



St. Mary's School Communicable Disease Exposure Plan

Updated Oct. 2, 2021

A review of health and safety documents released by the Ministry of Education, BCCDC, and WorksafeBC have informed our Communicable Disease Plan. The key principles are listed below:

- Daily Health Checks continue to be required for all staff, students, or visitors entering the school building.
- School staff and visitors are required to wear masks indoors.
- **Kindergarten to Grade 12** are required to wear masks indoors and on school buses.
- Physical distancing guidelines will be replaced by practices that respect personal space through effective utilization of school space and student movement. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.
- There will be no Ministry prescribed cohorts or learning groups.
- There will be baseline PHO orders that will apply across the province but local health authorities may also activate medical health orders that reflect their region's context and public health experience.
- Diligent hand hygiene practices will continue throughout the day.
- Cleaning protocols will continue to be employed throughout the day.
- School to continue to ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation systems are working. Windows will be opened when weather permits.
- Extra-curricular school activities will resume and will be governed by the wider provincial or local health authority orders.
- The BC vaccination passport requirement commences on Sept.13th but does not apply to regular school settings.
- Further clarification is needed on school events that may draw parents and guests to school sites and for school field trips to indoor public spaces.

Access to School Site

During School Hours

- Visitors will be limited from entering the school. A telecommunication system is available at the front door for visitors to communicate with the front office. In-person visits should be for essential purposes and arranged in advance by appointment. Parents volunteering for yard duty or the library program will have school access to the grounds and library to complete their hours. Parents can drop off lunches, supplies, and instruments at the front door. If parents/caregivers need to contact the school principal or their child's teachers, they will be directed to do so by phone or email. Virtual appointments can also be arranged in advance.

- Parents with permission or appointments will be asked to identify themselves at the intercom and are made aware of health and safety protocols and requirements prior to entering the school (e.g., respecting personal space, requirement to wear a non-medical mask inside the school, etc.). Parents report to the office on the second floor once permitted in the building and sign in at the cabinet outside the office. Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others' personal space while on school grounds including outside.

After Hours Community Use of Facilities Permitted 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.
- Community users are responsible for collecting names and contact information of participants to support contact tracing activities by the local health authority.

Office Staff

- Will keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors and staff who are not typically onsite who entered the school over the past 45 days.
- Will monitor school attendance to track student and/or staff absence and compare against usual absenteeism patterns at school.

Arrival Time and Procedure

- Parents are expected to complete the Daily Health Check on their child prior to sending their child to school at arrival locations.
- Parents/caregivers and other visitors should **respect personal distance** and avoid crowding while dropping off their child(ren) outside.

Please take note of the following arrival locations:

Morning

- Grade 1-7 students will be dropped off at any of the three back playground gates starting at 8:30. Parents are not permitted on the playground at this time. Students stay outside in the back playground (rain or shine) until 8:50. At that time students will line up with their class at a designated area and be directed to walk into the school in an orderly manner.
- Kindergarten students will be dropped off by the front gym doors. At 8:50 the class teacher will open the gym door and walk with the students to the Kindergarten

classroom. Parents/caregivers wait and supervise their child until the gym doors open at the start of school (8:50).

- If a student is late, the parent would notify the school before arrival and report to the main school door for check-in. Please do your best to arrive on time.
- Before School Club arrivals will ring the bell for the library at the main school door starting at 7:30 a.m. and a staff member will come down to escort your child up to the library.
- All staff and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are required to wear a mask
- Students will wash/sanitize their hands before class begins.

Dismissal Time and Procedure

- Grade 1-7 students will be dismissed at 3:00 p.m. from the back playground according to gate assignment. Please note the following:

Grades 1 to 3 will be picked up at the Austrey Ave. Alley gate

Grades 4 & 5 will be picked up at East side gate by school walkway

Grades 6 & 7 will be picked up at the main rolling gate by Clive Street

- We ask that parents stay outside the gates for pick up. All students need to be picked up in a timely manner (within a few minutes of the dismissal time).
- Kindergarten students will be dismissed from the front gym door (by the front parking lot) (during and after the gradual entry period). **Exception:** Families that have a kindergarten student and children in other grades can pick up all their children at the gym door.
- Staff will be present on the playground during student departure.
- Parents/caregivers and other visitors need to respect personal space and avoid crowding while picking up their child(ren) outside.
- Children are not to play after school on the school grounds but are expected to go straight home.
- After School Club students will wait at a designated spot (3:00 p.m.) beside the Fine Arts Annex Building in the back playground for pick up with Ms.Olesiak.

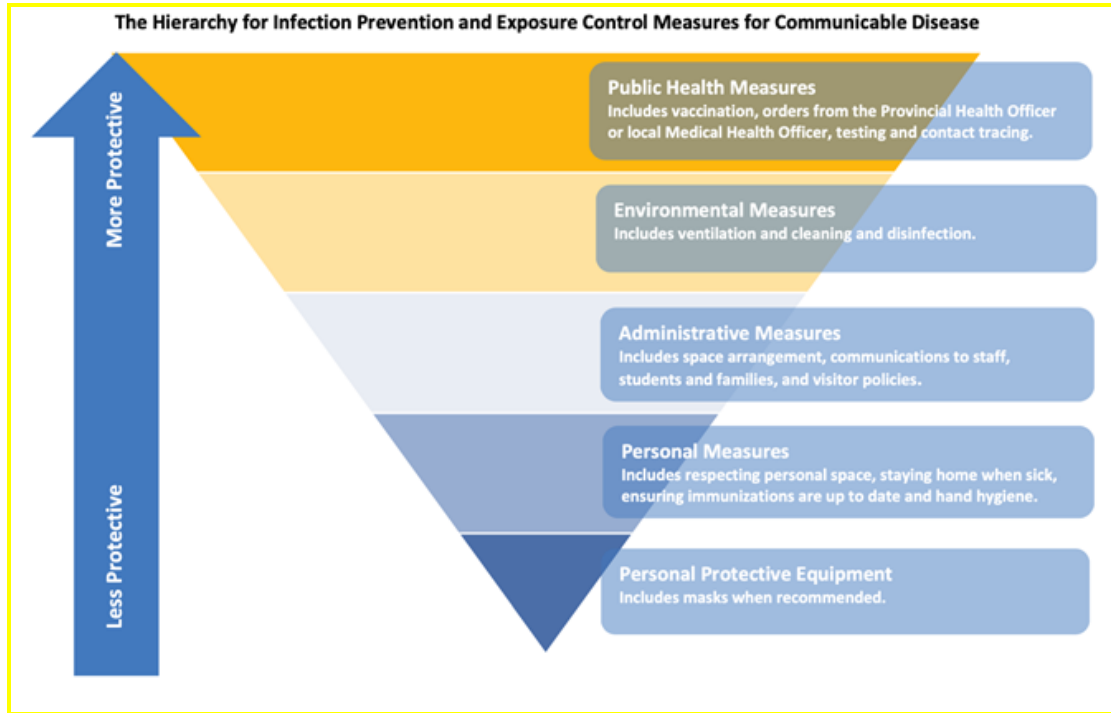
Recess & Lunch Breaks

- Classes will have staggered recess and lunch breaks according to a schedule to limit numbers outside.
- Students will be expected to have their own lunch and snacks packed in their school bags for the day.
- Students are not allowed to share food.
- Recess and Lunch breaks are staggered and the playground is divided into three zones.
- A schedule will determine time and location where students will play. Students will rotate zones periodically.

Respecting Personal Space & Minimizing Physical Contact

- Respecting personal space signage will be visible at all school entrances by posters, signboards and floor decals.
Whenever possible, staff and students are expected to respect personal space in all areas of the school.
- Staff and other adults should seek to reduce the number of close, face-to-face interactions with each other at all times, even if wearing a non-medical mask. This includes break times and in meetings.
- OFFA protocols followed as a guide for employers and occupational first aid attendee. (24 employees are certified)
- Pylons/markings will be placed outside for family name for departure times as well as zones in the playground
- Avoid close greetings (hugs, handshakes, etc.)
- Regular reminders of “keeping your hands to yourself”
- Spread out and consider a different learning environment - classroom desk/table formations, playground, etc. allowing for the distance between students and staff.
- Take students outside as often as possible.
- Organize learning activities and unstructure time outside.
- Use activities that involve movement; group sports activities can be done but in an organized and thoughtful manner.
- Implement appropriate hand hygiene practices, before, during and after outdoor play.
- Intra- and inter-school extracurricular activities and clubs can occur in alignment with the guidelines and requirements of local, regional, and provincial public health recommendations for Orders for community gatherings and events.

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 and will include:

Staff

- Daily Health Check: Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school (reference health check at home). Should symptoms be present, staff must not report for work.
- Staff will do their part to keep themselves and others safe and healthy by practising good hand hygiene.
- To encourage respectful distance between students and staff, staff will continue to implement the following: utilize floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding (i.e. in the break room by the photocopier, etc.).
- Staff are required to wear face masks when indoors, unable to maintain a respectful distance, and a barrier is not present.
- Staff should practice respectful distancing for face to face interaction, whenever possible.
- If a staff member exhibits symptoms they would report to the Office. (Tissues would be provided to ensure their use with respiratory etiquette. Proper disposal of the tissue and hand hygiene should be performed after coughing or sneezing).

Personal Items:

Teachers will implement strategies to manage the flow of students around lockers to minimize crowding and allow for people passing through.

The use of water fountains is not limited.

At the School Level

Students/Parents/Families

- Daily Health Check: Parents and caregivers need to assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school. Parents/caregivers can utilize the provincial [K-12 Health Check](#) for daily assessment of symptoms. The school will not need to confirm a daily health check has been done. Nobody should come to school if they are sick or otherwise directed to self-isolate by public health (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms). Staff, students or visitors who become sick while at school/work will be sent home as soon as possible.
- Students must sanitize their hands at the door before proceeding to their classroom.

Students

- If a staff member notices symptoms from a child, the staff member would report these observations immediately to Administration/Office staff. Students would be sent to the office where they would be supervised by office staff. The office will call the parent to arrive as soon as possible when notified their child is ill. Parent(s) will need to have a plan in place. COVID-19 Gargle kits are available at the office and can be taken home for the student to complete and returned to a Life Lab for results.
- Students need to put on a mask immediately and have them wait in front of the office for pick up. Apply a respectful distance, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene principles while waiting for pick up. Avoid touching a student's body fluids (mucous/saliva). Wash hands thoroughly.
- Staff member or custodian to clean/disinfect the area where the child was relocated.

At the Public Health Level

- If a staff or student in a school is confirmed by public health as positive for COVID-19, public health will work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken, including if any staff or students who have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate, and if other staff and students' families should be notified.
- If the household member tests positive for COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on quarantine or self-isolation and when they may return to school.

- If a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, St. Mary's will provide notification as directed by public health.

The following students, staff and other persons must stay home and self-isolate as per public health direction:

- A person confirmed by public health as a case of COVID-19; or
- A person confirmed by public health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19; or
- A person who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

Anyone required to self isolate will be supported by public health. Additional information is available from BCCDC.

If the staff or student (or their parent) indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they can continue to come to school. No assessment or note should be required from a health provider.

Those experiencing symptoms of illness can also use the BC Self-Assessment Tool.

At the Home Level

- Children with common cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19.
- Self-isolation is also advised for those who are considered a close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness
- If concerned, parents can be advised to contact 8-1-1, or the local public health unit to seek further input. They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.

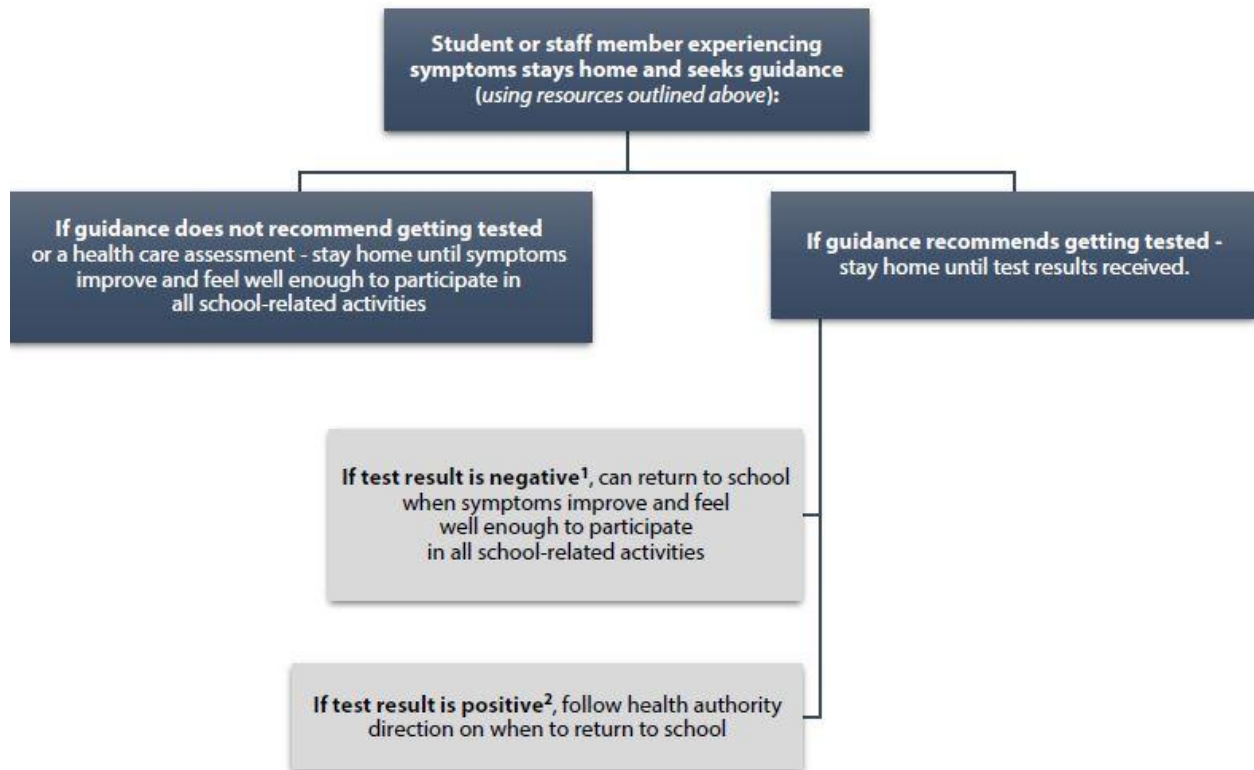
Returning to School After Sickness

When a staff, student or other person entering the school can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced as outlined in [When To Get Tested for COVID-19](#) resource.

If based on their symptoms a test is recommended (i.e. the guidance includes 'get tested'), the person must stay home until they receive their test result.

- If the test is negative, they can return to school when symptoms improve and they feel well enough
- If the test is positive, they must follow directions from public health on when they can return to school.

Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BC Self-Assessment Tool app [K-12 Health Check](#) or call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance.



Environmental Measures

Good cleaning and disinfection are essential to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in BC.

- Daytime custodian cleaning hired to sanitize and clean frequently touched surfaces throughout the day: To wipe down desk tops and tables during breaks and lunch, clean washrooms after breaks and during the day, wipe all light switches, door handles, handrails every hour, lunch rooms. Washroom and classroom doors will remain open to minimize touching of surfaces.
- Use of school-sanctioned and approved cleaning materials. General cleaning products will be available and accessible for staff in their classrooms and hallways. Staff will participate in some cleaning in their own work spaces. Specialized products will be used by janitorial staff and kept in the janitor's closets.
- Fixed playground equipment will be cleaned and sanitized daily.
- Garbage and paper recycling emptied daily.
- Wear protective gear (gloves, masks, etc.) when cleaning blood or bodily fluids (runny noses, vomit, etc.)
- Wash hands before and after removing gloves.

School Bus:

- Open windows when the weather permits.
- Bus will be cleaned and disinfected according to the BCCDC's standards.
- Bus will be cleaned and sanitized before and after use
- Students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering when they are on the bus.
- Staff wear masks during the trip.
- Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask or a face covering on school buses except while driving. The driver may wear a face shield in addition, but must wear a non-medical mask under the face shield.
- Masks should be put on before loading and taken off after offloading.
- Staff and students will wash hands before they leave the school prior to taking the bus and when they get back to school.
- Students can use hand sanitizer during trips.
- Students will be loaded from the back to the front of the bus and offloaded from front to back.
- Passengers will be spread out if empty seats are available.

Carpooling

Schools should share the following guidance with staff and families regarding carpooling arrangements (personal or school-related):

- Spread out vehicle occupants as much as possible.
- Travel with the same people whenever possible.
- Set the vehicle's ventilation to bring in fresh outside air, and do not recirculate the air.
- Open windows when the weather allows.
- Clean hands before and after trips.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly.

For carpooling related to school activities, students, staff and other adults must follow the mask requirements outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment section. For personal carpooling, as per public health recommendations, school-aged children and adults are encouraged to wear masks while carpooling (masks are not suggested when carpooling with members of the same household).

Buildings and Classrooms:

- Students & Staff are to wash their hands/sanitize prior to and after entering or leaving the building. Follow distinct markings and signs in the hallways for proper hallway flow. Respecting personal space and hands to ourselves.

Entering Classes:

- Try to refrain from touching doorknobs and light switches.
- Upon entering the classrooms, staff & students must wash/sanitize their hands.
- Respect personal space.
- Put away their coats, all supplies, backpacks and lunches in their cubby or locker.
- Students may enter one door and exit from the other as determined by the classroom teacher.

Staff Washrooms/Meeting Rooms (upstairs and downstairs)

- Wash hands before entering and when exiting

Learning Resource Centre (LRC):

- Students & Staff are to wash their hands/sanitize prior to and leaving LRC.
- Try to refrain from touching doorknobs and light switches.
- Respect personal space
- Students bring all of their own supplies needed for sessions; laptops, tables and chairs disinfected after each use.
- When more than one student or staff/student are working at a table, use the safety plexiglass barrier to separate.
- All staff and students wear masks.

Music Program (Fine Arts Annex):

- Use the right door to enter and left to exit.
- Staff and students sanitize their hands prior and after entering or leaving the building.
- Respect personal space as you sit in designated chairs or on carpet area
- Room specifics to be determined by Music Teacher adhering to work safe and provincial guidelines.
- **K-12 students and staff must wear masks when indoors and a barrier is not present.** Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument), but must be worn while singing.
- 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.**
*I added this in even though it wasn't highlighted in the Oct.1 updates

Church Basement:

- The staff & students should wash/sanitize their hands prior to entering the church basement and when leaving.
- The use of equipment should be individual, minimal to no sharing.
- Respect personal space

School Library:

School libraries are open and book exchange can continue to occur during stages 1 to 4.

At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing/return of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

- Students & staff wash their hands/sanitize prior to and after entering or leaving the library.
- Respect personal distance.
- Room specifics will be determined by the library teacher adhering to work safe and provincial guidelines.

Students and staff should practise diligent hand washing:

- before and after handling shared equipment/resources;
- whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. books, magazines, worksheets, etc.) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) are low risk items. Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as normal. There is no need to clean, disinfect or quarantine these items for any period of time.

For information on cleaning, including technological devices, see the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section.

A barrier of transparent material at the library check out desk has been installed with guidance from WorkSafeBC on designing effective barriers.

Physical and Health Education (PHE)/Outdoor Programs:

- Spaces are created between students and staff and encourage outdoor activities and programs as much as possible
- K-12 teachers will plan physical activities that respect personal space
- K-12 staff are required to wear masks during PHE/outdoor program classes when they are indoors **and a barrier is not present.**
- Shared equipment can 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:

- Programs, activities (e.g. intramurals, sports team practices and games) and sports academies can occur if:
 - Activities do not involve prolonged physical contact (i.e. physical contact beyond a brief moment).
 - Schools are encouraged to adapt activities/sports as needed to reduce physical contact
 - The EAC recommends that there are no spectators at indoor sporting events at this time.
 - Further clarification is needed on school events that may draw parents and guests to school sites and for school field trips to indoor public spaces.

Masks are worn by K-12 **students**, staff and other adults when they are indoors, unable to respect personal space and a barrier is not present.

Use of Devices:

- Ensure school devices are up to date and have the necessary programs for remote learning.
- 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.

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.

Respiratory Etiquette:

Students & Staff should:

- Cover the mouth and nose during coughing or sneezing with a tissue or a flexed elbow.
- Disposing of used tissues in a plastic-lined waste container
- Perform proper hand hygiene.
- Refrain from sharing food, drinks, utensils, or water bottles or other resources.

Personal Protective Equipment

Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings (Masks):

Personal protective equipment (including masks) can provide an additional layer of protection. Non-medical masks and face coverings (hereafter referred to collectively as “masks”) have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. They provide some protection to the wearer and to those around them.

In the event a regional or provincial public health recommendation or Order requires stricter non-medical mask use than what is outlined in this document, that recommendation or Order should be followed.

Those wearing masks should still continue to respect others' personal space.

Masks should not be used in place of the other safety measures detailed in this document (refer to the Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease graphic). **put page number in this document of the graphic

Parents play a key role in teaching young children to wear a mask.

Masks: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks>

Additional PPE, such as gloves and eye goggles, are not needed for most staff beyond that used as part of routine practices for the hazards normally encountered in their regular course of work.

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](#) (p.5). *Have link for the recovery plan?

Guidelines for Staff Working with Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities where Physical Contact may be Required

Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student.

When staff are working with a student indoors, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, staff are required **to wear a non-medical mask. Staff may wear a face shield in addition, but must wear a mask under the face shield.** Additional protective equipment is not required beyond that used as part of the personal care routine normally encountered in their regular course of work (e.g., gloves for toileting).

When working with students where seeing facial expression and/or lip movement is important, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, options include having the staff member wear a mask with a transparent section to enable visualization of the mouth. More information on masks and face covering is available on the [BCCDC website](#).

- **Students in Kindergarten to 12** are also required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering when receiving services indoors **and a barrier is not present. Students may wear a face shield in addition, but must wear a mask under the face shield.**

In addition to a non-medical mask, 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.**

Exceptions For Staff, Students and Visitors

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask.

The guidance outlined above regarding mask requirements does not apply to staff, students and visitors in the following circumstances:

- To a person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- To a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, et.);
- If a person is eating or drinking;
- If a person is behind a barrier; or
- While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important

Schools must not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm if staff, students or visitors cannot wear a mask.

Supporting Those Self-Monitoring for Symptoms or Self-isolating

- Families are treated with respect, fairness and compassion with a focus on dignity and privacy protection
- Steps are taken to reduce the potential for stigma and discrimination
- If students are self-isolating at home, measures are in place to provide meaningful homework to students so they do not fall behind
- If students are self-monitoring for symptoms, measures are in place to recognize symptoms while in school/childcare and to separate sick students and staff from others if symptoms develop.