

Operations Division Occupational Health and Safety

Field Visit Report

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OHS Case ID: **04633QDSL660**
Field Visit no: **04633QDSL661** Visit Date: **2021-FEB-23** Field Visit Type: **INITIAL**

Workplace Identification: **ST RAPHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL** Notice ID:
3 GADE DRIVE, NORTH YORK, ON, CANADA M3M 2K2

Telephone: **(416) 393-5127** JHSC Status: **Active** Work Force #: **40** Completed %:

Persons Contacted: **SHAWNA CAMPBELL - SUPERINTENDENT, MARTA RADIC - OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGER, RANIA DIFELICE - PRINCIPAL, ROBERT MACDONALD - TECT UNION REPRESENTATIVE, VAL DIGREGORIO - LOCAL 1355 UNION REPRESENTATIVE, REFUSING WORKERS**
Visit Purpose: **TO MONITOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT AND ITS ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS.**
Visit Location: **SECOND FLOOR STAFF ROOM; CLASSROOMS 203, 121, 120; ROOM 116C OFFICE IN THE GYM.**
Visit Summary: **NO ORDERS ISSUED. ACCOMPANIED BY MLTSD INDUSTRIAL HYGIENIST DAVID WINTER**

Detailed Narrative:

On January 12, 2021, the province of Ontario enacted a second declaration of emergency to help contain the spread of COVID-19 and protect public health. To address this, MLTSD has launched the Stay Safe All Day campaign. It focuses workplace inspections in areas of high transmission, for example, break and lunchrooms, smoking areas etc. Resource materials for workplace parties to promote safe behaviour before, during and after work are available. Inspectors will target workplaces with heightened risks that have been identified using data from local public health units and information reported directly to the province.

All of Ontario's workers, supervisors, employers and constructors have obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS Act) and its regulations to ensure a safe workplace and this includes protections from infectious diseases.

The potential for COVID-19 outbreaks is a serious concern in Ontario workplaces. This includes during meal and break periods. Workers must maintain physical distancing during these times, ensure proper hygiene before and after the break period, and have those areas properly sanitized after the break period and before the areas are used again.

COVID-19 is spread between people – whether “on the clock” or not. To prevent transmission, we all need to follow requirements to:

- Maintain 2m physical distance;
- Wear a mask if physical distancing cannot be maintained, whether indoors or outdoors; and
- Wash hands

Employers and supervisors must ensure that all workers follow the requirements to protect themselves and others while working and on breaks. Under the OHS Act, employers and supervisors are required to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstance for the protection of workers. Workers are required to wear all means of protective equipment required by their employer and to report any hazards they observe.

Recipient	Inspector Data	Worker Representative
	Alexandra Rondinone	
Name _____	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY INSPECTOR PROVINCIAL OFFENCES OFFICER	Name _____
Title _____	5001 Yonge St. Rm 1600 North York ON M7A 0A3 MOLCOMPLIANCEIHSTORN@ONTARIO.CA	Title _____
	Tel: (437) 688-5284 Fax: (647) 777-5014	
Signature _____	Signature 	Signature _____

You are required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to post a copy of this report in a conspicuous place at the workplace and provide a copy to the health and safety representative or the joint health and safety committee if any. Failure to comply with an order, decision or requirement of an inspector is an offence under Section 66 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. You have the right to appeal any order or decision within 30 days of the date of the order issued and to request suspension of the order or decision by filing your appeal and request in writing on the appropriate forms with the Ontario Labour Relations Board, 505 University Ave., 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5G 2P1. You may also contact the Board by phone at (416) 326-7500 or 1-877-339-3335 (toll free), mail or by website at <http://www.olrb.gov.on.ca/english/homepage.htm> for more information.

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The field visit took place and the following people were spoken to:

- Shawna Campbell - Superintendent
- Marta Radic - Occupational Health and Safety Manager
- Rania Difelice - Principal
- Robert Macdonald - TECT union representative
- Val Digregorio - Local 1355 union representative
- Refusing workers

This inspector was accompanied by MLTSD Industrial Hygienist David Winter.

The reason for this visit is to respond to a work refusal made to the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development involving 10 workers in the workplace. The work refusal includes the following:

- Workers expressed concerns related to air quality and ventilation; specifically with regards to carbon dioxide levels and particulate matter in relation to COVID-19.

INSPECTOR FINDINGS:

This inspector confirmed that Stage 1 had been completed prior to proceeding to the workplace. The Occupational Health and Safety Manager, Marta Radic and the Principal, Rania Difelice, investigated forthwith in the presence of each refusing worker and the corresponding worker health and safety representative. A resolution to the concerns was not achieved because the workers believed that the suggestions made by the Occupational Health and Safety Manager and Principal to address the concerns including, re-affirming that the windows in the classrooms are operational and that floor conduits for the HEPA air purifiers in each classroom be implemented did not adequately address the concerns brought forward.

The inspector investigated the work refusal in the presence of the employer, the health and safety representatives, and one (1) of the refusing workers selected to represent the ten (10) refusing workers. All ten (10) of the refusing workers were spoken to during this visit.

The circumstances reported by the refusing workers do not meet the conditions of Section 43(3) of the OHSA. This event was investigated by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) as a complaint.

The workplace parties indicated they have measures and procedures in place addressing the following:

Information & Instruction to Workers:

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- COVID-19 related signage including but not limited to physical distancing, mask etiquette and passive screening (signs/symptoms, means of transmission) was observed posted.
- All staff participated in one (1) full day of COVID-19 training. Topics included but were not limited to; means of transmission of COVID-19, physical distancing, cleaning/disinfecting procedures, donning/doffing, care, use, handling and storage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and performing hand hygiene.
- Updates to policies and procedures are communicated to staff via email.
- Virtual monthly staff meetings are conducted; COVID-19 updates and reminders are communicated to staff during these meetings.
- Staff are notified when a positive COVID-19 case is reported in the workplace.

- Joint Health and Safety Committee/Health and Safety Rep Involvement:
- Monthly physical inspections are conducted.
 - JHSC meetings are conducted. The last meeting was held February 10, 2021. COVID-19 related concerns regarding PPE were brought forward and discussed.
 - The written notices of occupational illness are shared with the MLTSD, JHSC and union.

- Social/Physical Distancing Measures in Place:
- Staff are instructed to physically distance wherever possible.
 - Maximum occupancy signage was observed outside of rooms.
 - There is a maximum capacity of 6 workers in the staff room at a time.
 - Workers take their breaks at their desk in their classroom if the maximum capacity of the staff lunch room is reached.
 - The workplace parties reported that staff can request to have a plexiglass barrier implemented at their desk/work station.

- Reasonable Precautions when Physical Distancing is not achievable:
- As of February 12, 2021, workers are required and have been instructed to wear eye protection (a face shield) when 2 metres of distance from an unmasked individual cannot be maintained. Signage is posted to remind workers when to use eye protection.
 - The workplace parties reported that 3 sided barriers are used on every student desk in classrooms with more than 15 students where desks are within 2 metres of each other.

- Special Education Students:
- Student safety plans for these students address COVID-19 measures in place. These students are typically kept with their cohort.

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-At the time of this visit, it was reported that there are currently no students that have specialized equipment that may create an AGMP.

Screening Measures:

- Staff, students and visitors are screened prior to entering the workplace. There are two staff entrances that contain screening stations; masks and hand sanitizer are available at both stations.
- Staff are instructed to self-screen and complete a screening questionnaire containing the MOH screening questions; completion is monitored by the Principal.
- Staff are instructed to self-isolate if they report feeling ill. The workplace is following Public Health guidelines for their return to work procedure.
- Parents complete the screening questions on behalf of the students; teachers verify that this is completed before allowing entry. Students who have not completed screening are referred to the Principal's office to get screened.

Cleaning and Disinfecting:

- High touch areas are disinfected at least twice a day by custodial staff.
- Additional custodial staff were hired to clean desks and handles more than twice a day.
- Cleaning logs are completed for high touch areas; logs are maintained by the head of custodial staff; completion is monitored by the Service Quality Supervisor.
- Staff have access to sanitary wipes to disinfect shared devices/equipment.
- An electrostatic disinfectant spraying is performed in the evenings.

The workplace parties committed to providing workers with disinfectant supplies, making these supplies accessible and providing information to workers regarding use.

Hand Hygiene:

- Workers have been instructed to perform hand hygiene including but not limited to before and after entering the school and before and after use of shared equipment.
- Hand sanitizer with an alcohol content of at least 70% is available in every classroom and throughout the workplace.
- Hand washing stations were set up in the hallways with soap, running water and paper towels.
- Workers and students can access hand hygiene facilities in the washrooms. There are two (2) staff washrooms on the first level and three (3) staff washrooms on the second level.

Personal Protective Equipment:

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- Universal masking is in place.
- Workers are provided with medical grade masks. Each worker is provided with an individual box of masks and can contact the office to request more as often as necessary.
- Workers were given two (2) face shields each, and can request more.
- Workers are instructed to wear eye protection in addition to their mask when they cannot maintain 2 metres of distance from an unmasked individual.
- The workplace has a contingency plan in place to address potential PPE shortages; the workplace can obtain more from their PPE warehouse. There were no concerns raised with regards to the supply of PPE on hand currently.

Infection Prevention and Control:

- The workplace parties reported that Public Health is notified when staff and students are reported COVID-19 positive.
- The workplace follows Public Health guidelines for their return to work procedure.

Portable Classrooms:

- There are five (5) portable classrooms at this school. The COVID-19 measures and procedures followed by the school building are also applied to the portable classrooms.
- There are scheduled times for students to access the school building to use the washrooms.

Childcare Centres:

- There are no childcare centres operating at this school.

Community use of School facilities:

- Facilities at this school are not used by the public or outside groups.

Physical Inspection:

At the time of this visit, classrooms 203, 121, 120 and the office in the gym (room 116C) were viewed.

HVAC: A subsequent field visit report will be delivered on a later date to address the ventilation concerns.

Investigation is on-going.

Resources that may assist workers and employers:

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Ministry of Education Guide to reopening Ontario's Schools
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-reopening-ontarios-schools>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-reopening-schools>
<https://www2.tc.gc.ca/en/services/road/federal-guidance-school-bus-operations-during-covid-19-pandemic.html>
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/operational-guidance-covid-19-management-schools>
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-guidance-school-outbreak-management>

Public Services Health and Safety Association-Guidance During Covid-19 For School Employers
www.pshsa.ca/backtoschool

Public Health Ontario
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/wwksf-routes-transmission-mar-06-2020.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/2020/09/covid-19-hvac-systems-in-buildings.pdf?la=en>

Learn what employers can do to help control exposure to COVID-19 at meal and break times

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/meal-and-break-periods-work-during-covid-19>

Infection Prevention and Control at Work- Free Basic Awareness online training
Public Services Health and Safety Association | Infection Prevention and Control at Work: Basic Awareness Training (pshsa.ca)

COVID resources are available in languages other than English and French. Please visit:

Ontario government COVID resources:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace>
Public Health Ontario resources in multiple languages:

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<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/public-resources?tab=25>

Emergency Leave under Employment Standards Act

Employees may have the right to take unpaid, job-protected infectious disease emergency leave. For information on infectious disease emergency leave under the Employment Standards Act, 2000 visit [Ontario.ca/ESAGuide](https://www.ontario.ca/ESAGuide) or call the Employment Standards Information Centre at 1-800-531-5551. Employees who take infectious disease emergency leave may be entitled to employment insurance benefits or to other federal government financial supports. For information, visit the federal government's website or contact Service Canada's Employment Insurance Automated Telephone Information Service at 1-800-206-7218.

Workplace Mental Health: Workplace mental health has become more of a concern during COVID-19. For information and resources, please visit the Ministry's Workplace Mental Health webpage.

https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/mental_health.php

Public Health Agency of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html#faq>

Additional Guidance

www.ontario.ca/coronavirus

You may also contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000

A copy of this field visit report is to be posted in the workplace.

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