



ABERDEEN HALL

Preparatory School

Teaching Excellence INSPIRING FUTURES Shaping Character

Frequently Asked Questions

The AH Safe Return to Campus Plan

Preschool Information

Updated: February 12, 2021

This document is an abbreviated summary of the larger [Aberdeen Hall Safe Return to Campus Plan](#) **with added considerations specific to child care settings** derived from the [BCCDC Public Health Guidance for Childcare Setting](#) document. We encourage all community members to read through the larger document for a detailed look at the protocols and procedures in place.

Who governs the safety policies, procedures and standards in child care settings?

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Who governs the safety policies, procedures and standards in child care settings?

Please be aware that childcare programs, such as ours, are governed by the [Interior Health Authority](#) in correlation with the [BC Center for Disease Control](#). See links provided for up-to-date information.

Is attending in-class optional?

In-class instruction provides students with peer engagement, supports social and emotional development and decreases feelings of isolation.

School also provides many students access to programs and services they can't get at home and is integral to their overall health and early development.

Students who are registered in "bricks and mortar" schools are expected to attend school in-person unless they are sick.

Please note that, according to the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control, most children who are immunocompromised can return to in-class instruction when safety measures are in place. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Parents/caregivers seeking an alternative to in-class instruction will be required to obtain a doctor's note indicating the need for accommodations due to health-related risks. Accommodations can also be made if a child is asked to isolate by Interior Health.

What do I need to do before I bring my child to school to ensure we safeguard the school community?

You are REQUIRED to assess your child's health *daily* for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease. Additionally, PRIOR to the first day of school, you will be asked to complete a permission form indicating that you understand the daily requirements to assess your child's health according to the "Daily Health Check Example" that will be attached to the permission form.

Please find the [Daily Health Check](#) here.

All students and employees who:

- have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory diseases, OR
- have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days, OR

- were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak

must stay home, seek assessment from a healthcare provider and self-isolate as they await results.

Once results and guidance from a health care provider are received (indicating it is safe to return to school), and symptoms have resolved for 24 hours, the student or employee may return to school.

Students who experience seasonal allergies or COVID-19 -like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition, can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they should seek an assessment by a health care provider.

Students may attend school if a member of their household has cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms, provided the student is asymptomatic. It is expected that the symptomatic household member seeks assessment by a health care provider.

If a student is confirmed to have COVID-19, public health will do an investigation to confirm if any students or employees have been in close contact with that person, and need to self isolate. Public health will inform the school and Head of School if there are close contacts of a confirmed case within a learning group or school. Additionally, schools will provide learning support to students required to self-isolate. Together, schools and public health officials will determine if suspending in-class learning is necessary.

More information about contact tracing can be found [here](#).

If determined that there are close contacts at school Interior Health will notify the school administrators and request class and bus lists to assist with contact tracing and provide guidance on what steps should be taken.

For detailed information on Aberdeen Hall's health and safety protocols, including information on cleaning schedules and dealing with illness onset during the day, please see our [Aberdeen Hall Safe Return to Campus](#)

Who will have access to the Early Learning Center? What policies are in place for visitors?

As per the advice of the BC Center for Disease Control Guidelines; parents, caregivers, volunteers and other non-staff adults entering the Early Learning Center are limited. We welcome those supporting activities that are of benefit to children's learning and well-being. All visitors provide active confirmation that they have no symptoms of illness and are not required to self isolate before entering. All adult visitors are expected to wear masks when in the Early Learning Center.

This means that parents may not enter schools unless they have made an appointment. Supply drop-offs (lunches, extra clothing, etc.) during the day should be arranged by calling reception. Teachers welcome parents to connect through Zoom and phone meetings.

Visitors are made aware of health and safety protocols and requirements prior to entering the school and their contact information is taken.

What about Personal Protective Equipment for staff and students?

Students may wear a mask based on personal or family choice. Child care staff will supervise and support children to ensure safe and proper use when masks are worn.

Employees will be provided masks to wear, and are expected to do so when around other adults and in common areas, as per WorkSafeBC guidelines. Any teacher entering a classroom outside their homeroom is expected to wear a mask and maintain physical distancing whenever possible (including and not limited to; specialist teachers, ASC support and TOC's).

In a childcare setting considerations are noted of the importance of visual cueing and non-verbal communications as they play an important role in early learning and development ([as noted in the BCCDC Guidance Document](#)).

Additional information on mask use is available from the [BCCDC](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#).

How will physical distancing and limited contact be managed? Do they practice social distancing in Preschool?

In each preschool classroom, tables and play spaces are configured to promote personal space. Each student has their own "pod" including their own table, Montessori materials, art supplies, manipulatives and daycare supplies.

Limited contact is a top priority for the early learning teaching team when planning Preschool and Daycare programming. Teachers mindfully organize activities that encourage individual play and more space between children and staff, utilizing the outdoors whenever possible.

Within child care settings, physical distancing includes avoiding physical contact between staff, avoiding unnecessary physical contact between staff and children, minimizing close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions where possible, and encouraging everyone to spread out as much as possible within the space available. It is not necessary to attempt to eliminate all close contact

between children, recognizing the importance of children’s emotional, physical and developmental needs ([as remarked in BCCDC Guidance for Child Care Settings](#)).

The movement of groups of students around and between buildings and other campus locations is minimized and managed by a teacher. Directional indicators managing the flow of people are on entrances and exits, and floors and walls around each building.

Are there separate cohorts/ learning groups in Preschool or do all of the students mingle together?

We have grouped our Preschool community into two cohorts (or learning groups). Each cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the year and who primarily interact with each other during Preschool, Daycare & ASC. Cohorting smaller groups is recommended by the BCCDC’s Provincial Health Officer to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

Preschool learning group sizes are a maximum of 30 students, the homeroom teachers for each class are included in the learning group. We have specialist teachers and/or support teachers that follow [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for Child Care Settings](#) precautions to teach and support students in both cohorts within the preschool department.

What is the safest way to drop off and pick up my child?

One member of each family must accompany their child(ren) to the ELC and line up in a socially distanced manner, a teacher will welcome each student into the building during their specific time slot (see chart below). Students are asked to use the ELC’s exterior hand washing station prior to entering the ELC (when weather permits). Please be aware the ELC has one-way traffic, therefore, pick-up and drop-off doors will be located on either side of the ELC.

Drop-off & Pick-up Times	Cohort	Location
Drop-off: 8:00am - 8:15am	Aberdeen Hall’s Staff Students	ELC Upper Entrance Nearest to Dome
Drop-off: 8:15am - 8:30am	Students with Siblings in Junior or Senior School (regardless of last name)	ELC Upper Entrance Nearest to Dome
Drop-off: 8:30am - 8:45am	Remaining Students	ELC Upper Entrance Nearest to Dome
Pick-up: 11:30 - 11:45pm	Half-day Students	ELC Upper Exit Nearest to Sports Field
Pick-up: 3:30-3:45pm	Full-day Students	ELC Entrance Nearest to Sports Field
Pick-up: 3:30 - 5:00pm	ASC	ELC Lower Entrance

What personal hygiene measures will be in place for students and employees?

Hand washing will take place for both students and employees:

- after entering and before departing the school buildings
- before and after snacks and meals
- before and after outdoor play
- after using the washroom
- after using a tissue
- after coughing or sneezing
- when hands are visibly dirty
- before and after playing with manipulatives (ex playdough)
- at least once per two hours, managed by teachers

Additionally, teachers will wash their hands:

- before and after applying any First Aid to students or self
- after contact with bodily fluids (runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
- after cleaning tasks
- after handling garbage
- after removing gloves

Regular hand-washing breaks are encouraged and children are supervised and assisted in using hand sanitizer.

How will the school sanitize equipment and the rooms to ensure the environment is safe?

Thorough cleaning and disinfecting are undertaken in every classroom, hallway, and all common spaces in all buildings, daily.

Signage has been placed around the school reminding students and employees of enhanced cleaning and hygiene standards and how to follow them.

During the school day, teachers will assist with the cleaning routines inside their classroom in addition to the enhanced cleanings provided by custodians. These may include:

- Cleaning tabletops and chairs before and after snacks and lunch
- Sanitizing nap basket activities
- Refraining from the use of shared equipment and toys such as art supplies, Montessori equipment and toys unless it is designated for one
- All material and equipment is sanitized before being transferred to a different child's work station/ "pod"

Furthermore, the facilities department sanitizes high-touch areas of the ELC such as bathrooms, doorknobs and hallways each day on a regular basis.

Enhanced cleaning standards will meet or exceed the requirements of Worksafe BC and the guidelines for child care settings put forth by the BC Center for Disease Control, which is twice per day and when visibly dirty for cleaning and disinfecting highly touched surfaces and once per day for general cleaning and disinfecting.

How will you deal with the onset of illness during the school day?

If anyone on campus develops any infectious symptoms, respiratory or otherwise, Aberdeen Hall will complete the following steps, as directed by the BC Ministry of Health and BC Centre for Disease Control. Updates to this process will match Ministry updates:

- 1.** Immediately separate the symptomatic child from others in a supervised area.
 - 2.** Contact the child's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.
 - 3.** Where possible, maintain a two-metre distance from the ill child. If not possible, staff should wear a nonmedical mask or face covering if available and tolerated or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth.
 - 4.** Provide the child tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
 - 5.** Avoid touching the child's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene.
 - 6.** Once the child is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene.
 - 7.** Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the child was separated and any areas recently used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas). Parents or caregivers should pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.
- 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 for 24 hours after their symptoms have resolved.

[See Developing New Symptoms chart for details.](#)

What can my child bring to school? What about the application of sunscreen?

Personal belongings other than a backpack, jacket, runners, water bottle, lunch kit and small blanket may not be brought to school. Cutlery will not be provided, please send all-inclusive snacks. Please do not send anything else to school with your child unless it is specifically requested by their homeroom teacher. No personal toys of any kind will be allowed in school (stuffedies, toys etc).

Students are allowed to bring a small blanket in a ziplock/sealed bag, it will be sent home each week for laundering. Rest cots are sanitized after each use.

When necessary, please be sure to send your child to school with sunscreen applied to all visible skin as we plan to enjoy the outdoors as much as possible. Encouraging young students to be independent with sunscreen is made possible by sunscreen roll-on sticks, please provide a labelled

sunscreen stick for reapplication of sunscreen at school, teachers will support students to apply sunscreen if a roll-on applicator is provided.

When should my child be assessed?

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

- If the child's parent/guardian indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they may return to daycare. No assessment or note is required from a health care provider.
- If children have only one of the key symptoms without fever or difficulty breathing, children and staff can monitor at home for 24 hours. If symptoms improve, they can return to the child care facility without further assessment
- If symptoms include fever or difficulty breathing, two or more of the key symptoms, or if after 24 hours, symptoms remain the same or get worse, 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.

*In small children, difficulty breathing can look like breathing fast or working hard to breathe. Remember, if you think your child is ill, please keep them at home.

For more information, or to find a local collection centre in your area, visit the [BCCDC Testing page](#).

How will student mental health and well-being be attended to during this time?

Students will continue to have access to their homeroom teachers. Teachers are the first level of support for children and alert to signs of excessive worry, sadness or stress. Student's feelings are acknowledged and supported through homeroom teachers, resource teachers and/or the school counsellor. As always, any additional care plan will be communicated to parents.

Teachers will utilize natural outside space for fresh air and exercise, essential for health and wellbeing.

Resource Links

The Interior Health and the BC Center for Disease Control have provided parental & teacher support and up-to-date information for childcare settings.

- [BC Center for Disease Control Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings \(Updated Feb 2021\)](#)
- [Changes to Childcare Enrolment to Start in September](#)
- [Interior Health: Child Care Health and Safety](#)
- [BCCDC Child Care safety guide for parents, operators and staff.](#)

APPENDIX A: DAILY HEALTH SCREENING

The following is an example of a daily health check to determine if you should attend school that day.

Daily Health Check			
1. Key Symptoms of Illness*	Do you have any of the following new key symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
		YES	NO
	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

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 COVID-19.

APPENDIX B: DEVELOPING NEW SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL

<i>If a Child Develops Any New Symptoms of Illness While in a Child Care Setting</i>	<i>If a Staff Member Develops Any New Symptoms of Illness While in a Child Care Setting</i>
<p>Staff must take the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immediately separate the symptomatic child from others in a supervised area. 2. Contact the child's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible. 3. Where possible, maintain a two-metre distance from the ill child. 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 child tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene. 5. Avoid touching the child's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene. 6. Once the child is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene. 7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the child was separated and any areas recently used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas). <p>Parents or caregivers should 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 two metres from others. 3. Use a tissue or non-medical 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>Children and staff should return to the child care facility according to the guidance in this document.</p> <p>A health-care provider note should not be required for children or staff to return.</p>	