

Communicable Disease Control/Prevention Plan (updated 23.09.19)

Alcuin College is continuously working to improve our communicable disease control (CDC) practices, including prevention of COVID-19 infection. This plan is based on, and adheres to, the **Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K to 12 Settings**, and **Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K to 12 School Settings**. This document is updated as often as necessary to coincide with any new recommendations, guidelines and orders issued by Public Health, the Ministry and WorkSafeBC. Any new Public Health Orders supersede this document.

Key elements of this plan include:

1. Having a supportive school environment to facilitate the regular practise of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
2. Supporting and respecting the individual's decision to wear a mask or face covering. This is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors.
3. Conducting daily health checks, staying home when sick, and implementing procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school/work.
4. Practising continued robust environmental hygiene, including cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation.

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Trauma-informed practice is a compassionate lens of understanding that is helpful to all children, youth and adults, especially those who have experienced traumatic events including the emotional and traumatic impact of a pandemic. Trauma-informed practice includes:

- Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments
- Understanding coping strategies
- Supporting independence
- Helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual needs of students and staff.

Some students may have experienced different elements of trauma. To support educators and staff in identifying and responding to the needs of students who have experienced trauma, the Ministry has created [trauma-informed practice resources](#) that are available on the [erase](#) (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) [website](#).

SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Schools can be supportive environments for communicable disease prevention by:

- Having staff model personal practices (e.g., hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette), and assist younger students as needed.
- Sharing reliable information, including from the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#), Office of the Provincial Health Officer, and local health authorities to parents, families and caregivers.
- Promoting personal practices in the school (e.g., posters).
- Ensuring individual choices for personal practices (e.g., choosing to wear a mask or face covering) are supported and treated with respect, recognizing varying personal comfort levels.

The Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings have been developed by the Ministry of Education and Child Care in collaboration with the BC Centre for Disease Control, Indigenous rights holders and education partners, including district/school leaders, teachers, support staff, and parents. These guidelines are based on the public health guidance developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Schools continue to be low-risk sites for the transmission of COVID-19. This document is intended to support staff, students, parents, and school community members to:

- Be informed about the public health measures that are implemented in our school and how they support a safe school environment.
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in carrying out these measures, and maintaining and promoting a safe and healthy school.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide the K-12 sector throughout the 2022/23 school year:

- Align health and safety procedures with public health guidance to support student and staff wellness, with a focus on mental health.
- Focus supports to address unique student and staff needs, recognizing the pandemic has impacted individuals and communities differently.
- Consult and work with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples to address the unique educational and learning needs of their communities.
- Engage and collaborate with parents, caregivers, staff and community partners to develop local solutions.

VACCINES

Vaccines are important tools to protect against serious outcomes of many communicable diseases, such as COVID-19 and influenza. Students and staff are encouraged to ensure they are up to date [on all recommended vaccines for communicable diseases](#). Evidence-based immunization information and tools for B.C. Residents are available from [BCCDC](#) and [ImmunizeBC](#) websites. Further information is available on the [WorkSafe B.C.](#) website.

The [Support Services for Schools Order](#) and the [Inter-Ministerial Protocols for the Provision of Support Services to Schools](#) require boards of education and participating independent school authorities to provide a designated space in each school for public health nurses or other qualified health personnel to carry out their duties (including immunizations).

A. GENERAL ORGANISATION

JUNIOR SCHOOL: 8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

- Enter/exit through St. Georges Ave. entrance (no thoroughfare through the Great Hall)
- Pick up on 11th St. Teachers will exit with their classes via the St. Georges Ave. entrance and walk around to the area in front of the 11th St. entrance and wait for parents. One teacher will assist with curbside pick-up. Teachers will remain with their students until they have been picked up by parents. Teachers will wait with students who have siblings in the SS.

SENIOR SCHOOL: 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

- Enter/exit through the 11th St. entrance. Pick up on 11th St.

Recess and lunch will be staggered to help create space between students.

- JS recess - 9:30 to 9:45 a.m., SS recess - 9:45 to 10:00 a.m.
- Lunch 12:00 to 12:45 p.m., alternating inside and outdoors
 - JS will go outside to play from 12:00 to 12:20 p.m., and eat lunch from 12:20 to 12:45 p.m., either outdoors (weather permitting) or indoors in their designated learning space.
 - SS will eat lunch indoors from 12:00 to 12:20 p.m., and go outdoors from 12:20 to 12:45 p.m.

Space Arrangement

As per BCCDC guidance, schools can use classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches. However, we must respect individuals' personal space. Personal space can be defined as "the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person." This distance varies with many factors such as culture, setting, and familiarity with others. Watch for clues such as the other person backing away.

Personal Items

Students and staff will adhere to the following guidelines, where possible:

- Students and staff will be encouraged to bring only items that are necessary and easily cleanable (backpacks, clothing, school supplies, water bottles).
- Students are encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks).
- Students will continue to use their lockers to store personal items to avoid carrying them from place to place.
- Personal items should be labelled.

School Gatherings and Events

School gatherings and events (including inter-school events) can occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders. Communicable disease prevention measures for school gatherings and events are in line with those in place in the school.

Supporting Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities and/or Receiving Health Services

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. Additional personal protective equipment is not required beyond that used in their regular course of work (e.g., gloves for toileting).

Those providing health services in schools may be receiving different guidance related to PPE from their regulatory college or employer. Health service providers are encouraged to work with their employer to confirm what PPE is recommended for the services they provide in school settings.

Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to communicable disease are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine their child's level of risk. Students are not required to wear a mask or face covering when receiving services, though may continue to, based on their or their parent/caregiver's personal choice. Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one.

Visitor Access/Community Use

- Visitors are encouraged to make appointments before visiting the school.
- Visitors should be aware of communicable disease protocols and requirements and will confirm that they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering the school. They will be required to sign in and confirm that they have completed their daily health check.
- After-hours community use of facilities should follow applicable communicable disease prevention measures.

Attendance and Record Keeping

As per our usual practice, daily attendance records will be maintained for staff, students, and visitors, and accurate class and bus lists will be kept. This includes maintaining attendance records for all school-supported activities, including extracurricular activities and field trips.

Emergency and Evacuation Drills

Emergency and evacuation planning, and drills should consider communicable disease prevention plans. In the event of an actual emergency, communicable disease prevention measures can be suspended to ensure a timely, efficient, and safe response.

B. CURRICULUM, PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

Field Studies - Student Transportation

- For students, staff and visitors taking mass transit (e.g. municipal buses, SkyTrain, ferries, etc.), riders should follow any other safety guidance (including mask guidance) issued by the relevant transit authority.
- Methods of active transportation (e.g. walking) will be encouraged wherever possible due to the overall health benefits.
- We will be in alignment with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.
- Guidance provided from [BCCDC](#) and the [BC Camps Association](#) will be used when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.

Music/Physical & Health Education (PHE)/Outdoor/Food & Culinary/Theatre, Film & Dance/Other Shared Equipment Programmes

Students should be encouraged to practise proper hand hygiene before and after shared equipment use. Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., instrument mouth pieces, water bottles, utensils) or has been in contact with bodily fluids should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

Work Experience

Students can continue to engage in work placements and the employer will need to follow current guidelines and standards from the PHO and WorkSafeBC. Placements will be reviewed to determine if it is safe, considering PHO and WorkSafeBC guidance. Parent agreement is required for any placement.

Classes (or other similar groupings of students) participating in training/work experience programs or field trips are to follow the more stringent measures (if applicable) between the school and the workplace/facility/field trip destination's communicable disease prevention plans.

Food Safety

Staff, students, or other persons in the school setting should follow routine food safety practices, including diligent hand hygiene. More information may be found on the [BCCDC Food Safety webpage](#).

C. ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Alcuin College is cleaned daily by a commercial cleaning contractor. The contractor provides all necessary cleaning supplies. Cleaning will adhere to the recommendations as set out in the [Cleaning And Disinfecting](#) guidelines. Our cleaning protocols include:

- General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once in a 24-hour period.
- Use of commercially available disinfectants, with guidelines from [Health Canada](#) in selecting products with evidence for use against specific communicable diseases.
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Empty garbage containers daily.

Frequently Touched Surfaces

- Frequently touched surfaces are items touched by larger numbers of students and staff. They can include doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains and toilet handles, as well as shared equipment (e.g., computer keyboards, PE/sports and music equipment), appliances (e.g., microwaves) and service counters, and may change from day to day based on utilization. Each teaching area will be provided with a cleaning disinfectant solution for teachers to wipe any high-touch areas.
- 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. Carpets and rugs can also be used.
- Proper hand hygiene are practised before and after shared equipment use. Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., instrument mouth pieces, water bottles, utensils) or has been in contact with bodily fluids should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Bodily Fluids

When cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine) the following procedure will be implemented:

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Follow regular health and safety procedures and regularly use PPE (e.g. gloves, Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting).

General Ventilation and Air Circulation

- There are two commercial furnaces which are designed, operated and maintained as per OHS Regulation. Furnaces are inspected and serviced annually, and filters are changed regularly once a month. The system will be turned down, rather than off, after working hours and on weekends.
- Ceiling fans in the Great Hall will be used, as it allows air flow to move downward from the ceiling.
- All learning spaces have a portable Austin HealthMate HEPA Air purifier.
- Where appropriate, fans will be set to avoid horizontal cross-breezes to prevent air blowing directly from one person's breathing zone to another's.
- Reduce air recirculation and increase the outdoor air intake as much as possible by opening windows and doors when possible and if weather permits. In the event the school's ventilation system is temporarily compromised, the school will open windows and doors to maximise the intake of outdoor air.

Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water or using an [effective hand sanitizer](#) reduces the spread of illness. Everyone should practise diligent hand hygiene. The following hand hygiene practices and procedures will be in place:

- Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol, where sinks are not available. Schools should use commercial hand [sanitizer products that have met Health Canada's requirements](#) and are authorized for sale in Canada.
- Hand washing should be encouraged upon school entry and before/after breaks and eating, using washroom and using frequently touched shared equipment.
- Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly. For example, display hand hygiene posters for students or adults at handwashing sites.
- Ensure hand washing supplies are always well stocked including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Staff will be available to monitor and assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating microbes. 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.

Respiratory Etiquette

Parents and staff can teach and reinforce good respiratory etiquette practices among students, including:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

D. HEALTH AWARENESS

Daily Health Check

Staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers, and students **should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities**. It is important that everyone complete a daily health check. A health check means a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, within school settings. Schools do not need to monitor students or staff for symptoms of illness.

What To Do When Sick

Staff, students, or other persons who are exhibiting new symptoms of illness (including symptoms of COVID-19 or gastrointestinal illness) should stay home and follow BCCDC guidance:

- Staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers, and students should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities.
- A health check means a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases within the school settings. Schools do not need to monitor students or staff for symptoms of illness.
- Staff, students, or other persons in the school setting who are exhibiting symptoms of illness, such as respiratory illness, should stay home until they are well enough to participate in regular activities or otherwise advised by a healthcare provider. Those experiencing certain illnesses, such as gastrointestinal illness caused by norovirus, may be advised to stay home for longer. Staff, children, or other persons can attend school if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved, and they feel well enough to return to regular activities. If you are unsure or concerned about your symptoms, connect with your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

What To Do When Symptoms Develop at School

If a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school and is unable to participate in regular activities, they should be supported to go home until their symptoms have improved. Appropriate infection control precautions should be taken while the person is preparing to leave the school premises, including use of appropriate hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfection of surfaces soiled with bodily fluids. They may use a mask if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms.

Any staff/student who becomes sick while at school and cannot be picked up immediately, will be separated from others and provided with a non-medical mask if they want one. Younger students will be supervised until picked up. Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces/equipment which the person's 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/staff will be requested to seek guidance regarding testing for COVID-19, and to stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and respected. This should include:

- Promoting the school environment as supportive for wearing masks through mask-specific messaging at assemblies and in announcements, signs, and written communications. Include that some people wear masks to reduce their risk of communicable disease, and it is important to be kind and respectful of other's choices. Include evidence-based, trusted information on masks from BCCDC.
- Continued school-wide efforts to create safe and inclusive learning environments, free from discrimination, bullying and harassment. Set, communicate and consistently reinforce clear expectations that any bullying or other disrespectful behaviour or conduct related to personal mask use choice is unacceptable. Address behaviour in line with protocols and practices for addressing disrespectful behaviour (e.g., student codes of conduct).

Masks are one layer of protection used to prevent the spread of communicable disease. To be most effective, wearing a mask should be combined with other important protective measures such as getting all the recommended doses of vaccine, staying home when sick, and regularly practising hand hygiene. Masks are most effective when fitted, worn and handled correctly.

Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who become ill at school.

E. COMMUNICATION AND ORIENTATION

Orientation for Staff

Staff will meet during the first week of September for training on health and safety protocols. Orientation will include information about the school's measures, practices and policies for managing communicable disease. Staff will meet regularly to address any questions or concerns and review practices. In addition, the Head of School or Assistant Head of School will check in regularly with staff regarding health and wellness.

Orientation for Parents

Health and safety protocols will be on the school's website.

Orientation for Students

The initial health and safety orientation will occur on the first day of school through homeroom classes, with training taking place throughout the week. Homeroom teachers will regularly review procedures and practices with students.

Information for Visitors

A copy of communicable disease protocols and requirements will be available at the sign-in desk. Visitors will confirm that they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering the school.

Routine Communications

The person primarily responsible for developing and managing communications is Stella Ablett, Head of School. For routine communications, we will:

- post updates to the [website](#),
- hold online Tea & Chats with the Head of School for feedback and to address questions or concerns,
- share email updates.

Communications with the Alcuin community will occur primarily through the following channels:

- Email
- SMS via ePACT for communications that are time-sensitive
- Website
- Tea & Chats: online sessions with the Head of School (bi-weekly in September and monthly thereafter)
- Bi-weekly staff meetings to review workplace practices relating to communicable disease prevention and other health and safety matters

Communications and Protecting Personal Privacy

Medical Health Officers play the lead role in determining if, when and how to communicate information regarding increased communicable disease activity within a school. Public health has encouraged schools to routinely communicate to their school community the need to follow any recommended public health measures, practise health awareness, and to stay home when sick. To protect personal privacy and to support accuracy, schools should exercise caution in providing communicable disease notifications beyond when they are recommended by public health.

Functional Closures

A functional closure of a school is the temporary closure of a school determined by a school district or independent school authority due to a lack of staff to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, support, and/or custodial to ensure the health and safety of students. This would likely be due to a high number of staff or certain employees away who are required for a school to function, and the inability to temporarily replace them. Schools should notify their Medical Health Officer and the Ministry of Education and Child Care (erase@gov.bc.ca) when they are considering or implementing a functional closure.

Public Health Closure

A public health closure is the temporary closing of a school ordered by a Medical Health Officer when they determine it is necessary to prevent the excessive transmission of a communicable disease.

Some Questions & Answers

Q: Do I wear my regular school uniform on PHE days?

A: No. On days where you have a scheduled PHE class, come to school in your PE gear. If you are uncertain of what is acceptable, check with your homeroom or PHE teacher.

Q: With the windows open for ventilation, I may be cold. What can I wear?

A: Students who are cold may wear their outdoor coats (plain, navy or black) in class, over their school or PE uniform. If you want to wear a toque, it must be the Alcuin toque, which is available at Cambridge Uniforms.

More questions?

About:

Ask:

Health and Safety, Attendance

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