested.

If a student or staff gets sick at school

If a student or staff gets sick at school:

- The student or staff will be immediately separated into a designated area
- The student or staff will be provided a mask
- The student's parent/guardian will be contacted to pick them up as soon as possible
- The school staff member who is sick will go home as soon as possible
- The designated area will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected

Wearing a mask at school

Although students and staff are not required to wear masks constantly, they may do so if they choose as frequently as they wish. Wearing a non-medical mask is not an appropriate substitute for physical



distancing or other control measures in a school setting. At the school-level, we have decided to require the use of masks in some areas of the school where there is a great deal of social mixing, such as the community library and the office area. Many staff will be wearing a mask, especially those who work with staff and students across K-12.

There are specific situations that may require a mask. These include:

- If a student or staff member gets sick at school, they will be asked to wear a mask
- If a school staff has to attend to a sick student, they will be asked to wear a mask
- If a school staff is unable to physically distance during their regular job duties, for example assisting students with activities of daily living, such as washing, using the bathroom, eating, etc.

Our school will have access to non-medical masks to ensure they are accessible when needed. Families are encouraged to provide a mask for their child, but the school will be providing a mask for each student and staff member.

Physical distancing

The health and safety guidelines indicate physical distancing is not always possible with children. Where not possible, risks are being reduced by increasing other measures like handwashing, cleaning and disinfecting, and making sure students and staff stay home when sick or showing symptoms.

To support safe spacing, manage traffic flows in common areas, and limit mixing of different groups of students, our school is taking the following measures:

- Restricting movement among the K-4, 5-7 and 8-12 areas
- Classes of students will remain together throughout the school day with seating plans and will not mix with other classes
- Large class sizes have been reduced for portions of the day, especially during Mathematics and English by creating small groups that work out of the classroom with a teacher during these times.

Hand washing and sanitizing at school

Students and school staff will be required to wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or sanitize their hands frequently during the school day.

When students should wash their hands	When staff should wash their hands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before and after any transitions within the school setting (e.g. to another classroom, indoor-outdoor transitions) • Whenever hands are visibly dirty • After using the washroom • Before eating and drinking • After sneezing or coughing into hands • After playing outside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before and after any transitions within the school setting (e.g. to another classroom, indoor-outdoor transitions) • Whenever hands are visibly dirty • After using the washroom • Before eating and drinking • After sneezing or coughing into hands • Before handling food or assisting students with eating



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)• After cleaning tasks• After removing gloves• After handling garbage
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Students and staff will be able to wash hands at available sinks in the school. Hand sanitizing stations will also be located in in four areas: Office, K-4, 5-7 and 8-12.

Cleaning and disinfecting the school

Government of Yukon custodial staff will be cleaning and disinfecting the school with disinfectants approved by Health Canada. They also follow [cleaning and disinfecting guidelines](#) set by Yukon’s Chief Medical officer of Health.

High-touch areas and equipment, including shared items for learning will be wiped down and cleaned more frequently.

Staff and students may also take part in support cleaning efforts. Students may be asked to help out by washing their hands, cleaning their desk and cleaning up after using shared items for learning, just like they usually would in their classrooms.

Supporting safe habits at school

Teachers and school staff will go over these health and safety routines regularly with students. Parents are also encouraged to review these health and safety routines regularly with their child or children. This includes:

- Washing hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds
- Using hand sanitizer when you can’t wash your hands
- Coughing and sneezing into our elbows
- Using a tissue to blow our nose, and then throwing the tissue in the garbage
- Wearing a mask in areas where there is a high degree of mixing, such as the community-library and the Office area
- K-7 students wearing a mask when students are escorted by a staff member through areas of mixing
- Keeping a 2-metre distance from your friends and teachers as much as you can
- Making sure your child or children tells you when they are sick or showing symptoms
- Keeping them home when they are sick or showing symptoms



Operations and schedule during the 2020-21 school year

School start and end times, and recess and lunch

The start and end times for our school day have not changed. Our school day will start at 8:40 and end at 3:20, except for Wednesday when school ends at 2:20.

Our time for recess and lunch has also not changed. K-6 students will have recess breaks from 10:25-10:40 and lunch break from 12:00-12:55. Lunch for high school students is from 12:10 to 12:55, except on Wednesdays.

Drop-off and pick-up

Student, parents and school staff should maintain a 2-metre distance during drop-off and pick-up times as much as possible.

Parents should not enter the school while waiting to drop-off or pick up their child, although there may be some exception for our K students, and Mrs Betts will inform. Parents should wait in their vehicle or in the designated outside waiting area nearest your child's entrance/ exit. K students enter through the north-side Gerties entrance, Grade 1-3 through the playground entrance nearest the portables, Grade 5 & 6's, through the west-side entrance (NWTel), Grades 7-12 through the main 5th Avenue entrance and Detö through the south-side gym entrance off the playground.

Water bottles, food and meals

Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottle for the school day to reduce contact at the water fountains. Water fountains will be functioning but should not be used for direct drinking.

There will be no sharing of food or drinks between students at the school this year. Any meals available at the school will be served in individual portions or packaged in single-use, food grade packaging.

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is about to commence a nutrition program at the school and more details around this program and hygiene practices associated with this program will be circulated at a later date.

Visitors and public access to the school

Parents and other guests should limit visiting the school where possible. We understand there may be times where you must visit the school building.

When visiting the school, parents and visitors to the school must:

- Enter and exit through the 5th Avenue entrance
- Sign in at the front office
- Sanitize their hands when entering the school
- Maintain physical distancing while in the school
- Wear a mask as requested or required
- Limit your movement within the school



Programming during the 2020-21 school year

Contacting the school for learning supports

Contact the teacher first if your child needs additional or different supports for their learning.

If you still have concerns with the supports being offered, please contact the school to ensure the school principal is able to follow-up.

The school can be contacted at: 993-5435

Learning at school

All students at Robert Service School will be able to attend in-class instruction, full-time for five-days a week. During the school day, students will attend their regular classes, while following health and safety guidelines. They will learn the full school curriculum. Teachers as a regular practice will be informing you on a weekly basis of what the learning focus is at each grade level, so that you can continue to be engaged in your child's learning.

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Remove this if you are a Whitehorse high-school.

School supplies and sharing learning materials

Sharing of school supplies and learning materials will be limited as much as possible. If shared, materials need to be cleaned and disinfected.

To limit sharing, all students are required to have their own school supplies. A list has been sent home to outline the supplies students will need.

Classes will continue to use some shared learning materials, such as toys, blocks and other materials for learning, but sharing of these will be minimized and materials. As necessary, materials will be regularly cleaned and disinfected using soap and water or a disinfectant wipe. Students will be asked to wash or sanitize their hands before and after each use.

Paper-based materials like text books, books and paper handouts are okay to use and share as outlined in the health and safety guidelines.

Libraries and computer labs

Our school library will remain accessible for students and staff and we will continue to allow books and other resources to be borrowed from the library. Because our library is a community-used library students will be required to wear a mask in the library.

Students and staff will be able to access IT equipment while following these measures:

- Students will be required to wash or sanitize their hands before and after shared IT equipment
- Computers and other shared IT equipment will be cleaned after each use using disinfectant wipes; students and staff may be asked to support this effort

Recess, gym and playing on the playground

Weather permitting, recess breaks and gym classes will take place outdoors. Students and families are asked to ensure they have the proper clothing for playing outdoors.



Playground equipment is okay to use as long as hands are washed before and after going on the equipment.

When gym class is indoors, we will follow the [health and safety guidelines for sport and recreation](#).

School field trips

The health and safety guidelines allow field trips within Yukon and Canada as long as public health and safety guidelines are followed. This includes allowing:

- Outdoor overnight trips if students can mitigate all risks associated with social distancing and hygiene, including sleeping arrangements.
- Hotel stays, as long as no more than two students are in each room

Our school will be assessing any planned school field trips on a case-by-case basis and will provide updates to students and parents directly through school year.

International field trips are not currently permitted.

Music and cooking classes

The health and safety guidelines note that singing and playing woodwind and brass instruments must not occur at this time. Being mindful of this, there is provision for singing and instruments to be used as long as the projection of air is minimized and social distancing and ventilation is maximized, which is what will occur in the music room and classrooms.

Cooking classes are also able to continue while meeting the health and safety guidelines, including washing hands before cooking, limiting sharing of equipment and cleaning and disinfecting surfaces between each class.

Music and cooking class teachers will share how they are adapting their programs once the school year gets started.

Extracurricular activities (school sports, music, arts, other programs)

We will be assessing extracurricular activities at the beginning of the school year and determining any changes or adaptations that may be needed.

Any extracurricular activities will follow the same health and safety guidelines for K-12 school settings, and any additional health and safety guidelines that apply, for example, the [health and safety guidelines for sport and recreation](#) for school sports.

Students and parents will be updated as this information becomes available.

For more information:

We will be providing regular updates to students and families during the school year through [e-mail; school news letter; on our school website].

Visit the following websites for more information:

- School website: [add link]
- Yukon.ca information on education and schools during COVID-19: yukon.ca/en/education-and-school-supports-covid-19



- Yukon.ca information on COVID-19: yukon.ca/en/covid-19-information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [enter phone number and e-mail address].