

# **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION SAFETY PLAN**

**(FORMERLY THE COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN)**

**Revised April 2022**

## **Step 1: Assessment of workplace risks**

Although official protocols and guidelines have been relaxed, the virus that causes COVID-19 continues to spread in several ways. It can spread in droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face.

The risk of person-to-person transmission increases the closer you come to other people, the more time you spend near them, and the more people you come near.

The risk of surface transmission increases when many people contact the same surface and when those contacts happen over short periods of time.

The closer together employees are and the longer they are close to each other, the greater the risk.

To assess the risks in our workplace:

- We have involved employees and supervisors in identifying the risks in our workplace.
- We have identified areas where people gather (entryways, hallways, washrooms, classrooms).
- We have identified job tasks and processes where employees are close to one another or members of the public (students and families).
- We have identified the tools, materials and equipment that employees share while working.
- We have identified surfaces that people touch often, such as doorknobs, banisters, door trim and light switches.

## **Step 2: Implementation of protocols to reduce the risks**

We have selected and will implement protocols to minimize the risks of transmission. We have reviewed K-12 education-specific and early childhood program-specific protocols on Ministry websites and on worksafe.bc.com. We have also consulted with an Environmental Health Officer from Island Health.

Protocols will be aimed at:

- 1) reducing the risk of person-to-person transmission (see below) and
- 2) Reducing the risk of surface transmission through effective cleaning and hygiene practices (see below).

### **First level protection (elimination): Limit the number of people at the workplace and ensure physical distance whenever possible**

- We continue to limit the number of adults in the school during school hours and require all observers to wear masks while observing a classroom. All staff model personal prevention measures (e.g., hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette), and assist younger students as needed. We have reviewed the Protocols for K-12 education as set out by Worksafe BC and expected by the Ministry of Education.
- We have restricted access to the school, have classroom windows open daily,
- have protocols and visual and verbal reminders about hand hygiene,
- Implemented strategies to limit crowding at drop-off and pick-up times,
- masks are no longer mandated but can be worn by choice.
- affixed signage to bulletin boards and walls reminding staff and students to wash their hands
- Cleaning and sanitizing is done according to the guidelines set out by Public Health and the Ministry of Education.
- The middle school van is disinfected after each use.
- Our Covid-19 Safety Plan has been posted on the main bulletin board, our school website, and posted on our Parent Portal (Transparent Classroom) for all parents to see.
- Visitors are not permitted without appointment, and parents/guardians do not enter the building at drop-off and pick-up times.

### **Second level protection (engineering): Barriers and partitions**

- masks are no longer mandated but can be worn by choice.

### **Third level protection (administrative): Rules and guidelines**

- We have identified rules and guidelines for how employees should conduct themselves while in school.
- We have clearly communicated these rules and guidelines to employees through a combination of documents, meetings and signage. We have posted and established cleaning practices. Children do not share food.

### **Fourth level protection: PPE-Using masks (optional measure in addition to other control measures)**

- masks are no longer mandated but can be worn by choice.

### **Effective cleaning and hygiene practices**

- We have reviewed the information on cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. In the Provincial Covid 19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf> This has been posted where staff can see it.
- We have implemented cleaning protocols for all common areas and surfaces — The facility is cleaned, and garbage is taken out nightly; Day staff disinfect high-touch items mid-day, and as needed. We have purchased an electrostatic machine to facilitate cleaning of classroom materials.
- Employees who are cleaning have adequate training and materials.
- We have removed unnecessary items to simplify the cleaning process — e.g., play dough, dress-up clothes, learning materials. a
- Staff wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Staff wash their hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Our workplace has enough hand-washing facilities on site for all our employees and students.
- Hand-washing locations are visible and easily accessed.
- We have policies that specify when employees must wash their hands and we have communicated good hygiene practices to employees. Frequent hand-washing and good hygiene practices are essential to reduce the spread of the virus.
- Staff oversee student hand-washing, at times prescribed.
- Staff, students and parents have been reassured that playgrounds are a safe environment, and we will encourage appropriate hand hygiene practices before, during, after outdoor play.

## **Step 3: Policies**

We have developed the necessary policies to manage our workplace, including policies around who can be at the workplace, how to address illness that arises at the workplace, and how employees and students can be kept safe in adjusted working conditions.

- Employees and students showing symptoms of COVID-19 are prohibited from the workplace. Symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache; Anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate; Anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada or who has had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case must self-isolate and monitor for symptoms.
- Visitors are not permitted to enter our workplace without an appointment and must wear a mask.
- First aid attendants have been provided OFAA protocols for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We have a working alone policy in place (if needed).
- We have a work from home policy in place (if needed).
- We ensure employees have the training and strategies required to address the risk of violence that may arise as customers and members of the public adapt to restrictions or modifications to the workplace.
- Our staff policy addresses employees who may start to feel ill at work. It includes the following:
  - Sick employees should report to the most senior employee on site, even with mild symptoms.
  - Sick employees will be asked to wash or sanitize their hands, provided with a mask, and be isolated.
  - Ask the worker to go straight home [and consult the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool, or call 811 for further guidance related to testing and self-isolation.]
  - If the worker is severely ill (e.g., difficulty breathing, chest pain), call 911.
  - Clean and disinfect any surfaces that the ill worker has come into contact with.

## **Step 4: Communication plan and training**

Everyone entering the workplace knows how to keep themselves safe while at our workplace. There are signs posted and hand sanitizer stations.

- We have a procedure to ensure every worker is trained in workplace policies and procedures.
- All employees and student families have received the handbook containing policies for staying home when sick.
- We have posted signage at the workplace, including effective hygiene practices.
- Administration will monitor employees and the workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.

## **Step 5: Monitor and update our plans as necessary**

Things may change as the virus progresses. If we identify a new area of concern, or if it seems like something isn't working, we will take steps to update our policies and procedures and will involve employees in this process.

- We have a plan in place to monitor risks, and make changes to our policies and procedures as necessary. (Daily attendance of students and staff to monitor absentee numbers)
- Employees know who to go to with health and safety concerns.
- When resolving safety issues we always involve other employees, as appropriate.

## **Step 6: Assess and address risks from resuming operations**

If our workplace has not been operating at full capacity for a period of time during the COVID-19 pandemic, we may need to manage risks arising from restarting our operations.

- We have training for staff taking on new roles or responsibilities.
- We have training around changes to our business, such as new equipment, processes, or products.
- We have reviewed the start-up requirements for equipment, and machinery that have been out of use. (photocopier, lawn mower, etc.)