



## ***St. Michael's School***

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# St Michael's Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

## Introduction:

The health and safety of our students and staff is a priority of St. Michael's school. Students will return to school in September and can look forward to full-time, in-person learning. In accordance with the Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings, St. Michael's school will update and follow a communicable disease prevention plan as outlined in this document.

A communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from one person to another. Examples of communicable disease that may circulate in the workplace include COVID-19, norovirus, and seasonal influenza. The level of risk of certain communicable diseases may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. St. Michael's administration and St. Michael's Joint Health and Safety Committee will monitor and review school and community communicable disease-related information (including orders, guidance, notices and recommendations) issued by our regional or provincial medical health officer.

## St. Michael's Routine Communicable Disease Prevention Practices:

- Implement policies to support staff who have symptoms of a communicable disease (eg. fever or chills, coughing) so they can avoid being at the workplace when sick.
- Provide hand-hygiene facilities with appropriate supplies. Use policies and signage to remind workers to wash their hands regularly and to cover coughs and sneezes.
- Maintain a clean environment through routine cleaning processes.
- Make sure building ventilation is adequate and ventilation systems are properly maintained and functioning as designed.
- Support employees in receiving vaccinations for COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable conditions.
- During a period of elevated risk, all direction from regional and provincial medical health officers will be followed.
- Employees, families and visitors will receive information about St. Michael's measures, practices and policies for managing communicable disease, including policies for staying home when sick.

- Signage will be posted to support health and safety measures.
- St. Michael's Joint Health and Safety Committee will identify (or receive concerns from other staff) and resolve school health and safety issues. All staff will be reminded how to raise health and safety concerns.
- School property inspections and ongoing supervision will ensure measures are functioning properly, followed and maintained.

## Understanding the Risk

The principal is responsible for regularly monitoring and reviewing the communicable disease-related information that is provided by Fraser Health or the Provincial Health Officer. This includes all issued orders, guidelines, notices, and recommendations. In addition, staff follows the guidelines that are provided by the Superintendent. This information is regularly communicated to staff to understand and minimize risk for communicable disease transmission in our school.

## Implementing measures, practices and policies to reduce the risk

Ongoing Measures – Policies to support staff who have symptoms of a communicable disease are in place so they can avoid being at the workplace when sick. These include CISVA Policy 310, Employee Leaves of Absence, as well as this Communicable Disease Prevention Plan. Measures, practices and policies are regularly reviewed in staff meetings and documented in minutes.

### **Health Screening**

- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school for daily assessment of symptoms.
- If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school. There are no current restrictions on healthy visitors in the school.
- If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school:
  - They will be separated from their classmates or colleagues
  - Separated children will be supervised and cared for
  - The student's parent or guardian will be contacted, and asked to have their child picked up as soon as possible
  - Staff will be asked to go home as soon as possible
  - Custodial staff will clean and disinfect the areas the person used
- Staff responsible for facility cleaning will clean and disinfect the surfaces/equipment which the bodily fluids may have been in contact with while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.) prior to the surfaces/equipment being used by others.

- Students and staff will return to school/work in line with the guidance in the “Illness practices / What to do when sick”, section of the K-12 Guidelines to ensure students and staff who are not sick are not kept out of school/away from work longer than necessary.
- Students, staff or other adults must stay home if they are required to self-isolate.
- Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g. seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. They do not require re-assessment by a health-care provider and are not required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a healthcare provider.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves.
- See Appendix 1 “What to do when sick” summary

## Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette

- Rigorous hand-washing with plain soap and water or an effective hand sanitizer reduces the spread of illness and these guidelines will be followed: Diligent hand hygiene will be practiced by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water); regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene will be provided; alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol will be used where sinks are not available; commercial hand sanitizer products authorized for sale in Canada will be used; Hand-washing will be encouraged upon school entry and before/after breaks and eating, using washroom and using frequently touched shared equipment; the importance of diligent hand hygiene will be promoted to staff and students regularly (including hand hygiene posters at handwashing sites); hand-washing supplies will always be well stocked including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Staff will assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- Students may bring their own sanitizer or plain soap if they are on the list authorized by Health Canada or have a medical condition that requires specialized soaps.
- Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty. If it is not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.
- Staff will teach and reinforce respiratory etiquette amongst students: cough or sneeze into the elbow sleeve or a tissue; throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene; refrain from touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed

hands; refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

### **Masks**

- Masks are not required for students, staff or visitors.
- The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for everyone. This choice should be supported and treated with respect.
- We will continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one.

### **Shared Spaces**

- St. Michael's will use classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches.
- Consideration will still be given to implementing strategies that help create space between people and support students and staff using a trauma-informed approach.

### **Staff Only Spaces**

- WorkSafeBC guidance for workplaces will be used. In addition, St. Michael's will implement the following strategies:
  - Signage will be used to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding (e.g. in the breakroom, by the photocopier, etc.).
  - For gatherings (e.g. meetings, pro-d, etc.), room occupancy limits will be respected, available space will be used to spread people out, and virtual options will be considered. Gatherings will also occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders and any related WorkSafe BC guidance.

### **School Gatherings, Visitor Access, and Community Use**

- For school gatherings and events that bring together multiple classes or other groupings of students (e.g., school assemblies, multiple classes doing a single activity, etc.) from the same school (but members of the school community beyond staff, students and necessary volunteers are not attending), there is not a specific capacity limit.
- Visitors, including community groups using the school, should follow applicable communicable disease preventions measures outlined in this document. These include but are not limited to:
  - Practicing hand hygiene
  - Staying home when sick

- Spreading out and using all available space

### **Music, physical education, sports, clubs and extracurricular activities**

- All music and physical education programs, sports, clubs and extracurricular activities are allowed.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected at least every 24 hours.
- Students will wash their hands
  - Before and after using shared equipment
  - Before and after outdoor play
- Students will be asked not to share equipment that touches the mouth, like an instrument mouth piece, unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses
- Students will be encouraged to cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing

### **Maintaining a clean environment**

- A cleaning and disinfecting schedule has been established so that high touch surfaces are frequently cleaned during the day. General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces (such as doors and cabinet handles, stair railings, washrooms, shared office spaces, desks, keyboards, light switches, and communications devices), will occur at least once in a 24-hour period. Surfaces that are visibly dirty will be cleaned and disinfected. Garbage containers will be emptied daily. Paper hand towels will be provided rather than hand dryers.
- Frequently-touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) or at all (e.g. sand, foam, playdough, etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.
- When cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine): Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids; Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves; Follow regular health and safety procedure and regularly used PPE for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting).
- Cleaning staff include a part-time custodian as well as contracted janitorial service with Mastercare.
- Cleaning protocols reviewed monthly by Joint Health & Safety Committee.
- Building ventilation is inspected annually (Pacific Mechanical) and ventilation systems are properly maintained and functioning as designed. Room Filters replaced quarterly.

- Joint Health & Safety Committee uses “Prevent the spread of communicable disease: Ventilation and air circulation” to guide inspection. Maintenance coordinator reviews HVAC inspection report and updates PEC.

## Communicating Measures, practices and policies

St. Michael’s will support the implementation of personal prevention practices through:

- Providing regular reminders to students, families, and staff about the importance of completing a daily health check, staying home when sick, and following public health recommendations.
- Having staff demonstrate and model how to practice personal prevention measures at school (e.g., hand hygiene, etc.).
- Sharing trusted information from the BC Centre for Disease Control. To ensure that everyone entering our school receives information about our measures, practices and policies, we have instituted the following:
  - All employees are provided with a copy of this communicable disease prevention plan and CISVA Policy 310 Employee Leaves of Absences.
  - Employees will also sign a “Statement of Understanding” that they have read and understood the necessity of staying at home if sick.
  - 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.

Training regarding school procedures and expectations has been provided to staff. Staff are encouraged to respond with any questions. Staff will be reminded how to raise safety concerns (through health and safety committee) and any new information relating to communicable disease in the workplace will be posted in the staffroom and emailed to staff.

Parents and caregivers will be made aware that students must stay home if they are sick.

Parents and caregivers will be informed about the extra precautions being taken at the school. Signage is posted in entrance ways, washrooms, and throughout the school to support the hygiene measures. Signs will be posted at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the premises (including anyone with symptoms).

St. Michael’s will continue to support personal prevention practices through positive and inclusive approaches. We will continue to utilize a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g., gatherings and events), including considerations around respecting others personal space.

St. Michael’s will notify public health if lower attendance than normal is observed, based on thresholds set by public health. Public health will then investigate to determine if additional action should be taken. Our local Medical Health Officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a group of schools, a school district or all schools within the health authority

region, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of increased risk.

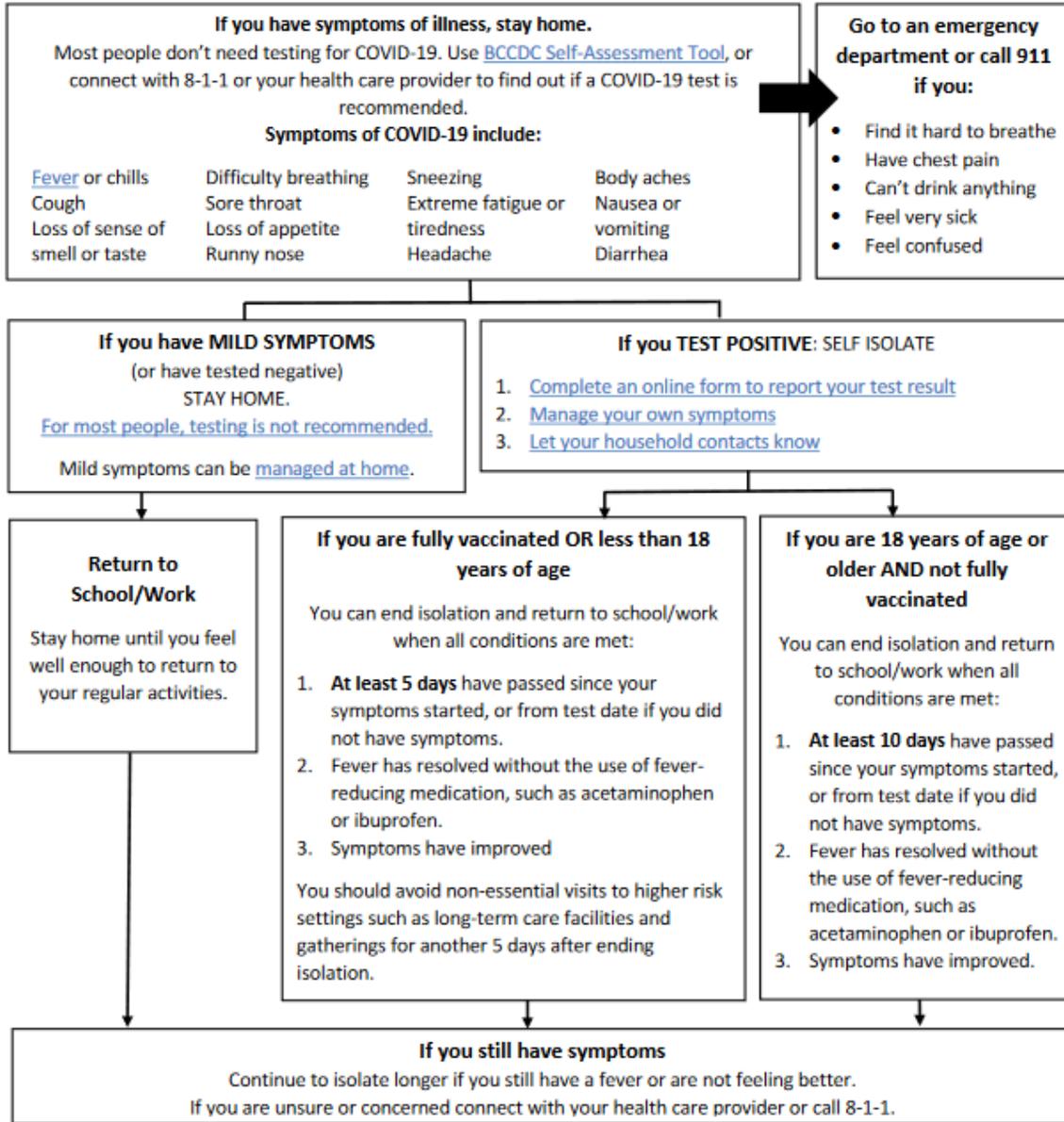
## Monitoring school environment and updating plan as necessary

Health and safety meetings are held to review workplace practices relating to communicable disease and other health and safety matters. Additional communication may be required as new information is made available that may affect work practices.

Administration and joint health and safety committees meet at least monthly to evaluate measures, practices, and policies at the school. Discoveries from staff concerns, walk-throughs, or site inspections will be addressed and discussed with the staff if necessary.

Staff will be encouraged to speak (or write) to a Joint Health & Safety Committee member if they witness or have concerns. If not satisfactorily addressed, staff will be encouraged to bring concerns to the principal and PEC. Staff will be reminded of the process at staff meetings.

**Summary: What To Do When Sick**



**What to do if someone is sick in your household:**

You can continue to attend school if someone in your household is sick and/or self-isolating as long as you do not have any symptoms of illness and feel well. This includes if they have tested positive for COVID-19. Ensure you closely monitor yourself (or your child) for symptoms of illness and stay home if you feel unwell. The best way to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. Vaccines are available for anyone ages 5 and up. Register now at: [Getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca](http://Getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca)

