



Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

The purpose of this document is to:

Share and communicate St. Mary's School's steps to maintain a safe and healthy school environment by minimizing the risk of spreading COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, and includes both ongoing measures (e.g. hand hygiene, cleaning) and additional measures to be implemented as advised by public health.

A) Public Entry / Access to School

- 1) Public entry of St. Mary's School is limited. Parents and others are asked to call instead of visiting the school if possible.
- 2) All visitors will use the main entrance to the school. Students and staff enter the school at their designated area.
- 3) WorkSafe health signs are posted (see WorkSafe BC resources) at entrances and throughout the school.
- 4) Upon arrival, everyone must wash their hands or they will use hand sanitizer at the entrance.
- 5) Everyone entering the building must wear a mask; disposable masks are available at the office.
- 6) All visitor names, dates, and contact information will be kept for a minimum of 45 days.
- 7) The office has plexiglass barriers in multiple areas to provide further protection to office staff.

B) Health Check for Students and Staff Entering School

- 1) All students and staff who have symptoms or have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days or were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate.
- 2) Parents / caregivers are required to assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school (self-assessment tool:
<https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1>)
- 3) If a student develops symptoms while at home, parents / 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 their symptoms have resolved.
- 4) Staff will assess themselves daily for symptoms of the common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school (self-assessment tool:
<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>).

C) Students who Develop Symptoms while at School

- 1) The symptomatic student is immediately separated from others and moved to a supervised area (sick room).
- 2) The student's parent / caregiver is contacted to pick up the student as soon as possible. Parents / Caregivers will be expected to pick up their child as soon as possible if notified they are ill.
- 3) Staff will avoid touching the student's body fluids. If they do, diligent hand hygiene will be practiced.
- 4) After the student is picked up, staff will practice diligent hand hygiene.
- 5) Staff will clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated (sick room) and any other areas used by the student.

D) Student Management: Hygiene

- 1) Students wash their hands (at a minimum):
 - a) Upon arriving at school;
 - b) Before eating and drinking;
 - c) After using the toilet;
 - d) After sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue;
 - e) When hands are visibly dirty; and
 - f) When moving between different learning environments (classrooms, indoor/outdoor, etc).
- 2) Staff are encouraged to assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- 3) If a sink is not available, 60% alcohol based hand sanitizer can be used.
- 4) Food and drink will not be shared between students.
- 5) All fruits and vegetables should be washed with soap and cold water before consuming. This is expected to be done at home before the student arrives at school.
- 6) Food items and containers will be kept in the student's backpack, which only the student touches. Students must be able to open their own food containers and packages.

E) Student Management: Physical Distancing

- 1) Students are reminded to respect others' personal space.
- 2) Staff will use available space to spread people out, both in learning environments and for gatherings and events where possible.
- 3) Students are reminded to keep their hands to themselves. Parents / caregivers are asked to reiterate the same reminders with their children before arriving at school.
- 4) Staff may consider providing work space outside when practical.
- 5) Staff may incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between students and staff.

F) School Structure / Organization

- 1) Reasonable efforts are made to minimize the number of different staff members that interact with groups of students throughout the day, while still keeping work load in mind.
- 2) Consideration is given to different classroom configurations to maintain distance between students or different locations in the school.

- 3) Primary and intermediate students each have designated outside areas to play in at recess and lunch recess.

G) Staff Management: Physical Distancing

- 1) Occupancy limits for shared spaces (staff room, copy room) are established and posted. See WorkSafe BC posters / resources.
- 2) Staff are asked to continue to respect the personal space and comfort levels of others.
- 3) Staff are required to wear a mask at all times except when:
 - a) There is a barrier in place
 - b) Eating or drinking
 - c) Outdoors
 - d) When providing a service to a person with a disability or a diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions, and/or lip reading/movements are important.
 - e) A mask can temporarily be removed to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (ex. Engaging in high-intensity physical activity).
- 4) St. Mary's School is not holding assemblies, school Mass, and other school-wide events to avoid a large number of people gathered in one place.

H) Staff Management: Hygiene

- 1) Hand-washing supplies are available at all times (soap, clean towels, paper towels, 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
- 2) Handwashing signs are posted near all sinks. All staff will wash their hands frequently to reduce the risk of transmission.
- 3) Other hygiene practice signage is posted (see resources from WorkSafe BC).

I) Cleaning / Disinfecting During School Operation (On-Site Staff)

- 1) Common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products are being used.
- 2) Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day, including (but not limited to) door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, stair railings, shared office spaces, keyboards, and communication devices.
- 3) Garbage containers are emptied daily.
- 4) Staff are wiping down shared spaces (shared desks) at the end of their shift.
- 5) Pillow cases and blankets (from the sick room) are laundered after each use.

J) Cleaning / Disinfecting After School Hours (Custodian)

- 1) St. Mary's School is cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BC CDC's Cleaning and Disinfecting for Public Settings (http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf).
- 2) Cleaning practices are in line with the PHO's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19_child_care_guidance_-_2020_may_15_final.pdf).

K) Communication

- 1) St. Mary's will maintain contact with Northern Health as directed.
- 2) Upon return to the workplace, a health and safety meeting is held to review workplace practices.
- 3) Daily check-ins with staff to provide new information and review concerns.
- 4) Parents and caregivers are provided a clear understanding that students must stay home if they are sick.
- 5) St. Mary's School is keeping parents / caregivers informed about extra precautions occurring in the school setting.
- 6) All information relating to communicable diseases is posted in the staffroom.

L) Concerns about Unsafe Work

- 1) St. Mary's School Staff are to raise safety concerns in writing via email to the Principal.
- 2) Staff have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. An undue hazard is an "unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate" hazard. For COVID-19, an "undue hazard" would be one where a worker's job role places them at increased risk of exposure and adequate controls are not in place to protect them from that exposure.
- 3) If the matter is not resolved, the worker and the supervisor / employer must contact WorkSafe BC (<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/contact-us/departments-and-services/health-safety-prevention>). A prevention officer will consult with workplace parties to determine whether there is an undue hazard and issue orders if necessary.
- 4) Workers / employers with questions or concerns about workplace exposure to the COVID-19 virus can call WorkSafe BC's Prevention Information Line at 1-888-621-SAFE to speak to a prevention officer to have questions answered. If required, a prevention officer will be assigned to assess the health and safety risk at your workplace.

M) Masks

- 1) Masks are required for all visitors, staff, and students in grades K-12. Some exemptions apply:
 - a) A person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
 - b) A person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without assistance of another person;
 - c) If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
 - d) If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. engaging in high-intensity physical activity);
 - e) A person is eating or drinking;
 - f) A person is behind a barrier;
 - g) While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

N) Vaccinations

- 1) For your information, please go to the [Northern Health website](#) for times and locations for vaccinations.

O) Regional Differences

- 1) Local public health orders may be placed for entire regions or communities, or for specific settings or activities. St. Mary's will follow all additional public health orders and will follow additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk. This could include, but is not limited to: increased cleaning, room reconfigurations, visitor restrictions, and limits on gatherings or events.

P) Staff Mental Health Resources

- 1) COVID-19 Psychological First Aid Service: Information and Signup (British Columbia Psychological Association) – Free virtual counselling provided by registered psychologists. <https://www.psychologists.bc.ca/covid-19-resources>
- 2) COVID-19: Staying Well In Uncertain Times (Canadian Mental Health Association – B.C.) – Tips and information on how to reduce and manage anxiety in the workplace due to the COVID-19 outbreak. <https://cmha.bc.ca/covid-19/>
- 3) Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression (Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions) - Tips and resources on things we can do as individuals and collectively to deal with stress and support one another during these challenging times. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health-safety/covid19_stressmanagement_5_accessible.pdf
- 4) Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak (World Health Organization) – These mental health considerations were developed by the WHO's Department of Mental Health and Substance Use as messages targeting different groups to support for mental and psychosocial well-being during COVID-19 outbreak. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf>
- 5) Mental Health and COVID-10 (Conference Board of Canada) – Videos on different aspects of mental health, including coping with anxiety, job loss, and dealing with isolation. [https://www.conferenceboard.ca/\(X\(1\)S\(1tloqepagnh0xli4w2hckucy\)\)/insights/covid-19?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1](https://www.conferenceboard.ca/(X(1)S(1tloqepagnh0xli4w2hckucy))/insights/covid-19?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1)
- 6) Taking Care of Your Mental Health (COVID-19) (Public Health Agency of Canada) – Tips and resources for taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/mental-health.html>

Q) References

- 1) COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings. BCCDC/Ministry of Health. May 15, 2020. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19_k-12_school_guidance_-_2020_may_15_-_final.pdf
- 2) WorkSafe BC: COVID-19 and returning to safe operation – Phase 2. <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe->

- [operation?origin=s&returnurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.worksafebc.com%2Fen%2Fsearch%23q%3DCOVID-19%20and%20returning%20to%20safe%20operation%20-%20Phase%202%20sort%3Drelevancy%26f%3Alanguage-facet%3D%5BEnglish%5D](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/search?q=COVID-19%20and%20returning%20to%20safe%20operation%20-%20Phase%202%20sort%3Drelevancy%26f%3Alanguage-facet%3D%5BEnglish%5D)
- 3) WorkSafe BC: Education (K-12): Protocols for returning to operation.
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/education>
 - 4) BC CDC's Cleaning and Disinfecting for Public Settings: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf
 - 5) COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings:
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19_child_care_guidance_-_2020_may_15_-_final.pdf
 - 6) BC Government Self-Assessment Tool: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>.