

**St. James School  
Public  
Communicable Disease Prevention Plan**

**\*\* UPDATED\*\* April 14, 2022**  
**\*\*Updates are Highlighted\*\***

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## A. Overview/Introduction/Greetings

### Objectives:

Effective **April 16th, 2022**, the Ministry has updated its plan to better reflect a transition away from a pandemic response and towards a sustainable communicable disease plan.

*Comprehensive guidelines build on the [Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#) developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to ensure schools have robust measures in place to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. These guidelines are intended to support K-12 employees, students, parents, caregivers, administrators and school community members to:*

1. *Be informed about public health measures and how they support a safe school environment;*
2. *Understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting safe and healthy schools.*

### Key Principles of our Plan:

- All school within the Catholic Independent Schools of the Kamloops Diocese (CISKD) are required to have Communicable Disease Prevention plans in place, which focus on reducing the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.
- Controls for Communicable Disease Prevention continue to be:
  - Hand Hygiene
  - Ventilation
  - **Health Awareness: an updated approach to Health Checks**
  - **Regular Cleaning and Disinfection**
  - **Use of Non-Medical Masks as a personal choice**
- Schools continue to be low-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission even with increased risk of COVID-19 in some communities.

This document was updated based on various Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, WorksafeBC, and CISKD.

The protocols identified in this school document are designed to keep everyone as safe as possible while still providing important educational services to our families and community.

At SJS, we follow inclusive/respectful approaches when personnel/students/visitors cannot comply with protocols due to health/behavioural reasons. We are committed to exploring other administrative and environmental methods to mitigate the risk to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

If an activity cannot be implemented in line with provincial guidelines, it should be adapted or another activity should be selected.

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating in school if they are not wearing a mask.

School will open on a full-time basis, September 8, 2021.

## B. Vaccines

Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools and communities. The vaccines used in B.C. remain highly effective against COVID-19, including among variants of concern (such as the Delta Variant). Vaccinated people aged 12 and older tend to have milder illness if they get infected and are also less likely to spread COVID-19 than unvaccinated people 12 and older.

Public health strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them including those who are not eligible to be vaccinated. People over 12 who are not vaccinated are at higher risk of getting and spreading COVID-19, with age the greatest factor of individual risk of severe illness. Most COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are now among unvaccinated adults.

According to the BC Centre for Disease Control, children under 12 who are not currently eligible to be vaccinated continue to be less likely to get and spread COVID-19 and have a low risk of serious outcomes if they do get COVID-19.

While COVID-19 is present in our communities, there will continue to be COVID-19 exposures in schools involving students and staff. However, the BC Centre Disease Control reports that, with the increasing proportion of people 12 and over being fully vaccinated and effective communicable disease measures continuing to be in place, exposures are unlikely to lead to further transmission. At this time vaccination is not required for K-12 staff or students

## C. Public Entry / Access to School

- Public entry of our school is limited to staff, students, volunteers, and those working for the benefit of the work we do at SJS.
- All visitors will use the main entrance to the school.
- Visitors to our school are welcome.
- In place of Health Checks, Families are encouraged to practice Health Awareness and are encouraged to keep their children home when sick.
- Upon arrival, students are encouraged to wash their hands.
- Students will exit the school at pick up time through their specified doors and will wait, playing outside in either the wrapper zone or the upper field, until they are picked up. Students should keep their bodies to themselves and respecting personal space as much as possible.
- Extended supervision will be in place from 7:45am to 8:30am and 2:45pm to 4:30pm. Students will remain outside for as long as possible and will respect personal space when brought inside.

- Staff will limit their access to the school between the hours of 7:30am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday. Staff requiring access outside of these times will make arrangements with the principal.
- Health Awareness is encouraged before entering the school. People who are sick are encouraged to stay home.

#### D. Health Check for Students and Staff Entering School

- Parents are asked to be aware if their children and household experience respiratory or other symptoms of illness. They are asked that they commit to not sending their children to school if their child is symptomatic.
- If you feel unwell, please stay home.
- Daily Health Checks are to be completed at home each day prior to leaving home.

#### E. Students who Become Ill at School

- Students who display any symptoms of fever, common cold, influenza, COVID19 or other respiratory diseases while in attendance at school will be separated from all students and school staff and placed in a supervised area referred to as the *Helping Hands Room*.
- Parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible.

#### F. Student Management: Hygiene

- Students wash their hands (at a minimum):
  - Upon arriving at school
  - Before/after any breaks (ex., recess/lunch)
  - Before/after eating and drinking
  - After using the toilet;
  - After sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue;
  - After handling common resources/equipment/supplies or pets
  - When hands are visibly dirty; and
- Staff are encouraged to assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- Staff shall model and teach students to ensure effective hand hygiene practice.
- If a sink is not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol concentration may be offered/used remembering that the 'air drying' is what 'kills' the virus.
- All group food preparation activities at school are now permitted with strict adherence to Food Safe and WorkSafeBC Restaurant protocols. Staff will ensure proper hand washing and hygiene is practiced in classrooms.

### G. Student Management: Personal Space

- All staff and students are asked to respect the personal space of others.
- Staff may use space in a way that best meets learner needs and preferred educational practice.
- Staff may consider providing workspace outdoors when practical.
- Respecting personal space during lineup/hallway is encouraged.
- We will schedule time outdoors as much as possible both for recreational and learning opportunities. Students should have appropriate footwear and attire for a range of weather conditions.
- School gatherings and events will occur in line with those permitted by all applicable public and local/regional health orders and recommendations. School organizers will apply a trauma informed lens to their planning, including consideration of:
  - respecting student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space;
  - using space available to spread people out as much as possible, respecting room occupancy limits, and ensuring enough space is available to prevent involuntarily physical contact between attendees (e.g., overcrowding); and
  - transition to larger gatherings (e.g. school-wide assemblies), including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person sessions, etc..

### H. Student/Staff Management: Mask Wearing

All K-12 personnel are no longer required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask is to be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools and on school buses.

All Grades K-12 students are no longer required to wear a non-medical mask or a faceshield and mask indoors in schools and on buses.

Mask-wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for everyone, and their choices must be respected.

### I. Academic Learning

- Teachers will build into their day mental health self-care for their students and themselves. Use of the Take A Breath program is highly recommended.

### J. Staff Management: Personal Space

- Staff are asked to respect the personal space of others.
- It is no longer required that adults wear a non-medical mask when indoors.

## K. Staff Management: Hygiene

- Staff should perform hand hygiene:
  - \*when they arrive at school and before they go home
  - \*before/after any breaks
  - \*before /after eating/drinking
  - \*before/after handling deliveries and mail
  - \*before/after handling food or assisting students with eating
  - \*before/after giving medication to a student or self
  - \*after toileting
  - \*after contact with body fluids (mucous/congestion, blood, spit, vomit, stool, urine)
  - \*after cleaning tasks
  - \*before/after using gloves
  - \*after handling garbage
  - \*whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Staff shall follow respiratory hygiene by:
  - \*coughing/sneezing into their elbow sleeve or tissue. Immediately disposing of used tissues and perform hand hygiene.
  - \*refrain from touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
  - \*refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, or other items
- With regard to the use of masks, the advice of the Provincial Health Officer should be followed. Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices amongst students.
- Hand-hygiene supplies are available at all times (liquid soap, paper towels, minimum 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
- Hand-washing signs are posted near all sinks. All staff will wash their hands frequently to reduce the risk of transmission. Some people have found it helpful to set a 'mental' 20 second timer or offer a prayer (Hail Mary or Our Father) for someone to support effective hygiene and spiritual practice.
- Other hygiene practice signage is posted (see resources from WorkSafe BC).
- At this time, the use of PPE by staff in our school (ex., masks, gloves, other) is followed as part of regular precautions for the hazards normally encountered in one's regular course of work (ex., cleaning, first aid, risk of projectiles/particles, risk of exposure to bodily fluids, or in certain circumstances where other preventative safety measures cannot be maintained such as physical distancing for greater than 15 minutes or hand-washing).

#### L. Staff who Become Ill While at Work:

- Staff who display any symptoms of fever, common cold, influenza, COVID19 or other respiratory diseases while in attendance at school are encouraged to go home.
- Under the direction of Health Authority, the School may be required to submit information to the Health Authority.

#### M. Cleaning/Disinfecting During School Hours

- Common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products are being used.
- Classroom: Each classroom will have hand sanitizer, disinfectant, and surface cleaner available.
- As part of 'end of day' routine, students, at the discretion of the adult supervisor will contribute to the cleaning of their personal space and equipment, followed by the staff member misting cleaned surfaces with disinfectants that are allowed to air dry.
- Frequently touched (high touch) surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least once a day, including (but not limited to) door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, the stair railings, and shared office spaces.
- Garbage containers are to be emptied once three quarters (3/4) full to avoid spillage, or, at least once per day, whichever comes first. Under no circumstances is anyone permitted to 'push' the contents down into the garbage can in order to make 'room' for more.
- Garbage cans will have plastic bags as liners that must be securely tied before removing the bag from the can and promptly removed from the area. Do not disturb contents and avoid placing head/face over bag while handling. This task will be done wearing gloves.
- Staff shall disinfect shared spaces (such as tables) with a diluted solution at the end of their shift and allow to air dry. It is highly recommended that staff develop a habit of misting areas they have touched with the sanitizing spray and leaving them to air dry.
- If any cloth items were used, they are to be bagged and tied, and taken to be laundered.

#### N. Cleaning/Disinfecting After School Hours

- Our 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](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf)).
- 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](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)).

## O. Communication

- Essential health and safety information is communicated to staff in writing before returning to the workplace.
- Upon return to the workplace, a health and safety meeting is held to review workplace practices.
- Regular check-in meetings with staff, that may initially be held daily, are held to provide new information and review concerns.
- Parents and caregivers are provided a clear understanding that students must stay home if they are sick.
- Our school will keep parents/caregivers informed and updated. We encourage everyone to check for email notifications daily in the morning and evening in case new information/updates are available. Updates will also be shared via our school Facebook page and our website: [www.stjamesvernon.com](http://www.stjamesvernon.com)
- In the event that it is necessary to perform a partial functional closure or full closure of the school, the office will use email, Facebook, and FreshGrade to communicate with families in a timely manner. We anticipate that these decisions may need to be made at the last minute and with little warning. We further recognize that school closure is a last resort given its impact on students and families, however, it may be necessary to ensure the health and safety of both students and staff.
- All information relating to COVID-19 is posted on our school website or shared by email.
- A reminder that it is the parent and/or staff member's responsibility to ensure that the School has the most recent/current contact information on file. Please contact the office with any changes/updates to your contact information.