



ST. MATTHEW'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

16065 88th Avenue, Surrey, BC V4N 1G3 P: 604.589.7545 F: 604.589.7113

www.stmatthewselementary.ca

ST. MATTHEW'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

Updated as of January 7, 2022

A review of health and safety documents released by the Ministry of Education, BCCDC, an Addendum to the Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings and WorksafeBC have informed updates to 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 7 are required to wear masks indoors
- 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. Using available space to spread out.
- 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.
- Extra-curricular school activities will resume and will be governed by the wider provincial or local health authority orders.
- Everyone who is eligible is encouraged to get fully vaccinated



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Access to School Site

During School Hours

- We will be limiting visitors to the school. In-person visits should be for essential purposes and arranged in advance by appointment.
- Parents volunteering for their PPP will have school access to the school facilities to complete their hours.
- 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.
- Itinerant staff, Teachers On-Call and visitors will be made aware of the school's health and safety measures and their responsibility to follow them at all times. These individuals will be required to read the updated School Communicable Disease Plan (posted on school website)

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
- 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.



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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

Respecting Personal Space & Minimizing Physical Contact

- Respecting personal space signage will be visible throughout the school. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- If gatherings and events must be in person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), the number of people in attendance is minimized as



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much as possible, does not exceed 50% operating capacity, and spectators are not present.

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.
- Staff are required to wear face masks at all times when indoors
- Staff gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, etc.) will happen virtually.

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.



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- Staff member 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.

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.
- 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.

Carpooling

- 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



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Music Program

- Staff and students sanitize their hands prior and after entering or leaving the building.
- Respect personal space
- K-7 students and staff must wear masks when indoors
- Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (i.e.: playing a wind instrument) **but must be worn while singing**

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.
- Proper fit is a key factor in mask effectiveness. Masks worn at school should fit well. All staff and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are required to wear a mask.
- Masks are available for those who have forgotten theirs. 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.

Supporting Students With Disabilities/Diverse Abilities Expectations

- School districts and independent schools are expected to implement health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse abilities.



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- 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 14 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).

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
- 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:



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- 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, etc.);
- If a person is eating or drinking;
- 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.