

December 09, 2021

Subject: St. Mary Catholic School Closure due to COVID-19 outbreak

Dear parents/guardians and staff,

This letter is to inform you that St. Mary Catholic School will be closing temporarily at end of day today, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021. It is anticipated that the school will remain closed until after the winter break. Hastings Prince Edward Public Health's (HPEPH) decision to close the school was made in conjunction with the school and school board as a result of an ongoing COVID-19 investigation.

As of December 9, 2021, there have been three cases identified that are associated with the school.

HPEPH has decided that temporary closure of the school building is a necessary precaution to prevent further spread of COVID-19 within the school while the case investigation is completed. This decision is consistent with provincial guidance. Please be assured that HPEPH will continue to monitor the situation closely and will work with the school to determine when school operations can safely resume. You will be informed directly by the school when the school will reopen.

Is my child a close contact?

Please note, if you have not received a call/letter advising that your child is a high-risk contact, your child has not been identified as a high risk/close contact at this time.

Public Health will contact anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19, as well as anyone who has been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive, to provide them with individual guidance. Close contacts will be provided with specific information related to testing and isolation.

If you have not been identified as a close contact, you do not need to. However, please continue to monitor closely for **ANY** symptoms of COVID-19. **It is important that you self-isolate if you develop ANY symptoms – even if they are very mild as per [HPEPH School Screening Tool](#).**

North Hastings

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Prince Edward County

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Quinte West

499 Dundas St. W., Trenton, ON K8V 6C4
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Symptoms listed on Provincial School Screener	HPEPH Additional Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (37.8°C/100°F) and/or chills • Cough or barking cough • Shortness of breath • Decrease or loss of taste or smell • Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea • Fatigue • Muscle aches and pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore throat • Difficulty swallowing • Runny or stuffy nose • Abdominal pain • Headache • Conjunctivitis (pink eye) • Decreased or lack of appetite

We recognize that receiving this type of news can be stressful. Please know that help is available, and we encourage you to reach out for support when you need it. Please see resources available on our website: [Mental Health and Emotional Health During COVID-19](#).

For more information go to hpePublicHealth.ca/back-to-school-planning-parents/, where you will find fact sheets, and information on [COVID-19 symptoms and screening](#), [self-monitoring](#), [self-isolation](#), and testing. On the website you can also find the [COVID-19 dashboard](#) which provides up to date information on COVID-19 in our region.

Sincerely,

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health