



# St. Michael's Parent Handbook for School Re-Opening



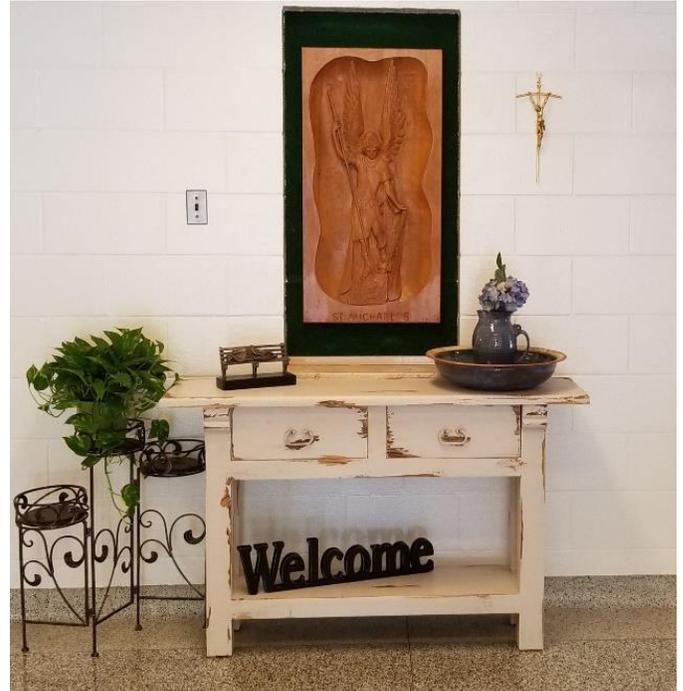
### Message from the Principal:

Welcome Back everyone! We are so happy to have you return to our school building. We have been apart for a long time and I would like you to know that you have always been in my thoughts and prayers.

We have all had a very challenging six months, but we are very excited about this brand new school year together. It will be a very different one but one where we will meet all challenges...together. Most years, I prioritize the security of all who enter our building. This year, again, it is absolutely KEY to everything we do at St. Michael's school and the basis of every decision I make as an administrator. Your children are very important to us and I invite you to continue to work together as a TEAM so that all children in our care can flourish in mind, body, and spirit. I would like to take a moment to call to mind those families who have selected distance education for their child(ren). These have not been easy decisions to make but I know they are made with much consideration and thought. I look forward to the day when we can ALL be together in joyful celebration that we have overcome so much by never losing hope and faith. One of my favourite quotes from scripture says: *"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."* (Isaiah 40:31). Email me [afortunato@bhncdsb.ca](mailto:afortunato@bhncdsb.ca) should you have any questions/concerns regarding this information or any other matter. I am committed to getting back to you in a timely manner as your thoughts/questions are very important to me.

Blessings to you and your family during this time of hope, faith and promise.

A.Fortunato, Principal



## St. Michael's School Staff 2021-2022

Principal	Ms. Anna Fortunato
Secretary	Mrs. Irene Bowden
Parish Priest	Father Sunny Sebastian
Custodian	Mrs. Margaret Botrell
Custodian (Part-time)	Mrs. Lisa Pielechaty
FTJK/FTK	Mrs. Bekki Vallee
FTJK/FTK	Mrs. Deanna Bubish
Grade 1	Mrs. Ashley Carrigan
Grade 1/2	Mrs. Sheri Carnegie
Grade 2/3	Mrs. Kim Villella
Grade 3	Mrs. Laurie Rykse
Grade 4	Mrs. Theresa Molnar (Wright) - on leave Ms. Ashley McPherson - LTO
Grade 5/6	Ms. Sylvia Papez
Grade 5/6	Mrs. Rachael Drouin
Grade 7	Miss Sarah Sienna
Grade 8	Miss Shannon Gaudette
French	Mrs. Marie Premi
French/Prep	Miss Katarina Osterman
Special Education/Prep	Ms. Amanda DeMelo
Early Childhood Educator	Mrs. Yolanda Embleton
Educational Assistant	TBD
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Stacey Bick
Educational Assistant	Ms. Carissa MacDonald
Educational Assistant	Miss Brittany Swent
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Rebecca Roswell
STEM Itinerant Teacher	Mrs. Teresa Mosher

Library Technician	Mrs. Christine Gohn
Lunch Monitor	Mrs. Sandy Lalonde

### **Covid-19 Self-Assessment:**

Please do not send children to school if they are ill (cough, cold, fever, throwing up, pink eye, diarrhea, etc. see below).

Rules around children coming to school sick will be more strict this year – and they should be. In the past, parents would send children to school with all of these symptoms and sometimes more. This can no longer occur. Children have to be **SYMPTOM-FREE** when attending school. Please make sure we have all your correct contact numbers (home/cell/work) as it will be important that you (or a caregiver you choose) will be ready to come in a timely manner to pick up your child should they become ill.

Children with Covid-19 can present with mild symptoms and it will be difficult for you or for us to know if this is Covid-19 or regular cough/cold so err on the side of caution and **KEEP THEM HOME**.

You should be doing **DAILY** self-assessments and please communicate to our local health unit and to the school immediately if you are concerned you or your child may have Covid-19.

Students who become ill during the school day will be isolated and must be picked up as soon as possible. Additionally, students who become symptomatic during the day will not be able to use student transportation or the Before/After School Program (if applicable).

BHNCDSB and all schools are working closely with the [Brant County Health Unit](#) and the [Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit](#) to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our school. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

### **Outbreak Protocol:**

Please read the detailed outbreak protocol on the board/school website

We have an Isolation Room in the office well equipped for any outbreak with back up rooms if needed.

Again, please make sure we have all of your important phone numbers and be prepared to have a plan in place for your child to be picked up in a timely manner if/when we call. **And (again) make sure you do not send your child to school with any symptoms as they will be sent home.**

### **Physical Distancing:**

It is a great idea if parents discuss the distance children should be from other children and staff – roughly 6 feet apart (pool noodle length) – especially indoors. In some cases (like classrooms) children will be 1 meter apart or 3 feet. This is okay since they have been ‘cohorted’ or ‘grouped’.

Reassure your children that it is okay to ask someone (politely) for more space .



Reassure your children that being less physically close does not mean that they are prohibited from having fun or socializing. We are ALL adjusting to the new way to interact with one another.

There should be no congregation or socialization of parents or students at any time on or around school grounds.



### **Mask Etiquette:**

Gr.JK to Gr.8 masks are MANDATORY at all times EXCEPT when eating or drinking.

All staff will be wearing Medical masks and possibly shields (goggles) and in some cases gowns.

Parents are encouraged to send multiple masks to school in case one gets dirty or lost – let your child know where the extra masks are.

Label their masks – children will lose them and you don't want them going home with someone else's mask.

Discuss the proper way to take off and put on the mask and where to store the mask when not in use .

Masks need to be worn properly (nose is to be covered). Parents will be contacted if students need multiple warnings for deliberately choosing not to wear masks appropriately (or at all). This may result in students having to be picked up from school. It is important to note this is a PUBLIC HEALTH rule that schools are upholding.

At this time, masks will need to be worn outside at recess times because students have a hard time staying 2 m apart and because they need to wear a mask once they enter the school for washroom breaks or when the bell rings. Teachers will give students mask breaks outside during instructional times when it is just their class and the 2 metre apart can be more easily upheld.

**This isn't the mask you wore  
to school this morning.**



**No, this one is way cooler.  
I traded mine to Taylor  
who traded with Hunter.**

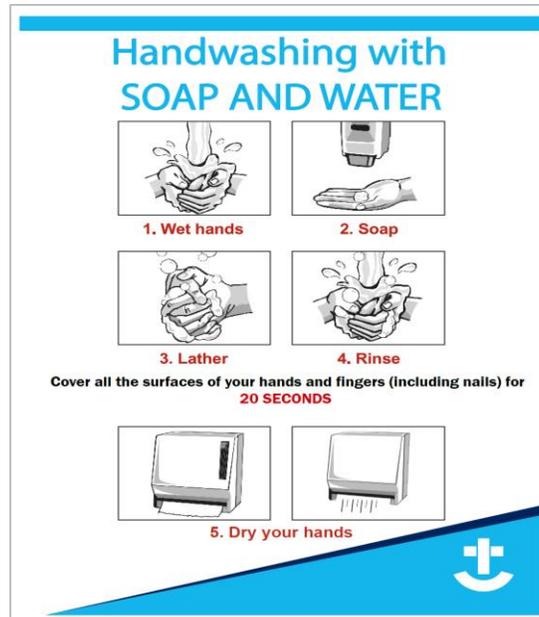
### **Student Health and Hygiene**

This will be a big focus upon the return to school. You can help and practice these things at home 😊

- Regular Hand washing and how to properly wash your hands (20 seconds)
- How to properly use Hand Sanitizer
- Cleaning items when done (where age appropriate - teachers will show students what items will be placed in a “dirty” bucket to be cleaned and disinfected)
- Proper way to sneeze and cough
- NOTE: Washroom breaks will be scheduled (washroom stalls have been reduced)
- SLEEP – get a good nights sleep
- HEALTHY EATING – mornings can be rushed but it is important for you and your child to have a healthy breakfast. It is also important to pack a nice hearty lunch for your child(ren)
- An HVAC system has been installed in our school portable, kindergarten classrooms and Isolation Room. Windows can also be opened at our school if/when possible.

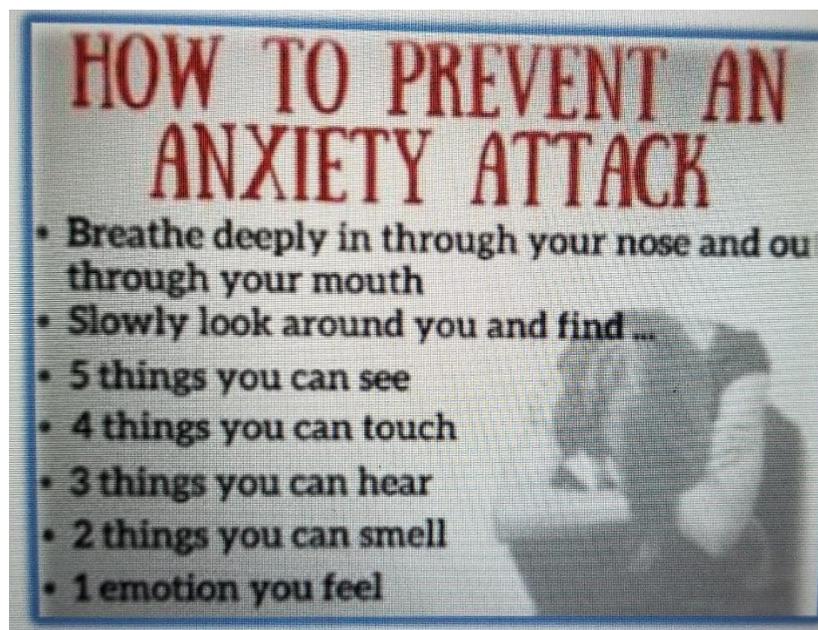
The Ministry of Health advises everyone to take an active role in protecting themselves from COVID-19. Here are a few things that you and your family can do:

- wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- sneeze and cough into your sleeve
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- avoid contact with people who are sick
- stay home and [isolate](#) if you, or anyone in your household, is sick



### **Mental Health and Wellness:**

We know these have been challenging times for our families (for all of us). I have found the two images below to be helpful in promoting mental health and wellness. Maybe try them with your family?



# Cultivating Calm: Self-Care Ideas For Anyone



1 min	5 min	10 min	30+ min
<b>Get Grounded</b> Pause. Feel your feet in your shoes. If seated, lightly push your feet against the floor.	<b>Say Thank You</b> Text a friend, thank them for something they did for you	<b>Journal</b> Write down 10 things you are grateful for.	<b>Phone a Friend</b> Ask them how they are feeling. Share your thoughts and experiences too.
<b>Recall</b> Who is someone that makes you smile? Bring them to mind for a moment or two.	<b>Listen</b> Have a favourite song that you listen to when relaxing? Press play!	<b>Sip. Savour.</b> Prepare and enjoy a cup of your favourite tea or other beverage.	<b>Sweat!</b> HIIT - Run - Weights You Choose.
<b>Do Not Disturb</b> Set your phone to DND when you can. Or just leave it in another room for a while.	<b>Meditate</b> Find a free guided meditation online. Find a style that works for you.	<b>Walk it Out</b> Take a stroll around the block.	<b>Stretch it Out</b> Find a free yoga class online.
<b>Breathe</b> Inhale (5 sec.), Exhale (7 sec). Repeat 3x	<b>Tidy Up</b> Set your timer and take a 5 min break to tidy up your home office or desk.	<b>Dance</b> Have a favourite jam that makes you want to move? Press play. Repeat.	<b>Laugh!</b> Watch a funny movie, show or YouTube video.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting:

- High touch points will be disinfected at least twice per day and when visibly dirty.
- Facilities will be thoroughly cleaned before the start of each day using enhance cleaning protocols
- All staff and students (where age appropriate) will implement ongoing, informal, cleaning and disinfecting of their classroom and workspace
- We have the appropriate cleaning supplies to effectively disinfect surfaces
- Our school is clean and bright and we would like to keep it this way. This is why we ask students to bring an extra pair of INDOOR shoes so that the mud and dirt from outside does not come in the school.

## Changes to Daily COVID-19 Screening - IMPORTANT

It is important to note that for the 2021-22 school year, the questions and symptoms of the Provincial Screening Process have changed. Staff, parent/guardians, students, visitors and volunteers are encouraged to review the new screening information closely and remember to **screen everyday before leaving for school.**

Please do not use any print screening resources that may have been provided during the 2020-21 school year.

Link to the [COVID-19 school and child care screening](#)

## **Signage:**

Signs (eg. directional markers) are posted all around the school which will assist students and adults with all the changes for physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette. Unlike some other schools our hallways at St. Michael's are a bit complicated when it comes to traffic flow. For this reason we opted for blue arrows ONLY to indicate direction for our traffic flow (most schools have blue AND green arrows).

## **Classrooms:**

Have been decluttered and desks/tables are as physically distant as we can.

Student desks should be free of clutter and personal items from home. Plexiglass dividers may also be used to help with the physical distance.

Some manipulatives will be used – in many cases teachers have separated items for each student rather than a bin of 'shared' items.

STEM (Mrs. Mosher) and FRENCH/Prep (Madame Premi and Mlle. Osterman) class will take place IN the 'home' classroom – students will not move out of their class to another area – the teachers will go to them.

Teachers have specific rules and markers in the class that they will go through with their students to encourage physical distance, hand washing, health, hygiene and other.

Cubbies in classrooms will be used if the teacher would like them but only if they can do so in a physically distant way.

The gym can be used – only if students are able to be physically distant. The change rooms will be closed.

Group work and circle time on the floor can be done but only if it is possible to be physically distant.

Teachers will update their D2L (Brightspace) page regularly. Parents/students are asked to check nightly for any communication and important announcements.

We are encouraging as much outdoor education as possible especially with our younger students.



## MY CHECK LIST FOR EVERY CLASS THIS YEAR

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1. Keep them safe
2. Lower their anxiety  
about the current situation
3. Make them laugh
4. Make them feel loved
5. Teach them something

All in that order



### **Nutrition Breaks:**

Students cannot share any snacks. The snack program (once started) will be pre-packaged food only. The food you provide for your child for lunch should be stored in a lunch bag and should be items they can open/close themselves. They will eat at their own desk at all times at a physical distance from their classmates. No drinks at the water fountain – please pack a water bottle for your child to refill at our water stations. NOTE: no student helpers in primary classrooms but we have sufficient adult supervision. Also, we will be practicing something called ‘boomerang’ lunches where students bring home all of their garbage from their lunch (eg. wrappers, apple cores, left over sandwiches etc.). This will help with Covid-19 restrictions, with garbage and recycling and it is absolutely great for the environment too! We can provide ziplock bags should students need one for their leftovers and garbage that will be returned home. Parents should empty out their child(ren)’s lunch bags nightly.



## **Parent Visitors/Volunteers**

We are limiting visitors and volunteers to the school this year. It will be **by appointment only** and it must be approved by the Principal. **If you come to school and buzz at the office without an appointment then do not expect access into the school.** All visitors/volunteers who have made appointments must wear a face covering and must hand sanitize/hand wash when entering the school. You will also be required to sign in and sign out at the office. We do not mean to be unwelcoming but we must follow strict Public Health guidelines and restrict our contacts and 'bubble'.

# VISITORS



To keep our students and staff safe:

**Non-BHNCDSB employees, visitors  
(including parents)  
ARE BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.**

If you **have an appointment**, please **buzz** the office to announce that you are here.

If you **require an appointment**, please **call** the office, to schedule an appointment.

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**All visitors are expected to:**

1. Wear a mask.
2. Hand sanitize upon entry.

Thank you for helping stop the spread of Covid-19.

**Phone: 905-774-6052**

## **New this year – Vaccinations:**

All staff and regular school volunteers have to show proof of a full vaccination or negative antigen test within previous 5 days before they enter our school building. NOTE: there will be a published percentage of our school vaccination rate found on our board web page.

## **Student Arrival and Drop off:**

**Walkers:** Students are not to arrive to school before **8:35 a.m.** If you walk or drive your child to school you cannot enter the school grounds. You will drop your child off **at the gate on South Cayuga Street (same at last year)**. Students will make their way immediately into the school building. Supervisors will be outside ensuring students go into their proper door.



**Bus Students:** Will exit off the bus and enter the appropriate doors. If needed, bus buddies will deliver their buddy to their class. Supervisors will be in the bus loading area to ensure student safety.

**NOTE:** Parents **CANNOT** enter the school building nor walk students to class at any time.

## **Dismissal and Kindergarten Pick up:**

Bus students: Will be dismissed first using cohorted bus buddies for our primary children.

Walkers: When the bell rings at 3:10 p.m. primary teachers will bring their “walker” students to the pick-up area on South Cayuga

Parents must wait outside the gate area on South Cayuga Street for your children to come to you. Remember – no parent/guardian are allowed on the school grounds at any time. Parents are asked to please stay physically apart from one another outside the gate area waiting for your child to come out. Please drive safely in this area as children and adults are moving across the street and in between parked cars.

### Forgotten Items:

If something has been forgotten (eg. lunch) we have a red bin right by the front door. Buzz the front door and you will drop the item into the bin for your child to pick up. Always make sure to have your child's name labelled on the item you are dropping off as we will not know at the school who the item is for. You are not permitted beyond that area where the red bin is without an appointment.



### Lateness:

We know it is difficult sometimes in the morning for various reasons. We request you please make an effort this year to be on time for school (bell rings at 8:50). However, if your child is late – depending on their age, a parent can walk them to the front door and buzz but you cannot enter with your child. Your child will check in at the office and then go directly to class (if your child is in kindergarten then an adult will walk them to class). Don't worry – we will look out for them and make sure they safely get to class.

### Early pick-up:

We know occasionally you will have to pick up your child(ren) early. **We ask you to keep this to a minimum.** To pick up your child, the parent (or guardian) will buzz at the front door and the parent will have to wait outside while we call your child down. There are no exceptions to this as no adult is allowed into the school without an appointment. Please communicate with your child(ren)'s teacher via email IN ADVANCE of this change and/or contact the office the day of the change so that we are aware you are picking up your child early. Teachers DO NOT have time to check their email messages throughout the day and a child will not be released unless it is safe to do so. Please limit the phone calls and we ask that you not interrupt the school day unless for important and/or urgent reasons.

## Recess:

Students will still enjoy two 20 minute outdoor recesses (weather permitting) as usual and it will be staggered by grade (K to Gr.4 and Gr.5 to Gr.8) in order to reduce the number of students playing outside. The school yard has been divided and cohorted into ZONES (play areas). Each class has a map and students know their 'area' to play. Masks will be worn outside if students cannot keep a distance and if they wish to play sports (eg. soccer, basketball). Any equipment used will be cohorted. Students have specific doors to exit and enter. When the bell rings students **will NOT line up**. They will enter the school 'at a distance' and go directly to class. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO BRING ANY SPORTS EQUIPMENT OR TOYS FROM HOME TO PLAY WITH REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY WERE TOLD NOT TO SHARE IT.** Any items brought to school should be a MINIMUM (eg. lunch bag and note book). We are trying to reduce items going between home to school.



## Home/School Communication:

We have no agendas again this year and so we will be communicating electronically or by phone. Any parent meetings will take place virtually. Your child's teacher will explain how to access their class D2L site that parents will use as a tool to stay connected to the teacher and school. Please make sure to let us know if there are any concerns about this communication. It is important you stay connected with your child(ren)'s teacher and with the school. You can also follow us on twitter @stmcaholic and subscribe to our school website [www.stmichaeldunville.ca](http://www.stmichaeldunville.ca). We will be mostly paper-less so it is important we all stay connected in these other ways, especially if there are any school closures.

## School Activities:

- No school-wide assemblies or liturgies (we will celebrate over announcements or find creative ways)
- No Back to School/Meet the School Staff BBQ this year – teachers will be introducing themselves via email/D2L
- Field trips will not be planned at this time (virtual field trips are GREAT!)
- Clubs and sports – only if physical distancing is possible and equipment and spaces are cleaned and disinfected between each use
- No contact sports at this time – focus will be on individual sports and non-contact activities
- Milk and Pizza will not be offered at this time for students



## Transportation:

Bus drivers will assign students seats and students will be required to wear masks. Bus drivers will also have medical masks. It is important that all students wear their masks on the bus. It is also VERY important they behave safely and respectfully on the bus as the bus driver has a very difficult and important job. As previous years, **students can only ride their own assigned bus**. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule as transportation cannot make room on buses for other students who do not normally ride the bus.

If your child is new to the school and requires bussing and you have not received information over the summer, please call the school: 905-774-6052 or email the secretary: [ibowden@bhncdsb.ca](mailto:ibowden@bhncdsb.ca).

## Student Behaviour

Just a reminder the school follows the Ministry and board policies on Safe Schools. Behaviour is examined and we document it, inform parents and guardians, and consequences are given according to the incident using progressive discipline. Bullying is absolutely NOT tolerated at St. Michael's school but it is often misunderstood. Please read below and share it with your children. Conflict is definitely part of life but no child should be bullied or bully others.



### Know the Difference!

#### Conflict

- Happens occasionally
- Accidental
- Not serious
- Equal emotional reaction
- Not seeking power or attention
- Not trying to get something
- Remorseful-takes responsibility
- Effort to solve the problem
- There is a relationship to protect

#### Bullying

- Happens repeatedly
- Done on purpose
- Serious-threat of physical harm or emotional or psychological hurt
- Strong emotional reaction on part of the victim
- Seeking power or control
- Trying to gain material things or power
- No remorse-blames victim
- No effort to solve problem
- There is a lack of relationship

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and support this year. These are very different times for all of us and it will take some time and adjustments but together we can make it through this challenging time even stronger and more positive and appreciative of all of our blessings. We pray the prayer below for YOU and for your families.....please pray for us too! The good times will again (one day) return to our beautiful school.

Stay well!

A.Fortunato

Principal

## A Prayer for Strength

Our Father,  
Sometimes the cares of the day  
seem to multiply, while the  
blessings fade so quickly.  
Our bodies grow tired  
and our minds even more tired.  
Jesus, help us.  
Give us the strength You've promised  
in Your Word.  
Give us the power  
to take the next step.  
Give us your grace...  
for we know that in our weaknesses  
**YOUR STRENGTH** is revealed.  
May we receive it today.  
Amen.