

RJDS COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN SEPTEMBER 2020

Changes from September 6th are highlighted

Dear Families,

We have now been issued specific guidelines to allow for a safe and healthy school environment for all students and staff. All schools are required to observe certain safety protocols to return to school during Stage 2. We will work with students to create a culture of awareness and precaution. Please familiarize yourself with the daily procedures that you will need to follow and explain them to your child(ren), so they will know what to expect on the first day of school. RJDS's plan and procedures have been developed using the *BC Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings*, produced in partnership with the Ministry of Education. For BCCDC information regarding COVID-19 and the school setting, please visit the BCCDC [website](#).

All staff and students will receive a health and safety orientation at the start of the school year to ensure they understand and are able to practise the necessary guidelines of physical distancing, hygiene, mask wearing (if they choose), and working within and across learning groups.

THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF PARENT SUPPORT

- Ensuring health and wellness of your children.
- Keeping children home if feeling unwell.
- Ensuring that you are sending your children to school with everything that they need for the whole day.
- Helping RJDS by reinforcing the necessity of compliance to these protocols.

PROTOCOLS FOR KEEPING OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF SAFE

- Infection prevention and control measures can help create a safe environment for children and staff. The Hierarchy of Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease describes the measures that can be taken to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Control measures at the top are more effective and protective than those at the bottom. By implementing a

combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.

- **Public Health Measures** are actions taken across society to limit the spread and reduce the impact of COVID-19. The Provincial Health Officer has implemented public health measures, including prohibiting mass gatherings, requiring travellers to self-isolate upon arrival in B.C., effective case finding and contact tracing, and emphasizing the need for people to stay home when they are sick.
- **Environmental Measures** are changes to the physical environment that reduce the risk of exposure. Examples include being in outdoor spaces, using visual cues for maintaining physical distance or directing traffic flow in hallways, erecting physical barriers where appropriate and frequent cleaning and disinfection.
- **Administrative Measures** are measures enabled through the implementation of policies, procedures, training and education that reduce the risk of exposure. Examples of these include health and wellness policies, cohorts, modified schedules and supporting the ability of individuals to maintain physical distance.
- **Personal Measures** are actions individuals can take to protect themselves and others. Examples include maintaining physical distance/minimizing physical contact, washing your hands frequently, coughing into your elbow and staying home if you are sick.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** is not effective as a stand-alone preventive measure. It should be suited to the task and must be worn and disposed of properly. Outside of health-care settings, the effectiveness of PPE is generally limited to protecting others should you be infected.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).
- Masks will be available for any students and staff who chooses to wear them.
- Should parents wish to send a mask with their child, please know that teachers will not be able to enforce mask wearing at this age, but they will give your children gentle reminders and support at appropriate times.
- For more information from BCCDC regarding masks, see this [link](#).

ILLNESS POLICY

- All parents are expected to closely monitor the health of their children before sending them to school. Students will be sent home if they come to school with any signs of illness.
- All employees must closely monitor their health before coming to school.
- Staff and parents should make use of BC's [self-assessment tool](#) should they have questions about their health status or they should contact 8-1-1 or their health care provider.
- Parents are responsible to let the school know if anything has changed in terms of the assessment.
- Students and staff should stay at home when new symptoms of illness develop. The key symptoms to watch for are fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- 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 may return to school. No assessment or note is required from a health care provider.
- For mild symptoms without fever, students and staff can monitor at home for 24 hours. If
- symptoms improve, they can return to school without further assessment.
- If symptoms include fever, or if after 24 hours, symptoms remain unchanged or worsen, seek a health assessment. A health assessment can include calling 8-1-1, a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner, or going to a COVID-19 testing centre.
- When a COVID-19 test is recommended by the health assessment:
 - If the COVID-19 test is positive, the person should stay home until they are told by public health to end their self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test.
 - If the COVID-19 test is negative, the person can return to school once symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness. BCCDC has information on receiving negative test results.
- If a COVID-19 test is recommended but is not done because the person or parent chooses not to have the test or a health assessment is not sought when recommended, and the person's symptoms are not related to a previously diagnosed health condition, they should stay home from school until 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and then may return if feeling well enough.

- If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, the person can return to school when symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (i.e. not COVID-19).
- All employees and students who have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days or have been part of a gathering in violation of Provincial guidelines, must stay home and self-isolate in accordance with guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Children developing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school or after having been at school

If a student develops symptoms associated with COVID-19 while at school or under the care of the school, the following procedures will occur:

- Student will be asked to remain in the health room thus providing physical distancing.
- Parents or caregivers of the student will be contacted immediately to pick up their child as soon as possible.
- Staff shall attempt to keep a 2-metre distance from the ill student. If not possible, staff will wear a non-medical mask or face covering.
- The student will be provided a non-medical mask to wear.
- Staff will avoid touching the student's body fluids (mucous, saliva) and will practise diligent hand-hygiene throughout the process.
- School staff will contact 811 or the public health unit to notify of a potential case and seek further input.
- All areas that the student came in contact with will be disinfected upon their departure.
- Student/family must seek assessment by a health-care provider.
- Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated, and any areas recently used by them.
- Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible.

Staff developing symptoms of COVID-19 while at school or after having been at school

- Staff will go home as soon as possible.
- If unable to leave immediately, symptomatic staff will separate themselves into an area away from others, maintain a distance of 2 metres from others, and use a mask to cover their nose and mouth while they wait to be picked up
- Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the staff member was, and any areas used recently by them.

CONTACT TRACING

- Active testing of anyone with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, even mild ones, helps identify cases early in the course of their disease.
- When a person is confirmed as positive for COVID-19, significant efforts are undertaken to determine if they are part of a cluster of cases or part of a local outbreak, and whether others in close contact with them are at risk for infection.
- Not everyone who has been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case is determined to be a close contact.
- Public Health determines who is considered a close contact. We will work in collaboration with Public Health to follow their recommendations should an illness occur.

CONFIRMED COVID-19 POSITIVE CASE

- If a staff member 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.
- We ask our community members and staff to inform the school should there be a positive COVID-19 case in the community.
- All contact tracing would be undertaken under the guidance of Public Health.
- Communication to the community will balance the privacy of the individual with the duty to inform, and all communication will be under the guidance of Public Health.
- Schools will not provide notification to staff or students' families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, unless directed to by Public Health.

RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Students and staff should:

- Cough and sneeze into their elbow, sleeve 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.
- Educators will instruct and encourage children/students on following cough/sneeze etiquette.

HAND HYGIENE

- Handwashing with soap and water is still the single most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.
- When sinks are not available, alcohol-based sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol will be used.

Students and staff will be required to wash/sanitize their hands:

- Upon arrival at school and departure from school.
- Before eating and drinking.
- After using the bathroom.
- After sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- When moving between different learning environments (e.g. Outdoor/indoor transitions, from gym room to the classroom).
- Teachers will assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.



PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Within cohorts, physical distancing should include avoiding physical contact, minimizing close, prolonged face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible within the space available.

- Outside of cohorts, practicing physical distancing should include avoiding physical contact and close, prolonged face-to-face interactions, spreading out as much as possible within the space available, and ensuring there is 1-2 meters of space available between people.
- Spaces where members of different cohorts interact should be sufficiently large, and/or should have limits on the number of people so that 1-2 meters of space is available between people.
- Within and outside of cohorts, there should be no crowding.
- Staff and students in different cohorts will practice distancing in common areas, hallways, while entering and exiting the building, and when queuing for events.
- If distancing from students in another learning groups is not possible, staff will be required to wear masks.
- We are aware of the challenges of monitoring distancing and will do so with targeted supervision, signage and continual reminders. Please support this effort by discussing expectations with your child at home.
- Traffic flow in common spaces will be managed with directional signs.
- Students can socialize with peers in different learning groups if they are outdoors, but are expected to minimize physical contact, as noted in the provincial guidelines.
- During drop off and pick up, parents and caregivers will remain outside of the school.
- Students and staff will avoid greetings like hugs or handshakes.
- Outside learning will occur more frequently.
- Shared items will be reduced.
- There will be no sharing of food or drink.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of objects and high-touch surfaces is very important to help to prevent the transmission of viruses from contaminated objects and surfaces.
- RJDS will be cleaned in accordance with the BCCDC expectations for a public setting.
- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least once every 24 hours.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces will occur at least twice every 24 hours (This includes doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, keyboards.)
- Garbage containers will be emptied daily.
- We will limit frequently touched items that are not easily cleaned.
- Shared items where cross-contamination is possible (e.g., shared school supplies, coffee and water stations, and snack bins) will be removed or cleaned between uses.

- Common, commercially available detergents and disinfectant products will be used.
- A cleaning and disinfecting schedule has been created to ensure the above is completed daily.

LEARNING GROUPS

A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school quarter, semester, or year, and who primarily interact with each other. Each learning group can contain no more than 60 people.

- RJDS will be divided in 2 learning groups, K-3, and 4-7. This division works well as the two groups are primarily located in 2 separate buildings.
- Students will stay in their homeroom classroom, for the most part. Specialist teachers not in the cohort will distance themselves from students in the classroom. (Interactions with specialist teachers will be minimized while still maintaining programs.)
- Students in different cohorts enter and exit the building using different doorways. More details to come on drop off and pick-up.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with BCCDC Guidelines.
- If space is available, each student will have their own seat unless sharing with a member of their own household.
- Seating will be kept consistent and students will have assigned seats when possible.
- RJDS will keep an up-to-date passenger list to share with Public Health if contact tracing is required.
- Students must wash or sanitize their hands prior to boarding the bus.
- Students in grades 4 and above will be required to wear a mask on the bus.

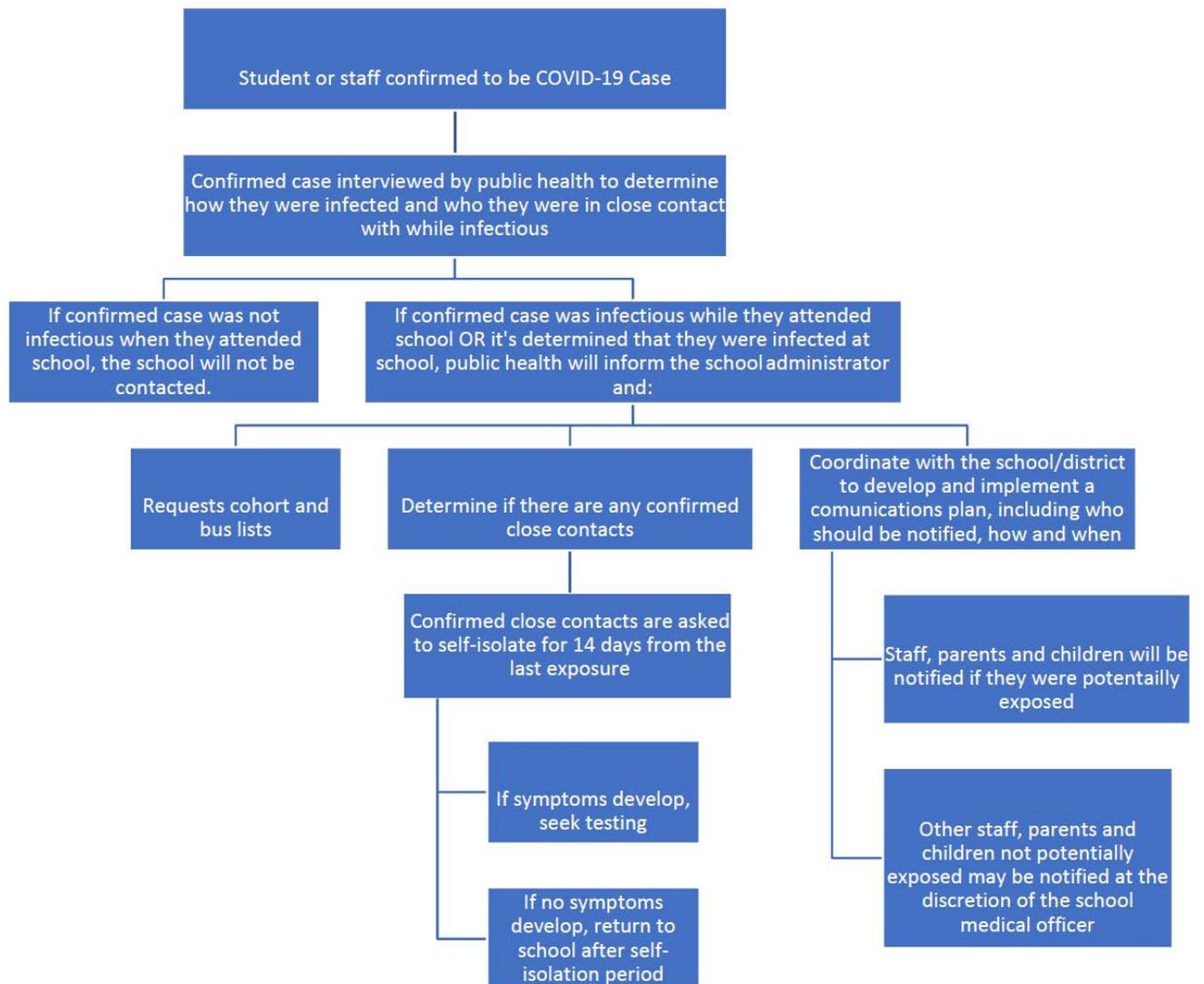
VISITORS

- During Stage 2, we will strive to keep visitors prioritized to those supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g. teacher candidates, therapists).
- Those wishing to make an appointment with a member of staff are asked to schedule through the office, or schedule a phone or Zoom meeting.
- Parents dropping off or picking up students are asked to remain outside the building and practice physical distancing.
- All visitors to the building will be required to complete a health check and don a mask before entering.
- RJDS will keep a list of the date, names, and contact information for all visitors who enter the school.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

This is a challenging time for all. Nevertheless, we will endeavor to make this experience as positive as possible for our students. We will aim to:

- Have fun with the children.
- Reassure students about their personal safety and health. We will tell them that it is okay to be concerned and there is a lot we can do to stay safe and healthy.
- Answer questions with information that is suitable for their age level.
- Maintain familiar activities and routines. This can reinforce the sense of security for children. At the same time, build in the social distancing routines and strategies into the play activities.



COVID-19 RESOURCES

Self Assessment Tool

- [BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool](#)

BC Centre for Disease Control

- [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)

Ministry Documents

- [Provincial COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K to 12 School Settings](#) - A guidance document to help schools maintain a safe and healthy school environment.
- [COVID-19: Return to School website](#) - The website that focuses on details on Stage 2 of B.C. 's Education Restart Plan, including information on health and safety guidelines and learning groups.

WorkSafe BC Documents

- [Education \(K-12\): Protocols for Returning to Operation](#)

Healthcare Resources

- [HealthLinkBC](#)
- [Vancouver Coastal Health](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [BC Ministry of Health](#)
- [Canada Health Agency](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)