



PAUL PENNA DJDS COVID-19 SCHOOL RETURN PROTOCOLS

2021-2022
(April 2022)



This policy has been adapted from our existing policies to maintain the good health of children, families and faculty at Paul Penna DJDS during the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes from existing policies have been made in accordance with Ontario Public Health and Ontario Ministry of Education requirements, as well as decisions made by Paul Penna DJDS, in consultation with our Pandemic Task Force and Medical Advisory Panel and the MNjcc.

This handbook is a living document. It will be revised based on public health guidance and local experience, and will be found in its online form with version numbers cited.

The protocols in this handbook are in accordance with Toronto Public Health requirements and based on the advice of our Medical Advisory Panel and Pandemic Task Force. All policies in this document supersede those in our Parent Handbook where applicable.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School
750 Spadina Avenue
Toronto, ON M5S 2J2
Phone: 416-928-3537

Questions regarding this safety and exposure control plan should be directed to:

- Amy Platt, Head of School (amy@djds.ca)

CONSULTATION AND GUIDANCE

In order to operate safe programs and maintain the health of our staff and students, we have received the following guidelines and advice from The Ministry of Education, Toronto Public Health, education lawyer, Eric Roher of BLG (Borden, Ladner, Gervais), CAIS (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools) and our own Medical Advisory Panel.



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Paul Penna DJDS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all faculty and students. A bundle of measures will be used to minimize exposure to COVID-19. Our procedures will protect not only our own employees, but also students and others who enter our premises. Faculty, families and caregivers are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Health and Safety Plan to help prevent or reduce exposure to COVID-19.

PROTOCOLS FOR KEEPING OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF SAFE

Infection prevention and control measures help create a safe environment for students and staff. The Hierarchy of Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease describes the measures that can be taken to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Control measures at the top of the list are more effective than those at the bottom. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.

1. **Public Health Measures** are actions taken across society to limit the spread and reduce the impact of COVID-19. [As circumstances continue to evolve, the Provincial Health Officer continues to update public health measures.](#) including: encouraging exposed individuals to monitor their symptoms, and emphasizing the need for people to stay home when they are sick. This also includes mandatory quarantine for unvaccinated or partially vaccinated travelers entering or returning to Canada, including children under the age of 12.
2. **Environmental Measures** are physical changes in the setting that reduce risk of exposure by isolation or ventilation. Examples include being in outdoor spaces, having good ventilation and air exchange, using visual cues for maintaining physical distance, erecting physical barriers where appropriate and frequent cleaning and disinfection.
3. **Administrative Measures** are measures enabled by implementing policies, procedures, training and education. Examples include changes in scheduling and work practices, and decreased density of individuals.
4. **Personal Measures** are actions individuals can take to both protect themselves and others. These include staying home when sick, physical distancing, minimizing direct physical contact, practicing good respiratory etiquette, and continued attention to hand hygiene.
5. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** is a critical part of the Health and Safety Protocols. When all individuals within a building are masked, risk of COVID-19 transmission decreases. The evidence of effective masking is seen as an important component of the bundle of measures that should be implemented to allow individuals within a community setting to protect each other.



ATTENDING SCHOOL SAFELY

Paul Penna DJDS is proud of the strong relationships between our families and our school and, at this challenging time, will rely on that strength and our open lines of communication to ensure the safety and health of our community. The protocols implemented in school will evolve as needed in response to emerging educational and/or health scenarios that may arise.

IN SCHOOL LEARNING:

Our Learning Model combines traditional face to face in class instruction, teacher-supported independent and partner work and digital connectivity for students at home as necessary. During the course of the day, students will have face to face time with their grade teachers as well as with Paul Penna DJDS resource teachers who will reinforce lessons and help with independent work.

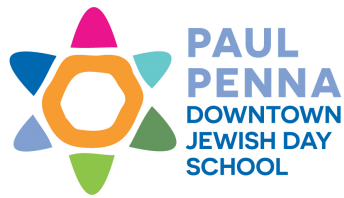
While each class will learn within their own cohort for much of the day, we will start to bring students together for small group learning and cross-grade activities as appropriate. Classroom placement will be organized to maximize daily learning balanced with an awareness of appropriate distancing between students. We will continue to balance management of the classroom environment with other established protocols to enhance safety and infection prevention.

We will continue to follow schedules initially implemented in September, which were designed to limit teachers' exposure to the smallest number of classes and keep them in a gradeband zone.

Paul Penna DJDS and the MNjcc are continuing to work in partnership to align our daily screening protocols, organizational protocols, and Health and Safety Protocols to ensure that students are equally protected in the school wing and other parts of the MNjcc.

ONLINE LEARNING:

Some students will not be able to return to school face to face, either for a short, medium or long term. In these cases, each class will have a unique schedule that will allow for students at home to connect to the classroom in a synchronous way each day. Opportunities to stay socially connected to children in the cohort will be organized on a case by case basis. The [PPDJDS guide to digital learning](#) provides more detail on the digital learning program.



SCREENING AND ILLNESS POLICY

VACCINE POLICY:

The school will continue to maintain our mandatory vaccine policy that applies to the following persons attending at the School: school administrators, full-time and part-time teachers, administrative staff, contract staff, and volunteers.

Visitors to the school will be asked to provide evidence of vaccination in advance of their visit.

Students are asked to submit proof of vaccine using [this form](#).

DAILY HEALTH CHECK:

While we will no longer be using the daily screening app, we encourage parents to continue to assess the health and overall well-being of each of their children each morning and to follow local and provincial guidance if they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.

ASYMPTOMATIC SCREENING

We will continue to employ the use of Rapid Antigen Tests under specific circumstances as a preventative measure at appropriate times. Just as we did prior to the December and February breaks, students will be sent home with 2 tests, depending on available inventory, prior to Pesach for use upon return from the break.

In addition, depending on available inventory and as a preventative measure, we will continue to send home a single test with each student if a confirmed positive case of COVID is identified in their cohort.



WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS UNWELL

SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Common Symptoms	Less Common Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever (>37.8C) ● Chills ● Cough ● Difficulty breathing ● Decrease or loss of taste/smell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sore throat ● Unexplained or worsening headache ● Fatigue or feeling tired ● Runny nose/nasal congestion ● Muscle aches or joint pain ● Nausea and/or Vomiting ● Diarrhea

If a student, staff or member is unwell

- If a student, or staff member is unwell and **ANY of the following are true, current public health and provincial guidance is to presume the individual is positive for COVID-19.**
 - The individual is experiencing ONE of the Common Symptoms listed above
 - The individual is experiencing TWO OR MORE of the Less Common Symptoms above
 - The individual tests positive on a rapid antigen or molecular test

The unwell individual must isolate for a minimum of 5 days (if fully vaccinated) or 10 days (if unvaccinated or partially vaccinated) following the onset of symptoms or date of the positive test result, whichever is earlier. Onset of symptoms or the date of the positive test is considered “day 0” and isolation should be 5 days **after** this date.

Fully vaccinated and asymptomatic household members **may attend school, but in accordance with current Provincial guidance, must wear a mask at school for 10 days following “day 0”.**

Returning to school after isolation

- Students and staff members who have been isolating may return to school when the following is true:
 - The individual has completed the appropriate isolation period **OR** obtained a negative PCR test **OR** 2 negative rapid tests taken at 24 and 48 hrs post symptom onset; **AND**
 - Symptoms have disappeared or have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours if symptoms included nausea, diarrhea or vomiting) **AND**
 - Parents have completed the Parental Confirmation for Return to School Form. Please [click here](#) to access this form.
 - **Please note that individuals returning to school after the 5 day isolation period must wear a well-fitted mask in school for a further 5 days.**
- If a student, staff or ANY member of their household is experiencing **any ONE of the less common symptoms** listed above, current public health and provincial guidance is to self-monitor and if after 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting or diarrhea), the individual is symptom-free or the symptom has improved, the student/staff member may return to school.
- Families are encouraged to carefully monitor all family members at home on a daily basis for possible symptoms.

Please advise the Front Office Administrator at schooloffice@djds.ca if your child will be absent from school or isolating due to any of the reasons mentioned above.



If a student or staff member is exposed to COVID-19 outside the household

- If a student or staff member who has been fully vaccinated (ie. at least 14 days have passed since receiving their 2nd dose) or is under 12 years of age, AND is asymptomatic, has been in close contact outside the household with someone who is either confirmed or presumed positive for COVID-19 they are not required to isolate and should self monitor for symptoms. **Effective March 21, 2022, exposed individuals are required to wear a well-fitted mask for 5 days following exposure.**

PROTOCOL IF STUDENT/STAFF BECOMES ILL WHILE IN SCHOOL

If a student becomes ill while in school

- They will immediately be separated from others in a designated isolation room until picked up. The student will be accompanied to the room by a trained staff member who will remain with them until they are picked up by a parent or designated caregiver. All students in the same household will be sent home together if one sibling becomes unwell at school.
- Both the staff member and the student will be required to wear a mask and other appropriate PPE.
- The room will be disinfected once the individual leaves.

If a staff member becomes ill while in school

- If they are unable to get home safely, they will wait in the isolation room until such time as a member of their bubble can pick them up.
- They will be required to follow all of the steps laid out for sick students in the isolation room.
- Staff are asked to maintain contact with either our Vice-Principal or Head of School.

PROCEDURE FOR CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID-19

The following steps must be taken when there is a case of COVID-19 (student or staff):

- Students and employees who test positive for COVID-19 will self-isolate for a minimum of 5 days from receipt of the positive result or the first appearance of symptoms in accordance with TPH direction.
- School Administration will send a letter to the impacted class informing them of a confirmed positive case and ask families to carefully monitor household members for symptoms.
- School administration will post class notices to a central place on a protected area of the school website. A link to this information will be included in the weekly Friday communications until after the Pesach break, and we will re-evaluate this process at that point.
- **Fully vaccinated, asymptomatic siblings may continue to attend school, but must wear a mask for 5 days, after exposure.**
- TPH will follow up with the family and/or School, if needed.



ADAPTING THE DELIVERY MODEL TO CHANGING SITUATIONS

We will be prepared to implement adapted delivery models should public health conditions require them, including moving one or more classes to a fully online distance learning model for whatever length of time is needed.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Arrival and dismissal will need to be staggered in order to reduce the congestion in the stairwells and the hallways. Please note that at this time, we are not able to offer early morning drop-off.

Maintaining safe protocols will require patience on the part of students, families and faculty. We thank you in advance for partnering with us to create a process that is safe for students, families and faculty.

ARRIVAL:

Paul Penna DJDS students in SK through Grade 5 will enter the MNjcc from the north entrance on Bloor Street and use a school-designated stairwell up the north end of the building. Middle School students (Grades 6 & 7) will enter the building at 459 Bloor St. West (Spirit of Math) using the front door. All students, regardless of locations, should arrive at their assigned drop-off time. It is recommended that parents continue to use the daily screener as a tool for assessing your child(ren)'s health and complete it each morning prior to sending students to school.

- Students in SK-Grade 2 will be directed to wait in a designated area for teachers to escort them upstairs.
- Students in Grade 3-5 will go upstairs directly, spaced out to allow for physical distancing. Staff members will be placed at the top of stairways and throughout hallways to direct students to their appropriate classrooms.
- Middle School Students will enter the building and proceed directly to their classrooms.

All students will sanitize their hands before entering either location and again as they enter their classrooms.

Students with younger siblings will follow the same protocols and will be able to enter the building in the same time block as a younger sibling, when the stairwell is clear. They will head directly upstairs to their classrooms.

Students who are late for school will not be allowed into the building until after 9:00am and will be required to enter the building through the Spadina entrance. MNjcc staff will notify the school office when students are ready to be escorted upstairs.



DISMISSAL:

From the MNjcc:

At their assigned dismissal times, students will be escorted to the Bloor St. doors and children will wait, with teachers, inside the MNjcc until staff confirm that a parent / caregiver is present to pick them up. Parents and caregivers picking up students will wait to the west of the Bloor Street doors. Children will be delivered to their caregivers by Paul Penna DJDS staff.

In order to ensure that we are able to allow for adequate social distance on Bloor St. we encourage you to depart as soon as children are picked up and to avoid gathering outside the school doors.

Younger students being picked up by older siblings in Grades 4 & 5 will wait in the second-floor foyer (outside of the school office) with staff supervision until their older siblings are ready to pick them up. Younger siblings who are picked up by students in Grades 6 & 7 will be picked up at the Bloor St. doors. Individual family arrangements for sibling pickup should be arranged with the Front Office Administrator in advance of the pick up routine beginning.

From the Middle School

Students who have been given permission to self-dismiss will be dismissed by their teachers from their last class of the day at 3:30pm. Please note that their last class of the day may be located at the MNjcc as they will continue to make use of the gym facilities. Those picking up younger siblings from the MNjcc should wait outside the building on the west side of the Bloor St. doors along with parents and caregivers.

Please ensure that any changes to student arrival or dismissal routines are communicated via email to the Front Office Administrator at schooloffice@djds.ca.

Self-Dismissal

All students will be escorted outside by their teachers in cohorted groups at designated dismissal times, or taken first to meet younger siblings, and then taken outside. Students with permission to self-dismiss can leave once they are outside and have notified the teacher that they are leaving.

Non-essential visitors, including parents and caregivers, will not be permitted in the building.

If a child needs to be picked up early, parents and caregivers should notify the school office at schooloffice@djds.ca, and the child will be escorted downstairs and outside to the Bloor street exit.



WHILE AT SCHOOL

MASK POLICY:

At the direction of the Ministry of Education, our Medical Advisory Panel and Pandemic Task Force, effective March 21, 2022 the following protocols will be in place:

- Effective March 21, 2022, mask wearing within school spaces will no longer be mandatory on a daily basis. However, we strongly recommend that students continue to wear masks for a while longer as masks have proven a very effective tool for stopping the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to support and encourage others to be respectful of individual choices around masking. As a school community, we respect and support all individuals' decisions and no one should be made to feel uncomfortable in any way for their choice to wear or not wear a mask. This will be an educational point of emphasis at all grade levels and we ask that you reinforce this message at home.
- We will continue to seek out opportunities for outdoor learning and activities for all students to provide physical activity. Students will not be required to wear masks when outdoors.
- We will follow the MNjcc guidelines and wear masks in our joint indoor spaces: stairways, lobbies and the gym for at least two more weeks. **This means that all students should continue to bring a mask as well as a bag for safe, dry storage to school for at least two more weeks.**
- Individuals returning to school after the 5 day isolation period **must wear a well-fitted mask in school for a further 5 days.**
- We will continue to provide N95 masks to faculty and medical grade masks to students on an as needed basis.

HAND WASHING/SANITIZING

We will continue to emphasize the importance of good hand-hygiene practices

A schedule of hand washing and sanitizing will continue to be a regular part of our daily routine at school, and teachers will reinforce [effective hand washing/sanitizing techniques](#). Hand sanitizing dispensers will be available outside and inside all classrooms. **Students are asked to bring personal hand sanitizer to be used at their personal workspace.**

Students will wash or sanitize their hands:

- Before removing or putting on a mask.
- After taking off a mask.
- Upon arrival in class in the morning and during dismissal.
- Before and after eating.
- Before and after leaving the class and reentering from the washroom, recess or gym.
- Before leaving school at the end of the day.



USE OF WASHROOM FACILITIES

The number of students in each washroom will be limited and a system of indicating how many students are in the washroom at any one time has been implemented. Students will follow strict hand washing protocols before leaving the washroom. Washrooms will be disinfected and cleaned multiple times throughout the day.

[These hand-washing resources](#) can be used to teach effective hand washing to children of all ages.

CLEANING PROTOCOLS AT THE MNjcc

The MNjcc continues to be a strong partner in maintaining the highest standards for cleanliness. Cleaning will be conducted frequently and with a team of MNjcc custodial staff who will work with us to ensure the highest standards for cleanliness. A deep clean will be conducted every evening and an additional cleaning protocol will be added on the weekend as a weekly practice.

The MNjcc has assigned a GDI staff member to Paul Penna DJDS who's duties will be dedicated specifically to daily cleaning of all school spaces. They have been provided with our schedules and will coordinate with janitorial staff to ensure that frequently touched surfaces and classrooms are cleaned regularly. Washrooms will be cleaned consistently throughout the day and frequency with which this is done will be adjusted as necessary to accommodate multiple cohorts. In addition, all school spaces will be deep cleaned nightly.

Cleaning protocols for the Middle School location will be established to ensure that facilities are adequately stocked with appropriate supplies, including hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, PPE and plexi dividers to allow small group work. The facility will be thoroughly cleaned on a daily basis to ensure student safety and in line with public health guidelines. We will work to establish a working partnership with Spirit of Math to achieve a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. GDI will also be servicing this location, which will provide for consistency and the ability to adopt routines that align with those at the MNjcc. This will also ensure that cleaning products used fall within Public Health guidelines for COVID safety.

AIR QUALITY AND VENTILATION

We are confident that both the MNjcc and Middle School have an HVAC system that is up to code and meets all provincial regulations. However, we are committed to going beyond just this system to ensure our air is as clean as it can be. Fresh air vents will remain open, pumping fresh air into the classrooms as part of the air circulation system. In addition we will continue to use the medical grade HEPA filter air purifiers already in place in each workspace and classroom at both locations. Classroom doors will be left open as much as possible to limit contact with door handles.



FOOD - SNACK AND MEALS

Snack and lunch time will continue to be used as times for students to relax, nourish their bodies and participate in prayer rituals associated with food - blessings before and after the meal. All food and eating utensils for students must arrive with them in the morning. We will not accept food deliveries during the day or lunches dropped off midday. Our 'no food sharing' policy will be strictly enforced. In order to minimize waste from lunch and snacks, we encourage all families to provide litterless lunches as often as possible.

We will continue to evaluate the feasibility of off campus lunch for Middle School students taking into consideration a variety of factors, and keeping the health and safety of our students in the forefront.

We are working with our food providers to continue to safely bring hot lunch into the school on a daily basis. It will be packaged in individually wrapped servings and handled in a way compliant with health and safety regulations. Hot Lunches will be offered for a third term, beginning after Pesach. Notice of registration for this program as well as other PA initiatives that we are able to offer safely will be sent 2-3 weeks in advance of the start of each of the remaining terms.

Students should bring their own, clearly labeled, water bottle daily and bring it home at the end of the day for cleaning. It is advisable to send two water bottles reducing the need for students to refill water bottles at school.

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS, GATHERINGS AND OUTINGS

Whole school celebrations and assemblies will be marked in modified ways and will take place in accordance with safety protocols.

In-person field trips will take place as appropriate and in ways that places student and staff health and safety needs at the forefront. Details will be released when they are known.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

The mental health and well-being of our students has been key in our planning for the return to school in September. We are well aware that students will need adjustment time as they get used to the safety protocols along with their integration into our new cohorting model. As well, some students might need accommodations throughout the year. Our teaching teams will stay committed to meeting the needs of students while maintaining health and safety protocols.

We will be providing professional development to our faculty both in the area of health and safety as well as in further supporting students' needs as they return to school after this six month absence.

We have also increased our school social worker's time at the school to provide assistance both to faculty and to those students who may require greater social-emotional support during this more challenging year.



COMMUNICATION

All notices will be in a secure section of the Current Family Section of our website under the heading COVID-19 updates, and will be emailed school-wide.

The school is committed to transparency, and expects families will be equally transparent in sharing any potential risks back to the school.

CONCLUSION

As always, the safety and well-being of our students and faculty is of utmost importance. Guided by Ontario Public Health, the Ontario Ministry of Education, our school's Pandemic Task Force and our Medical Advisory Panel, we have put the safest and most beneficial plan for our community into place. As we return to the MNjcc and 459 Bloor Street in September, we will continue working together to provide highly meaningful learning experiences for our students. We thank you, our parents, for your trust and for partnering with us on this unprecedented journey.

We extend our gratitude to The Paul Penna DJDS Board of Directors, Pandemic Task Force, our Medical Advisory Panel, our colleagues at Spirit of Math, Leo Baeck Day School, Robbins Hebrew Academy, Netivot HaTorah Day School, Bialik Hebrew Day School and The Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education for their guidance and support in the preparation of this document.