

St. Mary's School Communicable Disease Exposure Plan

Updated April 4, 2022

Dear Parents,

A summary of updates that have been developed to complement guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control (Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools) and WorksafeBC.

1. Space Arrangement

- Classroom and learning environment configurations and activities will best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches, with consideration of strategies to create space between people.

2. School Gatherings and Events

- Intra-school events (events with just students, staff and necessary volunteers) do not have a capacity limit.
- While PHO Gatherings & Events Order is in place, schools should not exceed 50% operating capacity for inter-school events or those with visitors (e.g., parent spectators).
- On April 7, 2022, the PHO Gathering & Events Order is expected to lift to a return to 100% capacity. The transition to 100% will also be in consultation with our Elementary Athletic Commission (EAC). Schools will continue to create a supportive school environment, including utilizing a trauma informed lens when planning school activities.
- Everyone who is eligible is encouraged to get fully vaccinated.

3. Visitor Access/Community Use

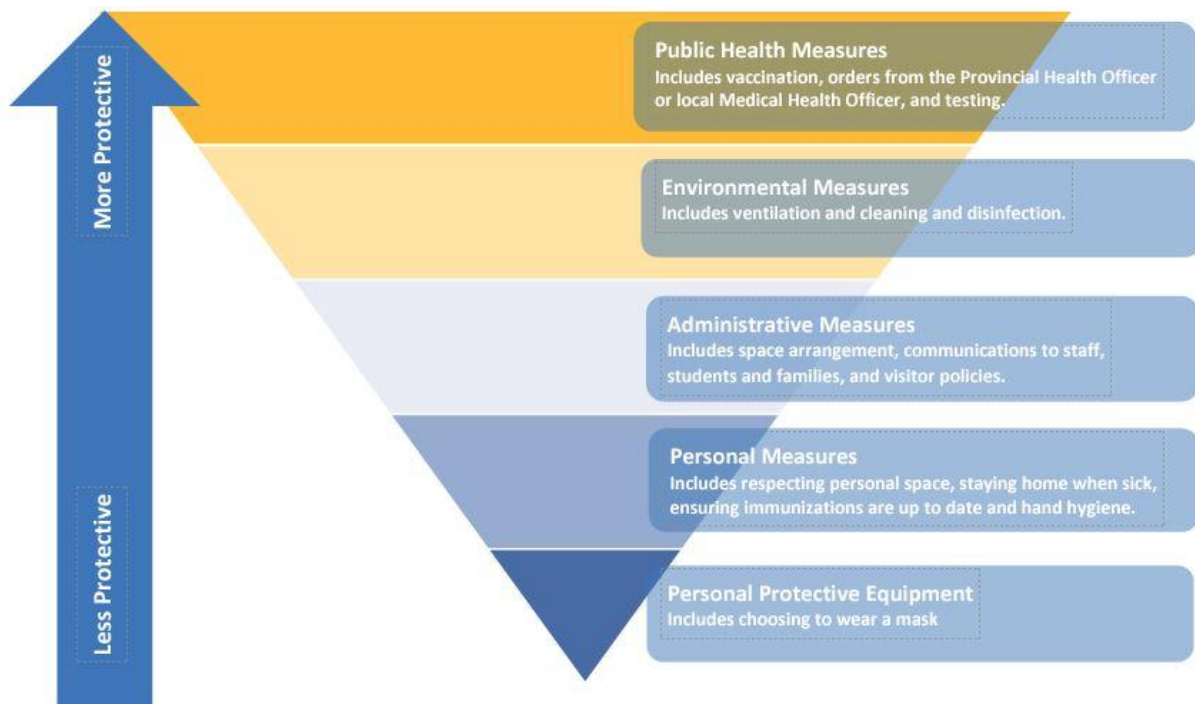
- We will continue with routine sign in/sign out practices (visitors and volunteers, etc.).
- Information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors is posted by the entrance to the school, on the school's website and included in communications to students and families.
- A gradual transition with parish use of the school building will return.
- Pick up/drop off practises will continue as currently being done.

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 (see [Daily Health Check & What to Do When Sick](#) resource for daily assessment of symptoms) **If a child is sick, they must not take the bus or go to school.**

- 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 employed throughout the day.
- Respecting personal space through effective utilization of school space and student movement will continue. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person. Use of available space to spread out whenever possible.

Infection Prevention & Exposure Control Measures



Exposure control measures help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. Multiple protection strategies, informed by public health advice, will be implemented to ensure that St. Mary's School is a safe environment.

Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms:

Stay Home When Required to Self-Isolate.

Students, staff or other adults **must stay home if they are required to self-isolate**.

Additional information on self-isolation requirements and support is available from [BCCDC](#)

Symptoms of Illness and Return to School:

Students, staff or other adults should stay at home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness:

- [When to get a COVID-19 test](#)
- Daily Health Check & What To Do When Sick [Tool](#)
- Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online [Self-Assessment Tool](#) call 8-1-1 or their health care provider

When a staff, student or other adult can return to school depends on if they have tested positive for COVID-19 and/or improvement of their symptoms. See [Appendix A - COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School](#) for more information regarding what to do when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with previously diagnosed health condition (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. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

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. BCCDC has more information for those considered a [close contact](#), which are usually people from the same household.

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.

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 classes (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.

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).
- Follow distinct markings and signs in the hallways for proper hallway flow. Respecting personal space and hands to ourselves.

Use of Devices:

- Students are to use school devices. Please refrain from letting outside devices into the school and classrooms unless otherwise specified.
- Students and staff should have washed/sanitized hands when handling devices.
- Keep devices away from food or drink.
- Devices should be cleaned at the end of every usage or day.
- Students are encouraged to reuse the same device each day, minimizing contact with another person's device.

Music Program (Fine Arts Annex):

- Music education is delivered in line with the Guidance for Music Classes in BC During COVID-19. In the case of any discrepancy in guidance, schools and school districts are expected to follow the Ministry of Education guidelines outlined in the most current Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines FOR K-12 Settings document.

Physical and Health Education (PHE)/Outdoor Programs:

- Spaces are created between students and staff and encourage outdoor activities and programs as much as possible
- Shared equipment will be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines
- The staff & students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in sport activities and equipment use.
- Disinfect teaching aids (e.g. clipboards, whiteboards, pens, plastic bins for transporting materials, etc.)

School Sports:

- Intra- and inter- school programs, activities (e.g. intramurals, sports team practices, games), sports academies and events can continue in alignment with the guidance within this document and the following:
- Capacity should follow that outlined within the School Gatherings and Events section
- Sports activities should be held outside whenever possible.
- Protocols for spectators include being aware of communicable disease protocols and requirements, and have completed a daily health check prior to entering the school (refer to school's website and communications to students and families)

Supporting Students With Disabilities/Diverse Abilities

Expectations for School Districts and Schools

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. For guidelines specific to children with immune suppression (e.g. students who have had a recent organ transplant, who are receiving chemotherapy, those with an illness impacting their immune system), please refer to the [K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#).

Guidelines for Staff And/Or Those Working With Students With Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Complex Behaviours, Medical Complexities, Or Receiving Delegated Care Where Physical Contact May Be Required

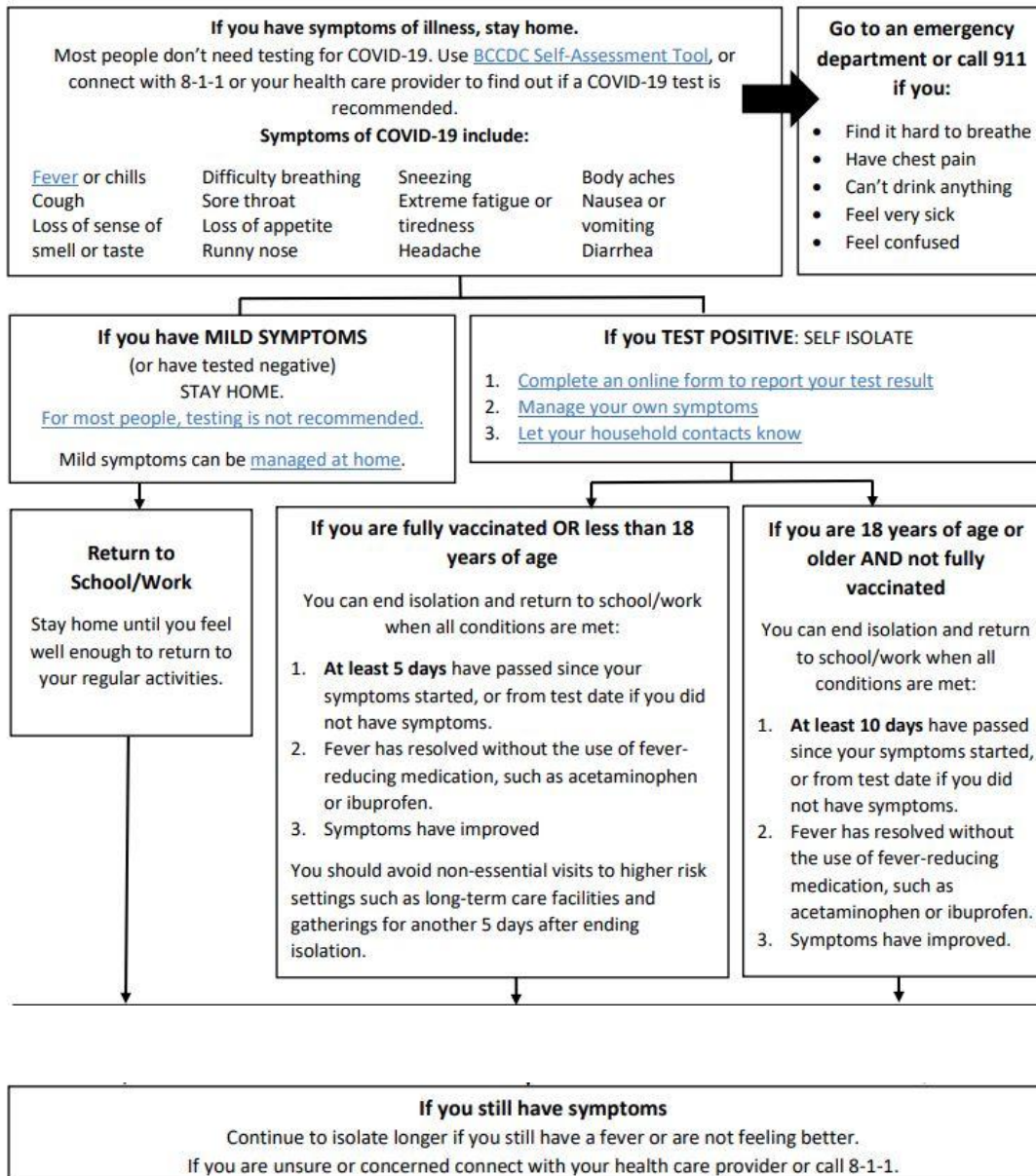
Those providing health or education services that require being in close proximity to a student should follow their standard risk assessment methods to determine what PPE is needed for general communicable disease prevention in accordance with routine practices. Additional personal protective equipment is not required beyond that used in their regular course of work (e.g., gloves for toileting).

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.

Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one.

Appendix A: (on page. 6)

Summary: What To Do When Sick



What to do if someone is sick in your household:

You can continue to attend school if someone in your household is sick and/or self-isolating as long as you do not have any symptoms of illness and feel well. This includes if they have tested positive for COVID-19. Ensure you closely monitor yourself (or your child) for symptoms of illness and stay home if you feel unwell. The best way to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. Vaccines are available for anyone ages 5 and up. Register now at:

[Getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca](https://getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca)