

VANCOUVER WALDORF SCHOOL HEALTH & SAFETY HANDBOOK COVID-19

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to inform the Vancouver Waldorf School (VWS) staff, parents, and students of the operations supporting health and safety for all VWS sites during COVID-19. This handbook represents a compilation of the most current information available on COVID-19 from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development, BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), WorkSafeBC, and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH).

These comprehensive resources are available at:

Office of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO):

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf>

WorkSafe BC:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/education>

Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Setting:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf>

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control:

<http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>

As of the time of updating this handbook, British Columbia is in Phase 3 of BC's Restart Plan and Stage 2 – In Class Learning of the Ministry of Education K–12 Restart Plan. Information contained in this handbook is based on the best evidence currently available and will continue to be updated. Revisions to this handbook are made to meet future requirements as necessary.

BACKGROUND

What we know about COVID-19

The BCCDC published the following key information in its *COVID-19: Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings* (July 29, 2020):

COVID-19 and Children

- Most children are not at high risk for COVID-19 infection.
- COVID-19 virus has a very low infection rate in children (ages 0 to 19). In B.C.:
 - Less than 1% of children tested have been COVID-19 positive, and even fewer are suspected to have been infected based on serological testing.
 - Approximately 5% of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 are among children and youth 0-19 years old, despite making up approximately 20% of the general population.
 - Children under 10 comprise a smaller proportion of the total confirmed child cases compared to children between the ages of 10 and 19.
- To the end of August 2020, fewer than five children in B.C. were admitted to hospital for COVID-19. None required intensive care and there have been no deaths.

- Based on published literature to date, the majority of cases in children are the result of household transmission by droplet spread from a symptomatic adult family member with COVID-19. Within households and family groupings, adults appear to be the primary drivers of transmission. Older children are more likely to transmit than younger children.
- Children under one year of age, and those who are immunocompromised or have pre-existing pulmonary conditions are at a higher risk of more severe illness from COVID-19 (visit the BCCDC Children with Immune Suppression page for further details).
 - Children who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 can still receive in-person instruction. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to consult with their health-care provider to determine their child's level of risk. Additional information is available here.
 - Staff and students requiring accommodation due to health-related risks should connect with their local school district for more information on requirements. This is likely to include a medical accommodation form completed by a physician or nurse practitioner.
- Children typically have much milder symptoms of COVID-19, if any. They often present with low-grade fever and a dry cough. Gastrointestinal symptoms are more common than in adults over the course of disease, while skin changes and lesions are less common.

COVID-19 and Adults

Most adults infected with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms that do not require care outside of the home.

- Some adults with specific health conditions are at an increased risk for more severe outcomes, including individuals:
 - Aged 65 and over, and especially the frail elderly;
 - With significantly compromised immune systems; or,
 - With poorly controlled underlying medical conditions.
 - Those at greatest risk are those aged 65 and over with a compromised immune system or underlying medical conditions.
- More information about adults living with health conditions that may place them at an increased risk for developing severe illness is available from BCCDC.
- Adults working within schools who have health conditions that may place them at increased risk for more severe outcomes should speak with their health care provider to determine their individual level of risk, and if this may require workplace accommodation.

COVID-19 and Schools

- Children do not appear to be the primary drivers of COVID-19 transmission in schools or in community settings.
- Adults in school settings do not appear to be at higher risk of COVID-19 than in the community or in their household.
- There is limited evidence of confirmed transmission within school settings. This is partially due to wide-spread school closures worldwide at the onset of the pandemic to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - In documented cases, there was typically minimal spread beyond the index case though isolated outbreaks have been reported.

- Schools and childcare facility closures have significant negative mental health and socioeconomic impacts on children, including increased stress, and decreased educational outcomes, connectedness with peers and the broader community, and health behaviours. These outcomes disproportionately impact children with vulnerabilities.
- Prevention measures and mitigation strategies involving children must be commensurate with risk.

SEPTEMBER RETURN TO SCHOOL

Based on current public health guidance for K-12 schools from the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), the Ministry of Education Five Stage Framework for K-12 has been updated to clarify expectations for B.C. elementary, middle and secondary schools for the 2020/21 school year. This includes organizing students into cohorts or Learning Groups to help limit contact and potential exposure as well as to aid contact tracing. The September start-up will be supported by the four foundational principles established at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, teachers and staff
- Provide the services needed to support the children of our essential workers (ESWs)
- Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
- Provide continuity of educational opportunity for all students

From September 8th, all schools in British Columbia will be in Stage 2 with the goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all students within the revised public health guidelines to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Having students in the classroom helps to minimize learning gaps and provide the academic, social and emotional supports essential for learning. Schools and school districts will also have the necessary plans in place to be able to shift quickly between stages when required.

LEARNING GROUPS

To get the most students back in full-time in-class instruction in September, the Provincial Health Officer has recommended the use of cohorts (Learning Groups) to reduce the number of close, in-person interactions. This will reduce the number of people each student or staff member comes into contact with, thereby reducing the risk of transmission and ensuring quicker contact tracing by health authorities.

Within a Learning Group, minimized physical contact is required, but physical distancing does not need to be maintained at all times. Outside of a Learning Group, physical distancing of 2m will remain the expectation for secondary school students, and for all staff. For elementary students, physical distancing of 2m will remain the expectation for students indoors. When outdoors, elementary students are not required to physically distance but physical contact will be minimized.

What is a Learning Group

- A Learning Group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school quarter, semester or year, and who primarily interact with each other.
- Examples include a single class, multiple classes that occasionally meet for additional learning activities or a group of secondary school students with the same courses.
- Extracurricular activities will likely involve students interacting outside of their Learning Groups and will require appropriate physical distancing in those circumstances.

- Learning Groups are recommended by the Provincial Health Officer as an effective way to limit the number of interactions between people in schools and subsequently reduce potential exposures to COVID-19.

Range of Benefits for Students

- Learning – Allow full-time attendance instead of on-line/remote
- 1. Social – Increase peer interaction, avoid isolation
- Emotional – Increase peer support and connection
- Psychological – Decrease mental health impacts

From this point forward, Learning Groups, as they relate to VWS sites, will be referred to as “cohorts”.

HEALTH & SAFETY PLANNING

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Management Team (MT), in conjunction with the Emergency Management Group (EMG), is responsible for monitoring the guidelines as presented by the PHO and the BCCDC and are required to:

- follow applicable WorkSafeBC legislation;
- support and assist with COVID-19 concerns brought forward by employees;
- participate in the COVID-19 safety training;
- assist in facilitating the COVID-19 safety training for all staff; and
- complete the MT and EMG Checklist COVID-19 (Appendix G).

FIRST AID ATTENDANTS

Administrators will identify a designated First Aid Attendant at each campus. The standard first aid treatment protocols have changed for COVID-19 (Appendix E).

INFECTION PREVENTION & EXPOSURE CONTROL MEASURES

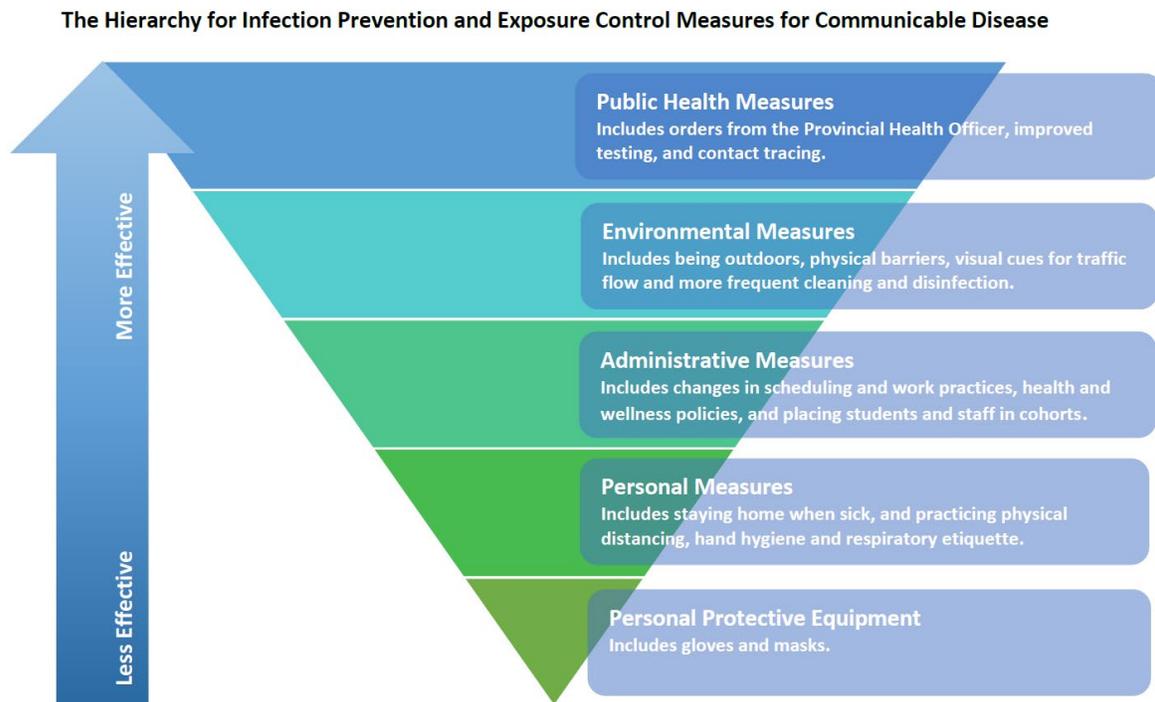
Infection prevention and exposure control measures help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. These are more effective in “controlled” environments where multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely and consistently implemented.

Schools are considered a “controlled” environment by public health. This is because:

- Schools include a consistent grouping of people.
- Schools have robust illness policies for students and staff.
- Schools can implement effective personal practices that can be consistently reinforced and are followed by most people in the setting (e.g. diligent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.).
- Schools can implement a variety of health and safety measures (e.g., enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, using outdoor space for learning activities, grouping students and staff in learning groups to limit in-person interactions, implementing staggered schedules, etc.)

The Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease describes measures that should be taken to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in schools. Control

measures at the top are more effective and protective than those at the bottom. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.



PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

All PHO recommendations and Orders will be strictly adhered to by the VWS.

School Gatherings and Events

The PHO *Order for Mass Gathering and Events* prohibits the gathering of more than 50 people for the purpose of an event. This order does not apply to students, teachers or instructors at school when they are engaged in educational activities but does apply to community events held at schools. The Order is focused on one-time or recurrent events where people gather and where control measures may be hard to implement.

School gatherings will be kept to a minimum and where possible, we will seek virtual alternatives for larger gatherings and assemblies to continue to support these events. When it is necessary to gather in larger groups, the following guidance will be followed:

- School gatherings will occur within a cohort.
- Gatherings should not exceed the maximum learning group size in the setting (which includes students and staff who are part of the learning group), plus the minimum number of additional people required (e.g. additional school staff, visitors, etc.) to meet the gathering's purpose.
- Additional people should be minimized as much as is practical to do so, and they must maintain physical distance.

- Staff meetings involving staff from different learning groups should preferably occur through virtual means. Where a virtual alternative is not possible, staff meetings can happen in person if participants maintain physical distance.
- In-person inter-school events (including competitions, tournaments and festivals) should not occur at this time. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year.

All students, staff, and visitors must complete a daily assessment for symptoms of common-cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms prior to entering the school. If they have any symptoms, they must not enter the school.

Employee and student absenteeism will be closely monitored and excessive student absenteeism will be communicated to the Medical Health Officer.

VWS will not provide notification to staff or students' families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, unless directed to by public health. Public health will work with school administration to determine what actions will be taken, including if any staff or students who have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate, and if other staff and students' families should be notified.

Persons returning from outside the country will be required to quarantine for 14 days under both provincial and federal orders.

Case Finding and Contact Tracing

If a staff or student is a confirmed case of COVID-19 through testing or investigation (i.e. case finding), public health will identify who that person has been in close contact with recently (i.e. contact tracing) to determine how they were infected and who else may have be at risk of infection.

If there was a potential exposure at a school (i.e. a student or staff who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 AND attended school when they may have been potentially infectious), public health will work with the school to understand who may have been exposed, and to determine what actions should be taken, including identifying if other students or staff are sick (case finding) or have been exposed and should monitor for symptoms or self-isolate.

Personal privacy rights will be maintained. Public health will not disclose that a student or staff member is a confirmed case of COVID-19 unless there is reason to believe they may have been infectious when they attended school. In this case, public health will provide only the information required to support effective contact tracing and only to the school administrator or delegate.

Public health will notify everyone who they determine may have been exposed, including if any follow-up actions are recommended (e.g. self-isolate, monitor for symptoms, etc.). They will work with the school administrator to determine if additional notifications are warranted (e.g. notification to the broader school community).

To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained, and that the information provided is complete and correct, school administrators or staff should not provide notifications to staff or students' families about potential or confirmed COVID19 cases unless the school administrator is directed to do so by the school medical officer.

Managing Clusters of COVID-19

When multiple confirmed linked cases of COVID-19 occur among students and/or staff within a 14 day period (a cluster), public health, under the direction of the local school medical officer will investigate to determine if additional measures are required to prevent further transmission of COVID-19. The school medical officer will advise schools if additional prevention measures are needed.

COVID-19 Outbreaks in Schools

Cases and clusters of COVID-19 are expected in school settings, given that COVID-19 is circulating in the community. These occurrences are not considered outbreaks. The declaration of an outbreak of COVID-19 or any other communicable disease in a school setting is at the discretion of the school medical officer. This is expected to occur rarely, and only when exceptional measures are needed to control transmission.

Self-isolation and Quarantine

Self-isolation means staying home and avoiding situations where you could come in contact with others. Self-isolation is required for those confirmed as a case of COVID-19 (i.e. those diagnosed with COVID-19) and those who are identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19. Public health staff identify and notify close contacts of a confirmed case who are required to self-isolate. Public health ensures those required to self-isolate have access to health-care providers and that other appropriate supports are in place. Quarantine is a term typically reserved for people who return from travel outside the country, who are at risk of developing COVID-19.

Self-Isolation for International Travelers Returning to B.C.

All students and staff who have travelled outside of Canada are required to self-isolate for 14 days after arrival under both provincial and federal orders. This includes students who are attending school from abroad. Students from outside of Canada should plan to arrive in Canada at least two weeks before school begins to adhere to the self-isolation orders.

Environmental Measures **Ventilation and Air Exchange**

At this time, there is no evidence that a building's ventilation system, in good operating condition, would contribute to the spread of COVID-19. For activities that take place indoors, application of the basic principles of good indoor air quality should continue, including supplying outdoor air to replenish indoor air by removing and diluting contaminants that naturally occur in indoor settings. All mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems should be checked to ensure they are working properly. Where possible, schools can open windows if weather permits.

School Preparation

Staff, along with the MT and the EMG, will utilize the following considerations to prepare classrooms and other work environments:

Classrooms

- Classrooms have been configured to accommodate health and safety requirements

- Where possible, natural ventilation will be maximized by keeping doors and windows open. Air purifiers will be used in rooms where ventilation is limited.

Each classroom will have a handwashing sink with soap and paper towels or a hand sanitizing station.

- In common rooms and areas where sinks are not available, students and staff will access a washroom, portable hand washing sink, or hand sanitizing stations.
- Classrooms, desktops and countertops shall only have essential items to allow for regular custodial cleaning.
- Items that are not easily cleaned should be limited.
- Equipment use is limited to items that are easily cleaned.
- Signage is posted at the entrance of washrooms to limit the number of occupants based on size and ability to physically distance.
- Administration, in collaboration with the EMG, will determine any additional access limitations.

Offices, Staff Room and Shared Space Access

- Access to reception offices is limited.
- All staff are encouraged to eat in their classrooms/offices or outside.
- To facilitate Grade School room occupancy limits:
 - Occupancy limit signage will be displayed in faculty rooms.
 - When possible, Community Kitchen should be used by administration for food and drink preparation.

Staff will bring their own lunch (no takeout deliveries), including utensils and dishes. Staff may use the fridge for storage of personal items and appliances may be used.

- Water fountains will be sanitized regularly.
- Washroom in administration corridor is for staff and visitor use only. All students will use designated washrooms.

Photocopier room access will be limited to one person at a time.

- There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources to students.
- Physical barriers will be utilized in reception offices and between computer stations in faculty room.
- Physical barriers may also be used in places where physical distancing cannot be regularly practiced and a person is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a cohort or for itinerant staff working across cohorts.
- Leaning groups cannot be applied to adult-only settings and thus WorkSafeBC guidance on office protocols will be followed.

Library

The library will be open under regular operating hours by appointment only. Students from the same cohort may use the library together but occupancy limits and hand hygiene guidelines must be observed.

- Staff must book the time-slot for their cohort in advance of attendance at the library.
- Parents who wish to use the library must pre-arrange their visit with the librarian. In those cases, parents must complete Appendix B - Daily Health Check for Staff & Visitors COVID-19 prior to entering the school and register with reception. A barrier will be installed at the library check out desk if physical distance cannot be maintained.

Keyboards and Electronic devices

Staff will wash hands before beginning work at a computer station. Computer stations, including keyboard and mouse, should be cleaned and disinfected regularly. This will be the responsibility of the user. When cleaning electronic devices please consider the following:

- First, remove visible dirt, grease, using product provided.
- Wipe down keyboard and mouse with provided product.
- Do not use alcohol-based sanitizers or disinfectants on keyboards, phones, monitors or touch screens.

Isolation Rooms

Early Childhood Centre & Grade School: Colin Dutson Room

High School: Elaine McKee Room

- The room must have a sink for hand washing or hand sanitizer, and a waste receptacle.
- The room must have an "Isolation" sign that can be posted while the room is in use.
- The room must have capacity to house more than one student.
- The room must only contain essential items to allow for ease of cleaning.
- After the room is used, administrative staff are notified and will clean the room as per the Enhanced Cleaning protocols (Appendix F).

Process for Using Isolation Room

- Isolation Rooms can be used for faculty and staff meetings, but the room would be immediately vacated if it's needed for isolating a student.
- Administrators will be assigned to stay with the isolated student by cohort.
- Teachers should consult with another staff member, usually the GS Receptionist or HS Coordinator, but if those staff members aren't available, consult with the administrator assigned to the cohort, before making the decision to isolate a student.

Once the decision has been made to isolate a student, an administrator will email the Management Team (mt@vws.ca) to confirm the time the student was isolated, which administrator is with them, and whether or not a parent has been reached and is on the way to pick up the child.

Toys and Sports Equipment

- Staff will select the minimum number of toys and sports related equipment required.
- Selected items must be easily cleaned. Limit stuffed toys, dolls, or porous items.
- Students are not allowed to bring toys from home, unless approved by administration.
- All toys must be cleaned daily.
- Sport equipment and tools used for activities such as gardening, woodworking, and art will be sanitized by the teacher after each cohort's usage.
- Gym equipment usage is limited to items that are easily cleaned.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are considered safe environments, including such elements as sand and water. The following measures will be taken by VWS students using playgrounds during school hours:

- Hand washing prior to and after use of playground.
- Close physical contact between students, including prolonged face-to-face interactions, will be reduced.
- Division of cohorts to zones during recesses on the GS big field.

Music Classes & Musical Instruments

Physical contact must be minimized for those within the same cohort.

- Physical distancing of 2m will be required between students and staff who are in different cohorts.
- In general, instruments will not be shared, and those that are will be sanitized after each cohort's use.
- Staff will be directed to the Guidance for Music Classes in BC During COVID-19, developed by the B.C. Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C.

Transportation

VWS buses used for transporting students are cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in the BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document and federal guidance from Transport Canada. Bus protocols will include:

- Handwashing before and after bus use
- Assigned seating with one student per seat. Sharing will be permitted for members of the same household or cohort.
- New on-load and off-load process
- Parents will be required to work closely with the bus driver and their riders to ensure compliance with new seating rules.

Field Trips

When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. Staff should conduct risk assessment vis-a-vis the field trip location. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- Field trip locations must provide teachers with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it does not conflict with the school's plan.
- Use of parent volunteers for driving groups of students is not permitted during Stages 2 to 4.
- Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to physical distancing and other health and safety guidelines.
- Ensure field trip numbers align with the PHO guidance on mass gatherings (i.e. 50 people).
- Field trips to outdoor locations are preferable.
- No overnight field trips should occur.
- If using public transportation for field trips, guidance from transit authorities will be adhered to.

After School Program

This program will run as usual, subject to COVID-19 health and safety protocols per the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Complete information about the After School Program will be distributed to parents prior to the first day of school.

Cleaning Requirements

- All disinfectants and detergents must be stored out of reach of students.
- Product information for all cleaning products are available through the Business Manager. Disinfectants used are Benefect Botanical Decon 30 or Quat Plus Liquid Disinfectant. No other disinfectant products are allowed (e.g. NO Lysol wipes). All products will be clearly labelled.

Cleaning Schedules

Contracted custodians will clean all school buildings thoroughly once every 24 hours in the evening. This will include the regular daily cleaning regimen as well as additional cleaning and disinfecting of frequently-touched surfaces. Contract cleaners will also clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in all rooms once during the school day, paying close attention to common areas. Frequently touched surface cleaning will include, but not be limited to: door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, keyboards, copiers, stair railings, and service counters. Waste bins must be emptied daily.

All rooms will be disinfected twice daily so there are no additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures required beyond those that would normally be implemented.

On-site staff will be responsible for the following:

- Teachers are responsible for sanitizing equipment such as toys; sports gear; handwork, gardening, and practical arts tools after each cohort's usage.
- Supplies (paper towels, soap and spray bottles) must be checked daily when the classroom or area is unoccupied.

- If supplies are low, contact Maintenance (maintenance@vws.ca) with an email copy to the Business Manager (businessmanager@vws.ca).
- Administrative staff will keep cleaning supplies readily accessible for staff to clean their work area and IT equipment.

Arts Education

- Students and staff will practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - at the beginning and at the end of the class;
 - before and after handling shared equipment; and
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Personal spaces and equipment will be set up for students, as best as possible.
- Students will avoid sharing equipment, if possible.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned as per guidelines.
- Students will be encouraged to use designated areas for personal items, if possible.
- Appropriate space will be made available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
 - If needed, classes will be broken into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.

No additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures are required when different learning groups use the same space or when the composition of a learning group changes at the end of a school term, beyond the cleaning and disinfecting procedures that are normally implemented, and what has been outlined in this document.

ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Access Control

Access to school buildings by non-school staff will be limited to parents, caregivers, health-care providers, volunteers and other non-staff adults who are supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing. Communication with teachers and administrative staff should occur via the phone, virtual meeting or email as much as possible.

- All visitors must register with reception and confirm they have completed the Appendix B - Daily Health Check for Staff & Visitors COVID-19 before entering.
- The school will keep a record of all visitors at the reception offices.

All staff entering the school must have completed the Appendix B - Daily Health Check for Staff & Visitors COVID-19. Prior to the start of school on September 8th, staff must provide a copy of a completed daily health check form to confirm they understand the form and that it must be completed daily.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that all students entering the school have completed the Appendix A - Daily Health Check for Students COVID-19.

In all cases, authorized service providers must wash or sanitize hands as per handwashing protocols when entering school buildings and prior to entering childcare areas.

Use of the school for community related events during Stage 2 will be limited and groups will be required to provide their *COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan*. Cleaning services that adhere to the cleaning protocols laid out in Appendix F must be arranged by the group.

Extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs can occur if physical distance can be maintained between members of different cohorts and reduced physical contact is practiced by those within the same cohort. Inter-school events including competitions, tournaments and festivals, will not occur until further notice.

Physical Distancing

Density on VWS sites will be managed primarily by the implementation of cohorts. The maximum allowable number of people in a space at any one time will not inhibit the ability to maintain health and safety measures. Physical distancing is used as a prevention measure because COVID-19 tends to spread through prolonged, close (face-to-face) contact. All students and staff must adhere to physical distancing protocols with different expectations and methods set for the varying ages of the children. Scheduling, programming, and customs to accommodate physical distancing have been arranged as follows:

- School buildings are configured to accommodate physical distancing recommendations.

Parents/caregivers must remain outside the school buildings to drop-off and pick-up their children. They must not enter the school buildings and must leave the school grounds immediately after drop-off and pick-up. Pick-up and drop-off has been planned to prevent crowding.

- Grade One parents will walk their children to the Grade One play yard gate, where they will be greeted by the teacher.
- Kindergarten parents/caregivers will drop-off their child outside the door of the classroom. A teacher will meet the child at the classroom door to assist in the boot room.
- All Grade School parking spaces are reserved for staff, visitors (by pre-arranged appointment), parents with infants, and those with mobility limitations.
- Cars entering the parking lot via the Kiss & Go lane must pick up and drop off only. Foot traffic will follow directional signage to support the requirement that 1-2m of space can be maintained.
- Cyclists coming onto the Grade School campus to access bike racks will dismount and use sidewalks while reducing physical contact with others as much as is practicable.
- Staff and other adults should seek to reduce the number of close, face-to-face interactions with each other at all times while on school grounds, even if wearing a non-medical mask. This includes during break times and in meetings.
- Adults interacting with each other are expected to practice physical distancing while on school grounds by maintaining 1 – 2m of space when it is required (ie: when out of cohort or family bubble).
- Options for preventative measures will be exhausted before requiring itinerant teachers/specialists to use a non-medical mask. Exceptions will be made for staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons.

- Staff will remind students about physical distancing and minimizing physical contact in an age-appropriate manner. Teachers will strive to build these measures into pedagogically-appropriate stories that are supportive of the socio-emotional wellbeing of the students.

Boot rooms will be open and teachers will inform students how to store and access their belongings in a safe manner during transition times.

- Greetings will not include the customary handshake between teachers and students.
- Students will be reminded not to share personal items.

Schedules have been configured to allow students to be outside for as much of the school day as possible and to minimize close contact between cohorts.

Support plans for Learners with Diverse Needs will be developed by the Educational Support Team to ensure physical contact is minimized.

PERSONAL MEASURES

Self-Assessment

Stay Home When Required to Self-Isolate

The following students, staff or other persons **must stay home and self-isolate**:

- A person confirmed by public health as a case of COVID-19; or
- A person confirmed by public health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19; or
- A person who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

Anyone required to self-isolate will be supported by public health. Additional information is available from BCCDC.

Stay Home When Sick

Staying home when sick is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. When COVID-19 is present in the community, the risk of introducing COVID-19 into schools is reduced if staff, students and parents/caregivers:

- Perform a daily health check.
- Stay at home when sick.
- Get a health assessment and/or COVID-19 test when symptoms persist longer than 24 hours or when fever is present.

These steps do not replace usual health care. Health questions can be directed to 8-1-1 or your health care provider. These recommendations are discussed in more detail below and may change over time.

Daily Health Check (Appendix A & B)

A daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious. Symptoms of COVID-19 can be mild and are similar to other respiratory infections. Most people in BC with these symptoms do not have COVID-19.

- Parents and caregivers should assess their child daily for key symptoms of illness before sending them to school (i.e. perform a daily health check for their child).
- Staff and other adults should assess themselves daily for key symptoms of illness prior to entering the school (i.e. perform a daily health check).
- There is no need for schools to verify that the health check has occurred every day, nor to require that parents submit a daily health check form to the school.

A full list of COVID-19 symptoms is available from BCCDC.

Stay Home When New Symptoms of Illness Develop

Students and staff should stay at home when new symptoms of illness develop. **The key symptoms to watch for are fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.**

- If the staff or student (or their parent) indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they may return to school. No assessment or note is required from a health care provider.
- For mild symptoms without fever, students and staff can monitor at home for 24 hours. If symptoms improve, they can return to school without further assessment.
- If symptoms include fever, or if after 24 hours, symptoms remain unchanged or worsen, seek a health assessment. A health assessment can include calling 8-1-1, a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner, or going to a COVID-19 testing centre.

When a COVID-19 test is recommended by the health assessment:

- If the COVID-19 test is positive, the person should stay home until they are told by public health to end their self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test.
- If the COVID-19 test is negative, the person can return to school once symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness. BCCDC has information on receiving negative test results.
- If a COVID-19 test is recommended but is not done because the person or parent chooses not to have the test or a health assessment is not sought when recommended, and the person's symptoms are not related to a previously diagnosed health condition, they should stay home from school until 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and then may return if feeling well enough.

If a **COVID-19 test is not recommended** by the health assessment, the person can return to school when symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (i.e. not COVID-19).

Other Considerations for Managing Illness at Schools

- Procedures have been established for those who become sick at school to go home as soon as possible (see below).
- Procedures have been established that allow for students and staff to return to school with mild symptoms of illness remaining, in line with the guidance in this document.
 - This is to ensure staff and students are not kept out of school longer than necessary.
- Do not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practices.
- A person with mild symptoms may elect to seek COVID-19 testing, even when this is not required according to the above guidance. Having a pending COVID-19 test result should not, by itself, be a reason to exclude a person from school if there are no other reasons to exclude them.

Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If the household member tests positive for COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they may return to school. Most illness experienced in B.C. is not COVID-19, even if the symptoms are similar.

Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. They do not require re-assessment by a healthcare provider and should not be required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

Protocol if a Student/Staff Develops Symptoms of Illness at School

If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school, schools should:

- Provide the student/staff with a non-medical mask if they don't have one (exceptions should be made for students and staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons).
- Provide the student/staff with a space where they can wait comfortably that is separated from others. Some students may not be able to be picked up immediately. As such, a space will be made available where they can wait comfortably, which is separated from others.
- All student are to be supervised and cared for by an administrator, when separated.
- Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible.
 - Contact the student's parent/caregiver with a request to have their child picked up as soon as possible.
- Clean and disinfect the areas the student/staff used.
- Encourage the student/staff to seek assessment by a health-care provider.

Schools and school districts should notify their local medical health officer if staff and/or student absenteeism exceeds 10 percent of regular attendance, to help with the early identification of clusters or outbreaks.

- Cough and sneeze into elbow, sleeve, or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene; and
- Refrain from touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Handwashing

Soap and water are the preferred method for cleaning hands. Parents, caregivers, and staff can teach and reinforce frequent and diligent hand hygiene, and posters displayed in the school buildings will reinforce the message. All classrooms have sinks for handwashing, and hand-sanitizing stations will be placed at the entry to each room.

When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at school. • Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch). • Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student’s desk or locker). • Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.). • After using the toilet. • After sneezing or coughing into hands. • Whenever hands are visibly dirty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Food Handling

No sharing of food, drinks, and utensils will be permitted.

If students with diverse needs need support for eating:

- Use good hygiene practices when handling food. Avoid bare hand contact. For example, use utensils, deli napkins, or dispensing equipment to handle food; and
- Frequently wash hands with plain soap and water.

In the ECC, food will be prepared according to Ministry of Children and Family Development food preparation hygiene requirements.

Schools can continue to include food preparation as part of learning. If food is prepared as part of learning and is consumed by the students who prepared it, no additional measures beyond those articulated in this document and normal food safety measures and requirements need to be implemented.

Schools should not allow homemade food times to be made available to other students at this time (e.g. birthday treats, bake sale items).

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Wearing non-medical masks at all times in schools is not recommended as there are multiple, more effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in place, such as those outlined in this document:

Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are sick or required to self-isolate, including ensuring everyone entering the school performs a daily health check;

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection;
- Placing students and staff into cohorts;
- Adapting learning environments to maximize the use of space;
- Ensuring physical distance can be maintained between cohorts; and
- Frequent hand hygiene

These measures provide multiple layers of protection that reduce the risk of transmission.

Staff providing health services should wear a mask when working in close proximity with students.

Non-medical masks or face coverings may be useful when physical distance cannot be consistently maintained and the person is interacting with people outside of their cohort for extended periods of time (e.g. secondary students on a school bus, etc.).

Visitors to the school will be required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while inside school buildings if physical distancing is not possible.

Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).

Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering within schools is a personal choice for students and staff and the choice to wear a non-medical mask or face covering on a VWS site will be respected.

Those that choose to wear non-medical masks, face coverings or face shields must still seek to maintain physical distance from people outside of their cohort. Face shields are a form of eye protection for the person wearing it. They may not prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer. Face shields should not be worn in a place of non-medical masks.

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Managing Social-Emotional and Traumatic Impact

Our goal is to ensure that the school environment is as safe as possible for students and staff, which includes socio-emotional wellbeing.

Students will be monitored by their parents and teachers and all concerns in this regard will be directed to the student's teacher and to the Care Group as needed.

All staff will be encouraged to contact a member of the MT should they need support. Time will be allocated at weekly department meetings for sharing of staff concerns regarding wellness.

In instances where parents/caregivers need support or guidance, any member of the MT is their point of contact at the school.

COMMUNICATION

Training and Education of Staff

All staff must:

- Complete Daily Health Check self-assessment daily;
- Review this document and complete any and all orientation/training related to this document;
- Complete the Staff Orientation Checklist on first day of return to work (Appendix H);
- Review all updates/notices provided to staff; and
- Participate in any additional training and or education sessions, as required.

Training and Education of Students and Parents

- All health and safety protocols will be sent to parents;
- Virtual Town Hall meetings will be held regularly to allow parents to voice questions and concerns.
- Prominent posting of hard copy communications/posters;
- Health & Safety Handbook COVID-19 will be posted on the VWS website. Appendix A - Daily Health Check for Students COVID-19

APPENDIX A - DAILY HEALTH CHECK FOR STUDENTS COVID-19

Parents/Caregivers: You are responsible for conducting the daily health check with or for your child. You or your child must have answered the questions below before they can come to school. For Kindergarten children, parents/caregivers must complete the form with their child's teacher at drop-off.

Daily Health Check			
1. Key Symptoms of Illness*	Do you have any of the following new key symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
	Fever	YES	NO
	Chills	YES	NO
	Cough or worsening of chronic cough	YES	NO
	Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
	Diarrhea	YES	NO
	Nausea and vomiting	YES	NO
2. International Travel	Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Confirmed Contact	Are you a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	YES	NO

Instructions:

If you answered "YES" to one of the questions included under 'Key Symptoms of Illness' (excluding fever), you should stay home for 24 hours from when the symptom started. If the symptom improves, you may return to school when you feel well enough. If the symptom persists or worsens, seek a health assessment.

If you answered "YES" to two or more of the questions included under 'Symptoms of Illness' or you have a fever, seek a health assessment. A health assessment includes calling 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner. If a health assessment is required, you should not return to school until COVID-19 has been excluded and your symptoms have improved.

When a **COVID-19 test** is recommended by the health assessment:

- If the COVID-19 test is **positive**, you should stay home until you are told by public health to end self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test.
- If the COVID-19 test is **negative**, you can return to school once symptoms have improved and you feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless you develop a new illness.
- If a COVID-19 **test is recommended but is not done** because you choose not to have the test, or you do not seek a health assessment when recommended, and your symptoms are not related to a previously diagnosed health condition, you should stay home from school until 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and then you may return if you are feeling well enough.

If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, you can return to school when symptoms improve and you feel well enough. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (i.e. not COVID-19).

If you answered “YES” to questions 2 or 3, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine if you should seek testing for COVID19.

A health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor’s note) should not be required to confirm the health status of any individual.

APPENDIX B - DAILY HEALTH CHECK FOR STAFF & VISITORS COVID-19

Staff and all visitors must complete this health check daily. **Staff must advise the Pedagogical Manager (or immediate supervisor) and the Business Manager if they are unable to attend work per the following table and instructions.**

Daily Health Check			
1. Key Symptoms of Illness*	Do you have any of the following new key symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
	Fever	YES	NO
	Chills	YES	NO
	Cough or worsening of chronic cough	YES	NO
	Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
	Diarrhea	YES	NO
	Nausea and vomiting	YES	NO
2. International Travel	Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Confirmed Contact	Are you a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	YES	NO

Instructions:

If you answered “YES” to one of the questions included under ‘Key Symptoms of Illness’ (excluding fever), you should stay home for 24 hours from when the symptom started. If the symptom improves, you may return to school when you feel well enough. If the symptom persists or worsens, seek a health assessment.

If you answered “YES” to two or more of the questions included under ‘Symptoms of Illness’ or you have a fever, seek a health assessment. A health assessment includes calling 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner. If a health assessment is required, you should not return to school until COVID-19 has been excluded and your symptoms have improved.

When a **COVID-19 test** is recommended by the health assessment:

- If the COVID-19 test is **positive**, you should stay home until you are told by public health to end self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test.
- If the COVID-19 test is **negative**, you can return to school once symptoms have improved and you feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless you develop a new illness.
- If a **COVID-19 test is recommended but is not done** because you choose not to have the test, or you do not seek a health assessment when recommended, and your symptoms are not related to a previously diagnosed health condition, you should stay home from school

until 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and then you may return if you are feeling well enough.

If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, you can return to school when symptoms improve and you feel well enough. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (i.e. not COVID-19).

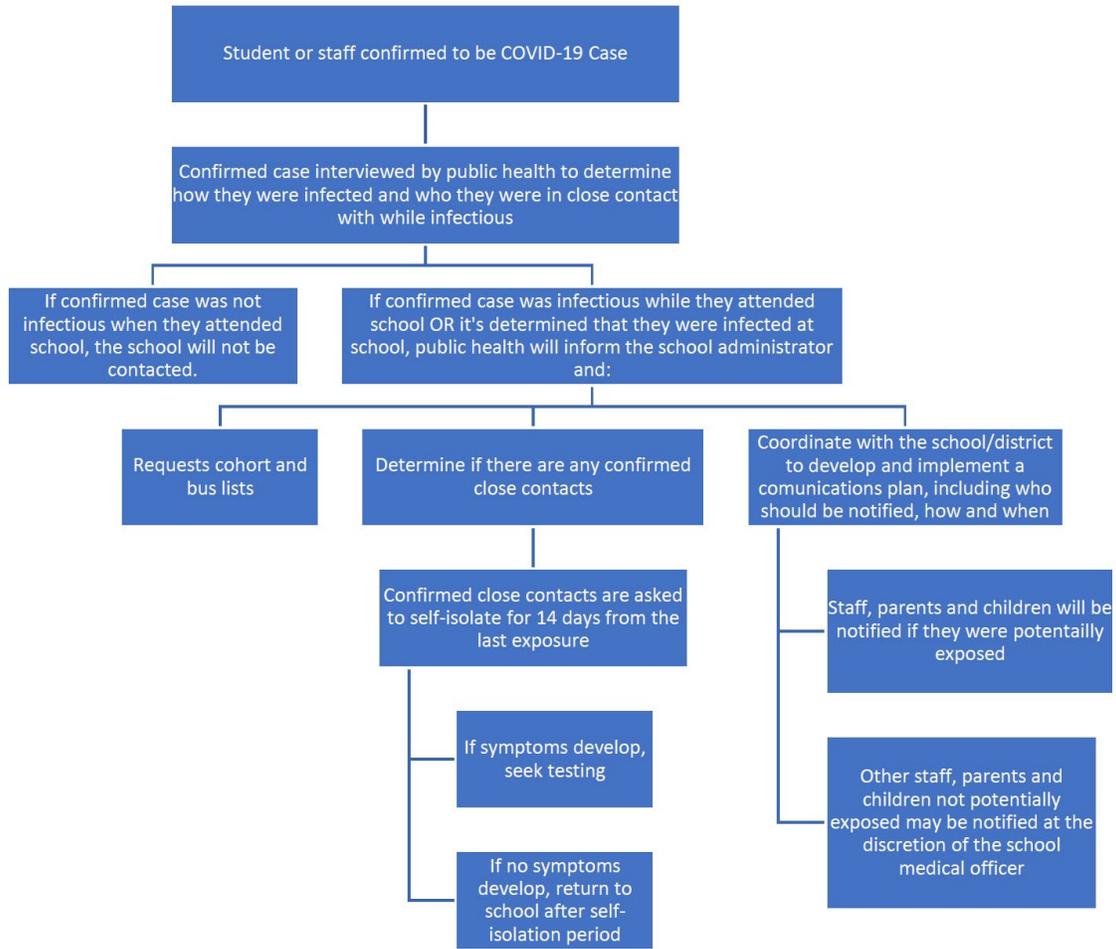
If you answered “YES” to questions 2 or 3, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine if you should seek testing for COVID19.

A health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor’s note) should not be required to confirm the health status of any individual.

APPENDIX C – WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL

<i>If a Student Develops Any New Symptoms of Illness At School</i>	<i>If a Staff Member Develops Any New Symptoms of Illness At School</i>
<p>Staff must take the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area. 2. Contact the student’s parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible. 3. Where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance from the ill student. If not possible, staff should wear a non-medical mask or face covering if available and tolerated, or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth. 4. Provide the student with a non-medical mask or tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene. 5. Avoid touching the student’s body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene. 6. Once the student is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene. 7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas recently used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas). <p>Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.</p>	<p>Staff should go home as soon as possible.</p> <p>If unable to leave immediately:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Symptomatic staff should separate themselves into an area away from others. 2. Maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. 3. Use a tissue or mask to cover their nose and mouth while they wait to be picked up. 4. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the staff member was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).
<p>Students and staff should return to school according to the guidance under the ‘Stay Home When Sick’ and Appendix C sections of this document.</p> <p>A health-care provider note should not be required for students or staff to return.</p>	

APPENDIX D: PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIONS IF A STAFF, STUDENT OR OTHER PERSON WHO HAS BEEN IN THE SCHOOL IS A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE



Confirmed close contacts are determined based on the length of time of exposure and nature of the interaction. Only public health can determine who is a close contact.

APPENDIX E - ADMINISTERING FIRST AID: COVID-19

Purpose

The purpose of this appendix is to provide a procedure for First Aid Attendants to follow while performing first aid to either students or staff at schools/sites during COVID-19 to ensure worker safety.

PPE

Nitrile gloves, safety eyewear or other PPE is task dependent.

Before performing / administering first aid, the First Aid Attendant must read and understand this procedure. All staff must always wear gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.

Procedure – Flu-like Symptoms

- Attendants are not to assess or approach patients with suspected flu-like symptoms. Should a staff or a child begin to show flu-like symptoms, follow the instructions in Appendix C.

Procedure - Non -Flu like Symptoms- Standard First Aid

- Perform hand washing as per hand washing guidelines.
- **Don nitrile gloves.**
- Gather appropriate first aid supplies-
- Perform injury assessment verbally and visually prior to administering first aid.
- Advise the patient not to speak when possible and to look to the side while you administer first aid. Administer appropriate first aid.
- Disinfect area used by student after use.
- **Remove Gloves:**
 - Remember the outside of the gloves are contaminated. Grasp palm area of gloved hand and peel off first glove. Slide fingers of hand under other glove at wrist and peel off. Discard in regular waste.
- Wash hands as per as per hand washing guidelines.
- Complete First Air Record where applicable

APPENDIX F - ENHANCED CLEANING COVID-19

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a procedure for cleaning staff to follow while performing enhanced cleaning of schools/sites due to COVID-19 to ensure worker safety and effective disinfecting.

Enhanced Cleaning

Regular cleaning as well as enhanced cleaning of washrooms, common areas, horizontal surfaces and high touch points such as: door handles, light switches, and handrails. Please follow the process below to ensure cleaning is appropriate for COVID-19.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Rubber gloves, mask.

Procedure

- Perform hand washing as per hand washing guidelines.
- Put on required PPE.
- To ensure access is restricted to room to be cleaned, use sign to restrict access.
- Use bucket to bring in essential supplies only to the room.
- Bucket along with all its contents will be thoroughly disinfected before being placed back in its place to prevent cross contamination.
- A waste bag will be placed on the floor by the doorway.
- A wet mop can be pre-dipped and stood in the corner of the room. Its handle should be disinfected thoroughly before being placed back in the cart.
- Using the VWS approved disinfectant, begin cleaning at the doorway and work around the room in a clockwise direction to ensure no areas are missed.
- Using a disinfectant and separate clean microfiber cloth, rub and scrub all horizontal and contact surfaces, including;
 - Chairs, low ledges, window crank, counter, sinks, wall mounted equipment, light switches, doorknobs, desktops and, any horizontal surfaces used during classroom activities that day.
- For washrooms use separate clean microfiber cloth, disinfect working from top to bottom.
- Clean the light switches, door handle, grab bars, dispensers, sink fixtures, basin, underside and pipes, and any specific areas identified by the staff.
- Use a separate clean microfiber cloth and a separate bucket of solution, clean toilet fixtures, flush handle, seat, tank and base. Wipe splash marks from wall around toilet. Use the bowl mop to clean the bowl.
- Remove trash from the garbage bins, damp wipe the can inside and out and replace the liner.

- **Do not** leave additional liners in the bottom of the garbage container or hanging over the side.
- Take garbage/soiled items to exterior dumpsters.
- Wash hands as per hand washing guidelines.
- Cleaning high touch surfaces should occur twice daily for areas in use.

APPENDIX G – MT AND EMG CHECKLIST COVID-19

Date: _____ Campus: _____

Employee Group

CONSIDERATION	Action Needed	No Action Needed
Staff & computer room		
Max occupancy		
Signs and markings		
Reconfiguration		
Photocopier room		
Max occupancy		
Signs and markings		
Office		
Access controlled		
Signs and markings		
Sign-in/out process (electronic)		

Classrooms		
Sink for handwashing?		
Layout & markings		
Decluttering & reconfiguration		
Staff mailbox access		
Isolation Rooms		
Capacity		
Signs (Isolation room, occupied)		
First Aid Room		
First aid Station/dressing area		
Washroom considerations		
Max occupancy		
Signs and markings		
Student and Staff allocations		
Hand washing locations		
Classrooms		
Washrooms		

Hand washing & hand sanitizer station locations		
Lockdown considerations		
Current lockdown processes sufficient		
Current hold and secure processes sufficient		
Electronic Plan Access		
Behavior support plan		
Personal care plans		
Student Attendance		
Access points/entrance		
Enhanced attendance measures communicated to all staff		
Access to Disinfectant for Staff		
Clearly labelled spray bottles in all rooms		
Ensure cleaning and sanitizing supplies are well stocked		
Site Specific Considerations		

Library, gym, round house, science room and music room access		
Building access / entrance		

Additional comments or concerns:

APPENDIX H - STAFF ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Employee Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Items reviewed	Site Specific Information	Reviewed (X)
Staff Check-in/out process		
Isolation Room Locations		
First Aid Designate		
How to Summon First Aid Designate		
Staff Health Check Requirement		
Student Health Check Requirement		
Attendance Processes		
Shared agreements: communication, physical distancing, meeting protocols		
Mask protocols		
Confirm staff have reviewed the entire Health & Safety Handbook COVID-19, including all appendices.		

To be completed with staff upon return to the school/site. Please note: this can be done via MS teams.

Additional comments/information:

APPENDIX I – SCHOOL BUS OPERATIONS & PROCEDURES

Purpose

This purpose of this appendix is to confirm the procedure for school bus drivers to follow while operating the school bus and for parents and students to follow when preparing to ride in or when riding in a school bus. This includes before, during, and after transportation via school bus.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is the lead federal agency responsible for coordinating efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Transport Canada has consulted with PHAC and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to develop these recommendations, building on current guidance from local and national public health officials.

The recommendations and guidance in this document are subject to change, based on the evolution of transmission of COVID-19 and the discovery of new evidence.

Ensuring Measures Taken Reflect Risk of Exposure

Proven interventions to limit the spread of COVID-19 include: hand washing, regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, and respecting physical distancing by maintaining a 2m distance from other people. To the extent possible, physical distancing measures should be implemented in school buses.

Self-Assessment

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 child has any symptoms, they must not take the bus or go to school.**

All children and drivers who experience symptoms, including mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 C or more), need to self-isolate and stay home. If another member of a child's or driver's household develops symptoms of COVID-19, it is recommended that the child or driver stay home and self-isolate.

A child who develops symptoms while at school will not be permitted to return home on a school bus and will be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Procedure

Before a Trip

- Bus line ups are set up to prevent crowding, and allow for physical distancing of 2m.
- A designated waiting area has been set up for bus riders to gather in until they are given access to the bus.
- Assigned seating arrangements will be used.
- Students should not enter the bus until invited to do so by the driver and must then do so in the pre-assigned order.

Hand Hygiene

- Thorough hand washing with plain soap and water is still the single most effective way to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Bus drivers should wash their hands often, including before and after completing trips.
- Students should be reminded by parents or teachers to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before they leave home to take the bus, when they arrive at school, when they are leaving school prior to taking the bus, and when they get home.

Cleaning High-Touch Surfaces in the School Bus

- The driver will don disposable, waterproof gloves to clean high-touch surfaces between all rides where different cohorts of students are riding the bus, including at the end of each day.
- The driver will dispose of soiled cloths, disposable gloves and any other items in contact with potentially contaminated surfaces in a waste disposal bag.
- The interior of the school bus will be cleaned daily.

During a Trip

- Students will have their own seat (unless sharing with a member of their household or cohort) and sit separated side to side and front to back.
- Consistent seating arrangements will be maintained throughout the ride and riders must not leave their seat except to exit the bus.
- Students should be reminded to keep their hands to themselves when entering and exiting the bus.
- Bus drivers are encouraged to carry alcohol-based hand sanitizer which will be stored out of reach of children

Enclosure Systems

In accordance with applicable *Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards*, the VWS school bus has been fitted with an enclosure system to limit direct contact and exposure to viral particles between the driver and children during boarding and off-loading of the school bus. Due consideration has been given to ensure the enclosure system does not create undesired reflections that could limit the driver's visibility or create additional risk during a collision or emergency situation.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask when they cannot maintain physical distance or be behind a physical barrier in the course of their duties.
- School bus drivers may consider wearing other personal protective equipment including gloves or safety glasses as recommended in Transport Canada's guidance *Personal Protective Equipment and their uses by Commercial Vehicle Drivers*. The choice of PPE should not interfere with the driver's ability to access vehicle controls.
- Masks are not recommended for use by unsupervised children unless advised to do so by a health care provider. In young children in particular, masks can be irritating and may lead to increased touching of the face and eyes.
- Secondary students are required to wear a non-medical mask when they are on the bus if they are interacting with students outside of their cohort.

APPENDIX J – REFERENCE DOCUMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL FAMILIES

Purpose

The purpose of this appendix is to provide parents with children registered in preschool the program-specific references used in compiling this handbook. These references guide preschool and day care settings under the purview of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Whilst incorporating these guidelines into the VWS preschool, in order to streamline programs, VWS will defer to additional guidelines as put forward by the Ministry of Education for K-12 programs, and the processes outlined in this document will apply to pre-school program where applicable.

References

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health - *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings*: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance_Child_Care.pdf

WorkSafeBC – *Child care and day camps: Protocols for returning to operation*:
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/child-care>