



Aberdeen Hall

Communicable Disease Prevention

Effective September 2022

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Please note:

These guidelines will be reviewed regularly and aligned with Interior Health-specific (“Regional Differences”) policies and procedures.

Communicable Disease Prevention

This document provides guidance for teachers, administrators, and support staff from Grade K- 12 schools of what infection prevention and exposure control measures should be implemented during the 2021-22 school year to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, including COVID-19. It also outlines how public health expects to manage COVID-19 cases impacting schools, if and when they occur.

- [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- [COVID 19: Public Health & Safety Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [Worksafe BC](#) Returning to Safe Operations & COVID-19 Safety Plan (K-12)

Note that the Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent School Authorities also serves as an overarching guiding document.

Schools can support students to practice personal preventive measures by:

- Having staff model these behaviours.
- Sharing reliable information, including from the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, to parents, families and caregivers.
- Promoting safety measures in the school through the use of visual aids like floor markings and signage. Staff should utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in personal prevention practices aligned with existing professional practices to address behaviour.

Approaches should not exclude students from participating in school or potentially result in stigma. Staff should also utilize a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g. gatherings and events) and interacting with other staff and students, including considerations around respecting others personal space.

Students and staff may choose to wear masks, face shields or other personal protective equipment in schools, and those choices must be respected.

Attendance/ Record Keeping / Visitors

Schools are responsible for ensuring that visitors are aware of communicable disease protocols and requirements, and have completed a daily health check prior to entering the school.

- Information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors should be posted by the entrance to the school, on the school's website and included in communications to students and families.
- Schools can return to routine sign in/sign out practices for visitors and staff not typically onsite. Schools do not need to keep a list of the date, names and contact information of visitors for communicable disease prevention purposes.
- Schools can return to routine pick up/drop off practices, though should still consider strategies to prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off time.
- Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others' personal space while on school grounds, including outside.

After hours community use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures:

- Use must occur in line with those activities permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders.
- Diligent hand hygiene
- Respiratory etiquette
- Ensuring participants stay home if they are feeling ill

- Where possible, limiting building access to only those areas required for the purpose of the activity

Daily Health Checks

A daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious.

- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school.
 - Schools no longer required to do health checks but parents should still utilise them to ascertain if a child should come to school. If ill, stay at home.
<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>.
 - Staff and other adults should complete a daily health check prior to entering the school.
 - If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school.

You are REQUIRED to assess your child's health *daily* for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease.
Parents/caregivers and students can utilize the provincial K-12 Health Check app for daily assessment of symptoms.

<https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s2>

Ventilation & Air Exchange

At this time, there is no evidence that a building's ventilation system, in good operating condition, is contributing to the spread of the virus.

During the school year the school will maintain HVAC systems for proper operation and ensure that the filters are upgraded to a minimum MERV 13 filter or higher.

Cleaning Standards & Routines

This summer a thorough cleaning and disinfecting has been undertaken of every classroom, hallway, and all common spaces in all buildings.

Signage has also 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 may 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
- Reminding students and assisting them in regular cleaning of their laptops (keyboard covers), pens and pencils, hands, etc..
- Refraining from or limiting the use of shared equipment such as class iMacs, 3-D printers, projection equipment, etc.

Enhanced cleaning standards will meet or exceed the requirements of Worksafe BC and the guidelines for school settings put forth by the Ministry of Health. Specifically:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least once in a 24-hour period. This includes items that only a single student uses, like an individual desk.
- In addition to the cleaning and disinfecting of the premises, cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces at least twice in 24 hours, including at least once during regular school hours.

The enhanced cleaning standards will be conducted according to the schedules outlined in Aberdeen Hall's Exposure Control Plan - STAGE 2 - Pandemic Influenza.

Gatherings & Events

For school gatherings and events that bring together multiple classes or other groupings of students (e.g., school assemblies, multiple classes doing a single activity, etc.) from the same school (but members of the school community beyond staff, students and necessary volunteers are not attending), there is not a specific capacity limit.

On March 10th 2022, the Provincial Health Officer announced the Gathering and Events Order requiring proof of vaccination for certain community-led gatherings and events would be lifted end of day on April 7th, 2022. At this point, schools can follow normal practices for welcoming visitors and the community use of schools.

When the Gatherings and Events Order requiring proof of vaccination for community-led gatherings and events is lifted, all school gatherings and events can return to 100% capacity.

School-led Gatherings and Events with Visitors	
While PHO Gatherings & Events Order is in place	After PHO Gatherings & Events Order is lifted (expected end of day April 7, 2022)
Schools should not implement proof of vaccination requirements and indoor capacity should not exceed 50 people or 50% operating capacity (whichever is greater)	All school gatherings and events can return to 100% capacity

Physical Distancing and Space Arrangement

Schools can return to classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches, though should still consider implementing strategies to help create space between people and to support students and staff using a trauma-informed approach:

Personal Items

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices, wind instruments).

Lockers can continue to be of use for personal items.

Curriculum/Programs and Activities

All curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with these guidelines, including school-led activities held off campus (e.g. sports academies, community-based programs/courses).

Schools should continue to implement ongoing communicable disease prevention practices (e.g. cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity.

Equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines outlined in this document.

Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles, instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between use. Hand hygiene should be practiced, including whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Field Trips

Field Trips will follow existing policies and procedures and will continue to require Principal approval

Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- For transportation, including school bus transportation and public transit, see guidance in the transportation section in this document.
- Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines.
- Alignment with applicable local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.
- Schools should make every effort to avoid venue/locations that place additional requirements that could prevent a person from being able to participate, particularly students. If this is not possible (and the field trip/travel cannot occur otherwise), schools can require participants to confirm they are able to meet the additional requirements (e.g., are able to provide proof of vaccination).
- Overnight trips will be planned with the [BCCDC](#) and [BC Camps Association](#) guidance

Music Programs

- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after music equipment use.
 - Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.
 - The B.C. Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C have also developed 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 this document.

P.E /Health Education Classes

- Spread out students and staff within available space, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible.
- Shared equipment can be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document.
 - Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball), as well as proper respiratory etiquette.
 - Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

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.
- Sport activities should be held outside whenever possible.
- See the Visitor Access/Community Use section for more information on protocols for spectators.

Bus Transportation

The following strategies are recommended for student transportation on buses:

- Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document.
- Bus drivers should clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips.
- Drivers are encouraged to regularly use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips.
- Bus drivers, teachers and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 may choose to wear masks or face coverings when they are on the bus.

- 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 the Daily Health Check section for more information). If a child is sick, they must not take the bus or go to school.
- Students should clean their hands before and after taking the bus.
- Spread passengers out if empty seats are available.
- Open windows when the weather permits.
- Bus drivers and students should be encouraged to practice respiratory etiquette while on the bus.

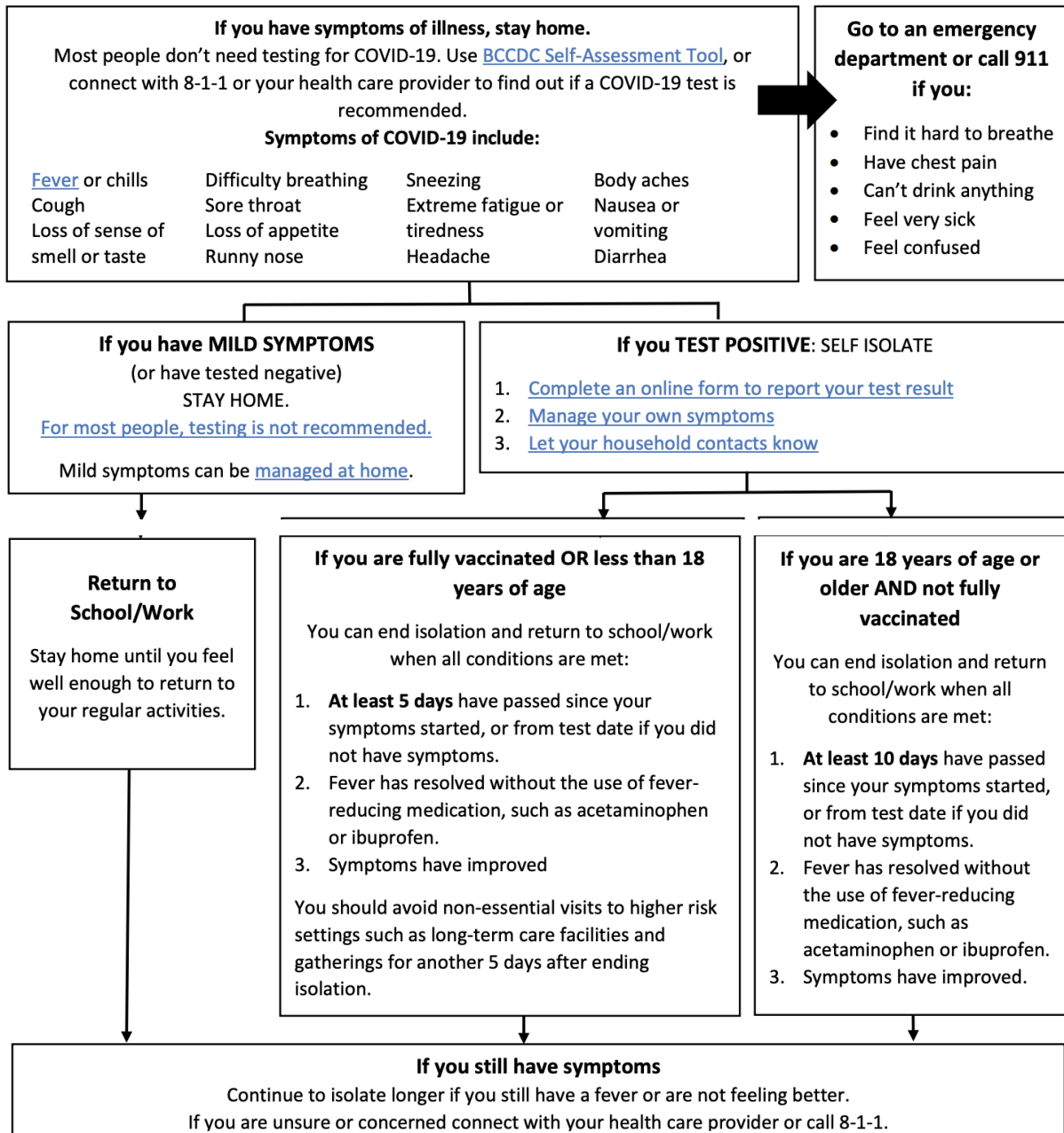
Food Service

The hot lunch program will begin on January 17, 2022. The kitchen staff and school will follow the [Food Safety Measures and Policies](#).

Return to School after Illness

When a student, staff or other adult can return to school depends on if they have tested positive for COVID-19. The table on the next page is summarized from BCCDC and is accurate as of March, 2022. Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online Self-Assessment Tool, or call 8-1-1 or their health care provider when they are experiencing symptoms of illness. BCCDC provides information about COVID-19, including what to do if a person suspects they have the virus, and what actions to take based on a COVID-19 test result.

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)

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water or using an effective hand sanitizer reduces the spread of illness. Follow these guidelines to ensure effective hand hygiene in schools:

- Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene:
 - Use portable hand-washing sites and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol, where sinks are not available.
 - Schools should use commercial hand sanitizer products that have met Health Canada's requirements and are authorized for sale in Canada.
 - Hand-washing should be encouraged upon school entry and before/after breaks and eating, using washroom and using frequently touched shared equipment.

Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly. For example, display hand hygiene posters for students or adults at handwashing sites. Ensure hand-washing supplies are always well stocked including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.

Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed. If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating microbes. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty. If it is not available, use an alcoholbased hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.

Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff should:

- Cough and sneeze into their elbow, sleeve, or a tissue.
- Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.

PPE

The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and respected. Refer to Supportive School Environments for more information. Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who become ill at school.

Supportive School Environments

Personal Prevention Practices:

Signage will be placed around the school with reminders on hand hygiene. Students will be reminded in homeroom and at assemblies about washing their hands and using hand

sanitizer, maintaining physical space where possible, preventing crowding, mask requirements and other important protocols that are implemented.

Personal Space:

All staff and students will be encouraged to and provided with, whenever possible, their own personal space to work within, whether in a classroom, office, etc.

Positive & Inclusive Approaches:

All students and staff will be treated with respect and compassion at all times. Approaches to training, preventative measures and implementation of policies and procedures will be undertaken with student and staff well-being at the forefront.