



St. Mary's School Communicable Disease Exposure Plan

Updated December 15, 2022

Dear Parents and Staff,

BCCDC (BC Centre for Disease Control) recently updated their guidance for what to do if a person has symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19. People with symptoms and those who test positive for COVID-19 should stay home until their fever has resolved and they feel well enough to participate in daily activities. Please refer to the link below for further information.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19#manage>

1. Space Arrangement

- Classroom and learning environment configurations and activities will best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches. Schools will continue to create a supportive school environment, including utilizing a trauma informed lens when planning school activities.

2. School Gatherings and Events

- Intra-school events (events with just students, staff and necessary volunteers) do not have a capacity limit.
 - Public health is encouraging everyone to stay up to date on their immunizations, including for COVID-19 and influenza (flu). Vaccines are safe and the best way to prevent influenza and severe illness from COVID-19. Please refer to the link below to get further information.

<https://immunizebc.ca/>

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine>

3. Visitor Access/Community Use

- We will continue with routine sign in/sign out practices (visitors and volunteers, etc.).
- Information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors is posted on the school's website and included in communications to students and families.
- There is regular Parish use of the school building.

- Pick up/drop off practises will continue as has been done since September 2022 (Pickup and drop off at school gates in the back playground with Kindergarten at the front of the school by the gym doors)
- Intra- and inter- school programs, activities (e.g. intramurals, sports team practices, games), sports academies and events have resumed.

4. Illness & Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols

- 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

<https://covidcheck.gov.bc.ca/>

- **If your child is sick, they must not go to school until fever and symptoms have subsided and your child is feeling much better** (A runny nose, excessive coughing, headaches, diarrhea, etc. requires some healing time at home).
- The decision to wear Personal Protective Equipment (a mask or face covering) is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice is to be supported and respected. Masks or face coverings are not mandated.
- Diligent hand hygiene practices will continue throughout the day (hand washing with soap and water or using effective hand sanitizer).
- Cleaning protocols will continue to be regularly employed at school

Symptoms of Illness and Return to School:

The following resource provides a summarized information sheet about what to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms and what is recommended in terms of a return to school:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/CD%20Manual/Chapter%201%20-%20CDC/COVID19-self-isolation-post-testing.pdf>

- Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the Covid-19 Self-Assessment Tool (link above), call 8-1-1 or their health care provider.
- Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with previously diagnosed health conditions (e.g. seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. They do not require reassessment by a health-care provider and should not be required to provide a health-care provider note.
- Students and staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness and/or has tested positive for COVID-19, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves.

Hand Hygiene:

- Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene. Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices among students.
- Please refer to the Hand Hygiene visual to practice diligent hand hygiene with your child.

Buildings and Classrooms:

- Students & Staff are to wash their hands/sanitize prior to and after entering or leaving the building.
- Students & staff wash their hands/sanitize prior to and after entering or leaving the common spaces (library, music room, gym classes, LRC room, church).
- Respecting personal space and hands to ourselves.

Supporting Students With Disabilities/Diverse Abilities

School districts and independent schools are expected to implement health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse abilities.

Most students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19. Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are encouraged to consult with their healthcare provider to determine their child's level of risk. Students are not required to wear a mask or face covering when receiving services, though may continue to based on their or their parent/caregiver's personal choice.