

First of all, we would like to welcome you and your children back to Hespeler P.S. and extend an extra warm welcome to those families who will be joining our school community this year! This certainly continues to be a unique and ever-changing time for our education system and greater society. We want to assure you that as we begin this new school year with some continued uncertainties, it is our priority to provide a quality education and experience for your child while making sure he or she is as safe and healthy as possible. Our approach will be informed by care and compassion, in a manner that will comply with all COVID-19 health and safety requirements. 'Safe, happy learners' will be our priority as we continue to focus on the conditions for learning: relationships, pedagogy and assessment, the learning environment, and human rights and equity.

Staff training: A staff handbook specific to Hespeler P.S. that follows the Health and Safety guidelines by WRDSB, the Ministry of Education and the Region of Waterloo Public Health has been created. Staff will receive training this week through professional development days on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. This includes learning about COVID-19 symptoms, prevention, transmission, control and management of suspected and confirmed cases. This training and information will support staff in the development of their plans for your children during the first 2 weeks of school.

Staggered Start to School for students attending in PERSON:

*Students in Special Education Classes (ACE) will attend every day starting Thursday, September 10

Monday, Sept. 7th	Tuesday, Sept. 8th	Wednesday, Sept. 9th	Thursday, Sept. 10th	Friday, Sept. 11th
Labour Day	Staff preparing for safe arrival of students and transitioning to new assignments	Staff preparing for safe arrival of students and transitioning to new assignments	Junior Kindergarten Orientation (Surname A-L) All other Staff connecting with families through a phone call or Google Meet	Junior Kindergarten Orientation (Surname M-Z) All other Staff connecting with families through a phone call or Google Meet
Monday, Sept. 14th	Tuesday, Sept. 15th	Wednesday, Sept. 16th	Thursday, Sept. 17th	Friday, Sept. 18th
Group 1 Surname A-L	Group 2 Surname M-Z	Group 1 Surname A-L As well all students who attend before and after school programs	Group 2 Surname M-Z As well all students who attend before and after school programs	All Students A-Z Including all students who attend before and after school programs

Please look for a School Day message in the upcoming week to indicate your child's teacher. The classroom teacher will connect with you before your child's start date and will let you know where their class will be meeting on the first day. Junior Kindergarten teachers will reach out to families to let them know the plans for the JK orientation.

Distance Learning: Information will be shared over the next week. Please refer to the WRDSB website if you have enrolled your child(ren) in Distance Learning.

Modes of Learning: The survey is now closed for changes. Families wishing to switch between learning platforms may do so at identified timelines. Intent to switch can be expressed at the end of October and again at the end of January.

Preparing for Back to School:

We thought you might like to know what kind of supplies would be helpful to send with your child this year. So here is a guide.

- Students will be expected to bring all personal items home each day
- Please only send essential items. Lockers will not be available and in many cases, students will be keeping their items with them at their desk. Less is more!
- We will be providing each student with essential learning supplies (pencils, erasers, pencil crayons, markers, ruler, etc.). The items provided will differ depending on grade level.
- Each student is asked to bring a **mask** to wear on the first day of school. The school will be providing students with reusable masks, which they may wish to use during subsequent days. Students are also free to continue wearing their own masks (e.g., cloth, disposable). Please send your child with a paper bag to house the mask when they remove it to eat.
- Each student is asked to bring a **labelled water bottle** since drinking fountains will be closed for use by mouth.
- Students should pack a **healthy lunch and a water bottle** labeled with their name. They will have access to touch-free water filling stations as needed during the day. We will also continue with our "Boomerang" lunches so everything that they bring with them will be returned home in their lunch bag. Please pack a reusable plastic bag for items that may be messy.
- We will **not** be asking you to send a second pair of shoes to leave at school. In fact this is discouraged right now. Students will wear their outdoor shoes into the classroom this fall. We will revisit this practice when the weather changes. This is to reduce contact in hallways and the storage of personal belongings on coat hooks.
- Approved **WRDSB hand sanitizer** will be available to all students and will be dispensed by the classroom educator at identified times throughout the day, upon request by a student, and as needed.
- **Tissues** (e.g., Kleenex) will also be supplied, so this is **not** something that students will need to bring themselves.

- At this time, kindergarten students are asked to bring a **change of clothes in a labelled Ziploc bag** (in case of spills or accidents). Kindergarten educators will communicate to families if there are any additional supplies needed.

We understand that this is an exciting time for students and often the tradition of purchasing back to school supplies adds to the excitement. As we all know, this is an unprecedented time so we ask that you please keep these personal supplies at home for students to use at home. We also ask that personal toys and/or sentimental personal belongings do not come to school with your child.

Daily Routines

As you know, school routines and procedures will look different than they have in the past so we would like to take this opportunity to share some of those with you. We thank you in advance for adhering to these guidelines to help keep everyone safe while at school.

Beginning & End of Day:

- Though bell times remain the same for ALL students, students will enter and exit school in a staggered fashion (one class entering/exiting at a time) to promote physical distancing
- Staggered entry/exit will result in students being outside for longer periods of time. Please be sure that students are dressed appropriately as this process will continue to be in place during inclement weather (rain gear/umbrella, warm clothes, etc.)
- Each class will have a designated line up space on the tarmac/yard
- As they arrive on school property, students will need put on their masks and head directly to their line
- We kindly ask, that where age-appropriate, you allow your child(ren) to enter the property on their own to help reduce congestion on the yard and allow for physical distancing
- At the end of the day, it would be helpful for your child (again, as appropriate by age) to be able to meet you at a predetermined spot off-property to help reduce congestion
- If meeting your child on property, please limit it to 1 adult/family. All adults should also be wearing a mask and should be on the field only (no adults on the tarmac please to ensure enough space for physical distancing).
- Please leave school property promptly at the end of the school day (do not congregate on property)

School Access:

- Access to the school will be greatly reduced and only essential visitors will be allowed
- Parents/guardians will not have access to the school
- Please ensure students have all items needed for the day, including lunches, when they leave each morning as we will not be able to accept deliveries of these items during the school day
- All students will need to remain on property at both lunches

Illness/COVID symptoms or diagnosis:

- Please be sure to complete the pre-screening check with your child daily. If they are showing any symptoms, do not send your child to school.

- The board's safety protocols require symptomatic children be removed from class and parent/guardian called for prompt pick up
- If your child(ren) has been exposed to an active case of COVID-19, they must also stay home. Please contact the school to discuss next steps.
- Please be sure the school has up-to-date contact information for your family and emergency contacts

Late Students:

- Students arriving after 8:35 should determine if their class is still on the yard in their designated line for staggered entry. If so, they are asked to join their line.
- If your child arrives late, please be prepared to wait with them in cue outside the main entrance of the school
- Entry at the main entrance will be delayed until students on the yard have entered the site in order to reduce congestion in halls and promote physical distancing. It is likely that staggered entry will take 20+ minutes.
- Students will enter on their own (without parent/guardian) when prompted by office personnel who will sign them in and then direct them to class

Chromebooks currently on loan: In order to be ready for September, we are asking that all families with a loaned WRDSB device at home, **RETURN devices and charging cords** to school this coming week. All devices will be set aside for 72 hours and then be thoroughly cleaned before they are distributed to classrooms. Please drop off ALL borrowed devices AND charge cords to the main entrance on **Wednesday, Thursday or Friday** of this week (Sept. 2-4), between 8am and 3pm. Park in the parking lot, come to the main entrance and buzz the school buzzer for further direction. We ask that you please wear a mask and practise physical distancing when returning the device. If your child is signed up for Distance Learning and you know you will need a Chromebook, you may keep it in your possession for now. If you are unable to drop the Chromebook off this week, please send it to school with your child when they return.

We would also ask that you send all library books/home reading books back to the school. These can be dropped off to the school this week or they can be sent with your child next week.

This is a busy time for the staff at Hespeler P.S. as we prepare to welcome your children back to the school building for what we all hope is a fantastic year of learning, friendship and joyful experiences for us all! See you all soon!

Rebecca Jutzi
Principal

Kevin Pomfret
Vice-Principal

Resources for more information:

[Returning to School - A Guide for Families](#)

[Return to School - FAQs](#)

[Daily Student Screening Checklist](#)