

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION POLICY & PROCEDURES

Updated January 7, 2022

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employer (school board)

Select, implement, and document risk assessments and appropriate site-specific control measures.

Ensure that all resources (information, authorization administrative changes, technology, training, human resources) and materials (personal protective equipment, equipment, cleaning and disinfecting products and systems) required to implement and maintain plan are reasonably made available as practical when required.

Ensure that supervisors and workers are informed about the content of safety policies.

Conduct a periodic review the effectiveness of the plan. This includes a review of the available control technologies to ensure that these are selected and used when practical.

Maintain records of training and inspections.

Re-examine all tasks in the workplace, especially those that require the direct care of students, and ensure that safe work procedures are updated with COVID-19 practices.

Where possible, have workers perform only essential tasks to maintain the student's education and well-being. Tasks that are non-essential should be put on hold until directed otherwise by the provincial health officer.

Supervisors (principals and vice principals)

Ensure that workers are knowledgeable regarding the controls required to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Direct work in a manner that eliminates or minimizes the risk to workers.

Post or relay educational and informational material in an accessible area for workers to review.

Maintaining an inventory of PPE for custodians, cleaning and disinfectant products, and well maintained equipment used for cleaning and disinfecting.

Providing adequate instruction to custodians on the hazards associated with cleaning work areas and on the safe work procedures specified in this exposure control plan.

Directing the work in a manner that ensures the risk to custodians is minimized and adequately controlled.

Revising the work schedule to ensure priority intensive cleaning of impacted work area surfaces and touch points.

Workers (teachers, education assistants, support staff and outside contractors)

Know the controls required to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Participate in COVID-19 related training and instruction.

Follow established work procedures and instructions as directed by the employer or supervisor.

Report any unsafe conditions or acts to the supervisor.

Know how and when to report exposure incidents.

COMMUNICATION

Staff

Training session will take place for all staff during staff orientation week, or prior to start of work.

- Staff will be reminded that all health and safety measures in place prior to the pandemic are still in place.
- Review of workplace practices relating to COVID-19 and other health and safety matters will take place.
- Staff will be informed on the purpose of a health and safety representative and how they can raise safety concerns.
- A health and safety representative will be assigned.
- Policy that workers and students must stay home if they are sick will be reviewed.

The policy will be available for staff to review and ask questions prior to the start of school.

New information and review of any concerns will take place at daily staff meetings. Additional communication will take place as new information is made available that affects work practices.

Bulletin board in staff room will be designated for posting of new information related to COVID-19.

Parents

At orientation, policy that students must stay home if they are sick will be explained. Parents will sign their agreement to this policy and provided with a checklist of symptoms to watch for.

Parents and caregivers will receive information about precautions taken during school via email.

PROCEDURES

Restricting access to the school

Whole School

All workers and students who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days must stay home and self-isolate in accordance with guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Clear communication will take place with parents and caregivers regarding their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school

- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. If a student develops symptoms while at home, parents or caregivers must keep their child at home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, and their symptoms have resolved.
- Should a student develop symptoms associated with COVID-19 infection while in care, physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene principles will be used while waiting for pickup. A worker will:
 - o Put on a mask and gloves
 - o Keep physical distance from student as much as possible
 - o Give the student a mask to put on
 - o Direct the student to the sick waiting room near the reception area
 - o Ask the receptionist to call the family and ask for immediate pickup
 - o Reception will alert janitorial staff to disinfect the sick room
 - o Reception will give family handout about steps to take after leaving school (isolation, monitoring, timing, testing, etc.)
 - o Staff member will disinfect any areas used by student with symptoms

Administration Areas

- Parents and others are encouraged to call instead of visiting the school. Public will be limited from entering the staff work areas.
- Clear barrier is installed between entrance and front desk to separate receptionist from public.

Student management and hygiene

Hygiene

Students will wash their hands (at minimum):

- When they arrive at school and before they go home
- Before eating and drinking
- After using the toilet
- After sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue

- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- When moving between different learning environments (e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions, from the gym to the classroom).
- Before/after touching difficult to clean items (fabric, sand, foam, playdough).

Workers will assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.

When a sink is not available, alcohol hand sanitizer will be used.

Frequently-touched items that are not easily cleaned are limited to those that support learning, health and development.

Food

Food will not be shared by students.

Wash or scrub all fruits and vegetables with cold, running, potable tap water before consuming.

Food will stay in lunch containers until it is time for consumption.

Physical distancing

Parents and caregivers are asked to not enter the building, unless coming to provide a direct educational benefit to students.

Avoid close greetings like hugs or handshakes and remind students to keep their hands to themselves when possible.

Use educational videos and online programs as a part of learning so young students can sit independently and distanced from each other.

Teach classes outside when practicable.

Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between students and staff. For younger students, adapt group activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items. For adolescent students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.

The number of different teacher(s) and educational assistant(s) that interact with groups of students throughout the day will be minimized.

Consider different classroom configurations to maintain distance between students or different locations in the school (e.g., different classrooms, gym or library, outside).

Discourage any food or drink sharing.

Recess/snack, lunch, and class transition times are staggered for early learning, elementary and high school to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.

Safety for staff

Vaccination

Workers will be encouraged to receive a vaccine. If time off work is needed to access vaccination, paid coverage for their time away will be provided.

Physical distancing

Occupancy limits are posted for shared spaces such as staff room and photocopier room.

Picnic benches have been placed outside for additional break seating options.

2 metre physical distancing will be kept whenever possible between workers and students.

Training to workers will include instructions for maintaining physical distance such as not greeting others by hugging or shaking hands.

Staff meetings will be held virtually.

Hygiene

Workers and students are encouraged to remain on site and not to leave during lunch or at break times.

Hand washing supplies are available at all times (i.e., soap, paper towels and 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer).

Staff will wash their hands:

- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking.
- Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.
- Before and after giving medication to a student or self.
- After using the toilet.
- After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).
- After cleaning tasks.
- After removing gloves.
- After handling garbage.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Hand washing signs are posted near all sinks. Workers, including teachers, administrators and support workers should wash their hands frequently to reduce the risk of transmission.

Soap, water and paper towel is provided at all sinks. Hand sanitizer is provided at each main entrance. Disinfectant wipes are available to elementary teachers and spray and paper towel is available to all upper grade teachers.

Effective hygiene practices will be promoted through trainings, meetings, and signage.

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE can provide an additional layer of protection when more effective measures are not feasible.

All K-12 staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools and on busses, at all times, except:

- while eating and drinking
- during high physical exertion, or
- when outdoors.

All K – Gr 12 students are required to wear a mask on the bus and in schools, except:

- while eating and drinking
- during high physical exertion, or
- when outdoors.

Feeling Unwell

A staff member who starts to feel ill at work should report to the principal (or assigned first aid person) immediately, even with mild symptoms.

Sick workers will be asked to wash or sanitize their hands, provided with a mask, isolated and asked to go straight home. They will also be recommended to consult the BC Covid-19 Self-Assessment Tool or call 8-1-1 for further guidance related to testing and self-isolation.

If the worker is severely ill (e.g., difficulty breathing, chest pain), call 9-1-1.

Surfaces that the ill worker has come into contact with will be cleaned and disinfected by another staff member or janitor.

Workers who are not feeling well or are required to isolate will be allowed to work from home whenever possible.

Cleaning and sanitizing

The school will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BC CDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings. Cleaning practices will be in line with the provincial health officer's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings.

High-traffic areas and high-contact surfaces (such as doors and cabinet handles, washrooms, shared office spaces, desks, keyboards, light switches, and communications devices) will be cleaned regularly.

General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least once a day.

Frequently-touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day.

- In classrooms: taps, door knobs, shared spaces, PE/sports equipment (teachers)
- Outside classrooms: washroom handles, hall doors, front doors, couches, staff table, staff counter, photocopier, water dispenser, coffee pot (janitorial)

Incorporate end-of-shift wipe downs for all shared spaces (janitor).

Garbage containers will be emptied daily (teachers and janitor).

If pillow cases and blankets are used, they will be laundered between each student. Other surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected prior and after use.

Custodians will be trained and provided with appropriate supplies and equipment (cleaner, cleaning cloths, paper towel, etc.).

Users will clean spaces after use (photocopier, water dispenser).

Playground equipment can be used.

Buses and school transportation

Bus driver will clean and disinfect the high touch areas of the bus at least once daily.

Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according the guidance provided in the BC CDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document.

Assigned seating will be in place. Students will sit in their own seat wherever possible.

Students in K – Gr 12 will wear a mask while riding the bus.

Windows will be opened on bus when practical.

General Ventilation & Air Circulation

Heating and ventilation systems will be operated and maintained as per standards and specifications.

Average air exchange is increased on fresh air intake systems.

Windows will be opened for extra ventilation when practical.

In the event a ventilation system is temporarily compromised (e.g. partial power outage, ventilation break down), the space will not be used until there is adequate ventilation.

DOCUMENTATION & TRAINING

Workers will be trained on:

- The risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease.

- Safe work procedures or instruction to be followed, including hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- How to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Changes made to work policies, practices, and procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic and keep records of that training.

Documentation on COVID-19 related meetings will be posted in staff room bulletin board.

Records of instruction and training provided to workers regarding COVID-19, as well as reports of exposure and first aid records will be kept in school office.