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4052 Wilkinson Road
Victoria, BC V8Z 5A5
Phone: (250) 595-7765
Fax: (250) 595-7712
Email: principal@discoveryschool.ca
www.discoveryschool.ca

Discovery School's Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

Introduction

The health and safety of Discovery students, staff, and school community are of paramount importance to us. Discovery School's Communicable Disease Plan has been developed to align with the latest released guidelines released by the Province.

Discovery School's Communicable Disease Plan will continue to be updated throughout the school year to ensure our protocols and procedures reflect recommendations suggested by the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Public Health Officer (PHO), and our regional Island Health authorities, as the Province has now allowed for regional and community variations in requirements, based on local and community circumstances.

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

- Communicable disease prevention measures will continue to be aligned with public health guidance to support student and staff wellness.
- Using an inclusive and trauma-informed lens, with a focus on mental health and wellness.
- Focusing supports to address unique student and staff needs, recognizing the pandemic has impacted individuals and communities differently.
- Consulting and working with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples to address the unique educational and learning needs of their communities.
- Engaging and collaborating with parents/caregivers, staff, unions and community partners to develop local solutions when needed.
- As required by [WorkSafeBC](#), all boards of education, independent school authorities & schools must ensure the health of their workers by ensuring that steps are taken to reduce the risk to workers from communicable diseases.
- The Provincial Health Officer or local Medical Health Officers may issue temporary provincial, regional or local recommendations or orders of additional prevention measures during times of increased communicable disease risk.

Our families, staff, and students have a shared responsibility in protecting themselves and each other from the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. This is achieved by all reading, knowing, and following the preventive plan and necessary safety measures. Staff will strive to implement psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice alongside physical health and safety measures.

Achieving an as close-to-normal learning environment within the guidelines is an important step in



helping achieve wellbeing for all. The Ministry has created trauma-informed practice resources that are available on the [erare \(Expect Respect and a Safe Education\)](#) website. Teachers will have access to these and other materials to support students.

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

A. Indigenous Student Success and Achievement

As directed, Discovery School will continue to support equitable outcomes and opportunities for all Indigenous learners. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on Indigenous communities. Boards/authorities have been requested to identify Indigenous students whose educational outcomes may have been negatively impacted during the pandemic and make accommodations to ensure these students are supported. Discovery will ensure the needs of Indigenous students who require additional supports will be planned for and prioritized in partnership with parents/caregivers and communities.

Discovery School's Communicable Disease Prevention Plan focuses on reducing the risk of transmission of communicable diseases (including COVID-19). Our plan is readily available (e.g., post on school website, emailed to parents, posted on a bulletin board at the school).

The prevention measures outlined below should be always in place. During times of increased communicable disease risk, public health may recommend additional prevention measures for schools to implement. Our Communicable Disease Prevention Plan will be updated when temporary additional measures are in place.

Discovery will review our Communicable Disease Prevention Plans when this guidance is updated, and/or on an annual basis or as circumstances require and will do so with our Site Committees and Joint Health and Safety Committees. Reviews should address areas where there are identified gaps in implementation.

1. Environmental Practices

Discovery will use/promote a combination of strategies to control the transmission of COVID-19 in our community, including:



A. Vaccinations

Variants of COVID-19 spread the same way as the original COVID-19. That means the prevention measure of vaccines is necessary to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading. The BCCDC states it is important for everyone eligible to get fully vaccinated. The public health officials have stressed that vaccines are the best form of protection against COVID-19.

Discovery endorses the public health officials' strong encouragement for all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated and receive recommended boosters against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them, including those who are not eligible to be vaccinated. It is strongly recommended that adults interacting with children be fully vaccinated. More information on COVID-19 vaccination and the workplace is available on the Work Safe B.C. website. Evidence-based immunization information and tools for B.C. residents are available from BCCDC and ImmunizeBC websites. Students and staff are also encouraged to ensure they are up to date on all recommended vaccines for other communicable diseases, including COVID-19 vaccines.

B. WorkSafeBC – Communicable Disease Prevention

Discovery School must and will follow WorkSafeBC communicable disease prevention guidance and must provide communication, training and orientation to ensure the health and safety of their workers. WorkSafeBC communicable disease prevention guidance is aligned with the guidance provided by BCCDC. Please see their website for specific requirements and additional information.

C. Environmental Cleaning

Regular cleaning and disinfecting of spaces, objects and high-touch surfaces is part of the school's approach to supporting safe and healthy learning and work environments, and prevention of communicable diseases. Discovery will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's cleaning and disinfecting recommendations. Our janitorial staff will clean and disinfect the school premises using approved cleaners. Cleaning Guidelines:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least once every 24 hours.
 - This includes items that only a single student uses, like an individual desk.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently-touched surfaces will occur in the evening/early morning and if needed then mid-day of high-touch surfaces.
 - These high-touch surfaces include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g., doorknobs/crash bars, stairwell railings, light switches, toilet handles, faucets, shared gym equipment, tables, desks and chairs used by multiple students).
- Cleaning will also occur whenever surfaces are visibly dirty, or spills occur.
- It may be impossible to wash certain frequently-touched items (sand, playdough, lab equipment, manipulatives, etc.). These items may still be used providing proper hand



hygiene is practiced before and after use.

- Objects made of materials that are not easily cleaned (e.g., foam, etc.), or that are typically cleaned intermittently (e.g., fabrics, soft toys, etc.), will continue to be used and be cleaned (if possible) according to regular practices.
- Carpets and rugs can also be used.
- Cleaning and disinfecting immediately of any surface or material that has come into contact with bodily fluids.
- Any equipment a student has placed in their mouth or that has been in contact with bodily fluid will need to be cleaned as soon as possible.
- Students will be instructed to wipe down their work areas (this will take place before eating breaks). There may be other times as needed that this may be requested.
- Other general cleaning will occur in line with regular practices.
- Medical cot and mattress will be cleaned and disinfected prior to use and after they are used or soiled. Pillowcases and blankets will be laundered between single person uses. Protective medical clothes will be applied as a protective barrier with each time.
- Blankets will be laundered with each use.
- All air filtration systems have their filters checked and changed as needed.

Cleaning and disinfection activities ensure there is a focus on spaces that have been utilized by staff or students. Notes and signs, and providing schedules to the janitor are implemented procedures to identify unoccupied spaces or heavily used spaces to help custodial staff focus their efforts on spaces that have been used.

Each classroom will also be supplied with a disinfectant spray bottle and paper towels, as well as disinfectant wipes for use by teachers and students as needed. Microfibre cloths have been issued for cleaning, as these are proven to have the greatest ability to remove microbes from surfaces and inhibit microbial growth. All sinks in washrooms, common areas and kitchens will be stocked with hand washing supplies at all times (i.e., soap and paper towels).

D. Waste Disposal and Other Potentially Infectious Material

Caution will be taken when handling garbage because it may contain contaminated material with blood and/or bodily fluids. Disposable gloves may be worn when handling waste or laundry. Hand hygiene will be performed before and after handling waste and garbage. Daily waste removal is sufficient per usual standards.

Staff and or the janitor (timing dependent) will clean up spills, including biohazard spills (blood and bodily fluids) and will use appropriate gloves and/or PPE in these circumstances.

E. Ventilation

Ventilation is a type of engineering control that may help reduce airborne concentrations of a virus



and filter out other microbes.

The school's ventilation ducts are cleaned professionally every summer. Rooms are equipped with air purifiers and filters changed as needed and on a cycle of replacement.

Basic guidelines:

- Use of the outdoors is still encouraged due to its overall health benefits. Some activities may take place outdoors, weather permitting.
- Doors and windows will remain open wherever possible; weather permitting.
- For spaces where heat can be an issue, a fan or air conditioner may be used.
- Air conditioners are used only with venting to the outside. When using air conditioners and fans in ventilated spaces, air should be moved from high places to lower places instead of blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to another's. Avoid horizontal cross breezes.
- Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed should be avoided, except when necessary (e.g., during high or excessive heat events).
- Portable air conditioners and fans are only used in ventilated spaces, with air moved from high to low and not situated/aimed at face level.

F. Emergency and Evacuation Drills

- Unless directed by MoE to do otherwise, Discovery will continue to practice emergency (e.g. fire, earthquake, lockdown) and evacuation drills as per BC Fire Code 2.8.3.2, and modify current drill procedures to adhere to health and safety guidelines (e.g., providing additional muster spots to prevent crowding/congregating).
- Discovery will continue to update their fire safety plans on an annual basis, as per the BC Fire Code, to pandemic protocols). School fire safety plans, including fire drill procedures, will be developed in cooperation with the local fire department.
- The above two points are also applicable to earthquake, hold and secure, and lockdown drills.
- In the event of an actual emergency, emergency procedures must take precedence over COVID-19 preventive measures.
- Emergency and evacuation planning, and drills will spacing out on stairwells, in hallways, and personal space allotments for gathering spots) In the event of an actual emergency, communicable disease prevention measures can be suspended to ensure for a timely, efficient, and safe response.

G. General Hygiene Protocols/Respiratory Etiquette

Good personal hygiene is the key to reducing the risk of infection and the spread of communicable



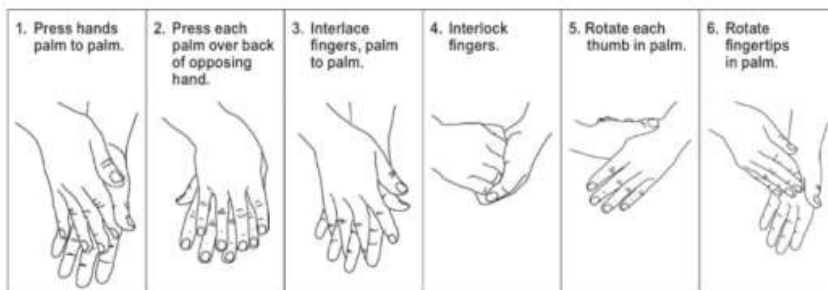
diseases from an infected person to a healthy individual. All employees and students attending the school will be instructed and reminded to practice principles of good hand and respiratory hygiene. The following hygiene practices are expected:

- Washing your hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds is the most important thing you can do to help protect yourself from getting sick.
- 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.
- When soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, which is available at all entrances to the school, in common areas, classrooms and photocopier rooms.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or direct into the elbow when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue away immediately. If you observe others not using appropriate etiquette, politely remind them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Do not share food, beverages, eating utensils or similar items with others. Food needs to be self-contained. Pack in and pack out all items lunches!
- Beverage containers should be filled from taps and those water fountains that are equipped with bottle fill spouts. Students should bring a personal, labelled water bottle and refrain from sharing.
- Do not share equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., mouthguards, mouthpieces for instruments, etc.).
- Keep your workspace clean and clean surfaces in your own work area routinely.
- As possible, devices such as laptops, Chromebooks, iPads, keyboards, and screens will be cleaned between use.
- Reminders to sanitize personal devices such as cell phones.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Keep your interactions with anyone who is sick as brief as possible.
- Stay away from crowded places whenever possible—respect personal space and avoid involuntary physical contact.
- Stay home and seek medical attention if you are sick. Report illness to school.
- If you're feeling heightened stress or anxiety, reach out for support.

H. Hand Washing

Hand washing is one of the best ways to minimize the risk of infection. Proper hand washing helps prevent the transfer of infectious material from the hands to other parts of the body— particularly the eyes, nose, and mouth—or to other surfaces that are touched.

It is expected that hands be washed or sanitized at these key times to limit the spread of germs:



When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at school and before they go home. • Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch). • Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple classes with shared equipment. • Before and after eating and drinking. • After using the toilet. • After handling common resources/ equipment/ supplies. • After sneezing or coughing into hands. • Whenever hands are visibly dirty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at school and before they go home. • Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch). • Before and after eating and drinking. • Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating. • Before and after giving medication to a student or self. • After using the toilet. • After contact with bodily fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood). • After cleaning tasks. • After removing gloves. • After handling garbage. • Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

2. Administrative Practices /Health Awareness

A. Daily Health Checks

We all must remain committed to personal wellness and the prevention of communicable diseases by staying home when sick. Students should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities. There will be a low threshold of tolerance for those who arrive at school sick, they will be sent home.

Parents and caregivers: perform the Daily Health Check with your child and follow the directions as to when to stay home. Directions for the BC Self-Assessment Tool can be found here: <https://bc.thrive.health/> You can download the iPhone/iPad iOS or Android devices app as an easy way to decide if your child should attend school based on their symptoms.



All employees and contractors of Discovery: complete a Daily Wellness Check and do not come to school if you are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities.

For more information on communicable diseases including COVID-19, please refer to the [BCCDC website](#). If you have any concerns or questions about the health of your child, you may also contact 8-1-1 at any time.

B. Illness Practices / What to Do When Sick

Stay Home When Sick

Complete your morning Daily Health Check and if you have any symptoms, stay home. Seek guidance regarding when to get tested, [When to Get Tested for COVID-19 resource](#) or the [B.C. Self-Assessment Tool](#) provides more information on whether you should get a test for COVID-19. Those unsure or concerned about their symptoms should connect with a health care provider or call 8-1-1.

Stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.

Anyone sent to school sick and unable to participate in school-related activities will be sent home.

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 enough to where they feel well enough to return to regular activities and their fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., ibuprofen, acetaminophen). Information specific to COVID-19 is available from BCCDC, [BCCDC website](#).

Positive COVID Test

Staff, children, or other persons in the school setting who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance on the [BCCDC website](#) as to how long they should self-isolate.

They can return to school when they no longer need to self-isolate, as long as symptoms have improved, and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

Symptoms of Illness While 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 will be supported to go home until their symptoms have improved.

Appropriate infection control precautions will 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.

In the event that a student develops or exhibits symptoms of illness while at school or when involved in school activities, Discovery will:

- Promptly separate students and staff who show symptoms from others until they can safely leave the school, with appropriate supervision for students by the staff member that was working with the student in the designated sick room. Primarily Rm 107.
- Anyone who is required to provide care to the ill person should respect personal space of the ill individual and practice diligent hand hygiene while the ill person is waiting to be picked up.
- A 3ply non-medical mask will be provided and staff should avoid touching body fluids as much as possible, and practice diligent hand hygiene.
- Staff caring for the ill child will assume responsibility for cleaning and disinfecting the required surfaces/equipment. If needed, Proper PPE to be used.
- The staff member will also clean and disinfect the surfaces/equipment which the bodily fluids may have been in contact with while the individual was ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.) prior to the surfaces/equipment being used by others. The janitor will also be notified immediately of any need for priority cleaning.
- Parents/guardians will be notified immediately and requested to come to pick up their child.
- It is expected that parents/guardians will come to the school to pick up the student immediately. We encourage families to have a back-up plan for pick up in the event that their child is ill and parents/guardians may have complications with work preventing them to make an immediate pick up.
- If an individual is experiencing respiratory symptoms and not able to wear a face mask, the ill person should be provided with tissues to practice good respiratory etiquette. Soiled tissues must be safely disposed of in waste receptacles.
- A staff member who shows symptoms of communicable disease, including but not limited to COVID-19, must notify administration immediately and promptly go home. Administration must confirm the location(s) the employee was working in to ensure environmental cleaning can be conducted in those spaces.
- The School will request that the student's family seek guidance regarding [When to Get Tested for COVID-19 resource](#) or the [B.C. Self-Assessment Tool](#) which provide information on whether you should get a test for COVID-19 and stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.

C. Students and Staff with Pre-existing Medical Conditions

It is important that families update their child's medical history in the new school year (Medical Form) and notify the school of any pre-existing medical conditions or changes to medication.

This is an expectation for all students (and staff with their medical forms), and particularly important for any individuals with allergies, on-going health concerns, or with health issues which may present



as symptoms similar to those experienced with communicable diseases including, but not limited to, COVID-19. This information will help to inform staff of a baseline for the individual with which to compare should symptoms change or worsen.

Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition, can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

It is important for families to communicate any new or existing medical needs with their child's teachers so that they are aware of the situation. Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to communicable disease (including COVID-19) 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 base on their or their parent/caregiver's personal choice.

Discovery will continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one.

In-class instruction may not be suitable for some children (or families) with severe immune compromise or medical complexity. Most students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case-by-case basis under the guidance of a medical doctor. (e.g., students who have had a recent organ transplant, who are receiving chemotherapy, those with an illness impacting their immune system). In the event that a parent is unsure if a student is able to receive in-person instruction as per the aforementioned reasons, the school will work with families and their health practitioners as they determine if enrollment in a certified remote learning facility is appropriate, or if the safety measures Discovery School can offer ensure learning can continue, or if the school can offer equity of access to learning at home for a very short period of time. Students who require additional home supports are identified through a medical needs assessment.

- Continuity of learning plans align with the goals identified in a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- They are developed in consultation with parents/caregivers and the specialists who typically support the student.

D. Continuity of Learning

If teachers are required to be home due to symptoms, and are still well enough to teach, they may be teaching virtually to the classroom with the SEA supervising attention to task and clarifying as per usual. This is situational dependent.



E. Space Arrangement

Classroom and learning configurations, seating plans and activities will be arranged in a manner that uses the space to best meet the learner needs and preferred educational approaches.

F. Visitor Access

The following measures are in place:

- Visitors, including community groups using the school, should follow applicable communicable disease prevention measures outlined in this document.
- Drop-in visits are strongly discouraged. Prearranged appointments are preferred.
- Appointments with inquiring parents will be offered via Zoom.
- Public access to the school will continue to be monitored and limited.
- School co-curricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring between schools) will occur and be virtually if there are regional, provincial and/or federal public health recommendations and orders.
- Attendance for IEP and report card meetings and teacher/parent meetings will be offered a choice of in person and virtually this year.

G. Curriculum, Programs & Activities

Schools should implement communicable disease prevention practices (e.g., cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity.

H. Field Trips

When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document. If Discovery undertakes an overnight field trip staff will need to consider guidance provided for overnight camps from [BCCDC](#) and the [BC Camps Association](#) when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.

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

Students will be encouraged to practice 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 will not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.



J. School Libraries / Learning Commons

Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as per routine practice.

K. Trades in Training / Work Experience Programs

If any student enrolls in individual training/work experience, programs will follow the Communicable Disease Prevention Plan required by the workplace/facility. Classes (or other similar groupings of students) participating in training/work experience programs together will follow the more stringent measures (if applicable) between the school and the workplace/facility's Communicable Disease Prevention Plans.

3. Personal Practices

A. Health Awareness

Everyone at school should practice health awareness, including staying home when sick.

B. Masks & Face Coverings

BCCDC Guidance

The decision to wear a mask beyond when it is recommended by public health is a personal one, based on individual preference. Some students and staff may choose to continue to wear a non-medical mask or face covering throughout the day or for certain activities. The choice of staff and students to choose whether they practice additional personal prevention measures should be respected. Information on non-medical masks is available from [BCCDC](#).

The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students, and visitors. Some people may choose to continue to wear a mask because they are more comfortable wearing a mask or because they, or someone in their family, may be at higher risk and want to take extra precautions. Some may choose to continue to wear them throughout the school day, or only during specific activities. A person's choice should be supported and respected. Discovery School will:

- Promote 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 practicing hand hygiene. Masks are most effective when fitted, worn and handled correctly.

C. Hand Hygiene

Staff, students and visitors will be encouraged to practice frequent hand hygiene. To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the BCCDC's [hand hygiene poster](#).

D. 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.

E. Personal Space

Staff and students will be encouraged to respect others personal space (the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person). Regular reminders will be provided as needed.

- As per school policy, close greetings like hugs or handshakes will be avoided by all and reminders given to students to keep their hands to themselves, and maintain space between themselves and others.

F. Sharing Food, Beverages & Other Items That Touch The Mouth

Staff and students will be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g., food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices).

Shared-use items that touch the mouth should be cleaned and disinfected between use by different individuals (e.g., water bottles, instrument mouth pieces).



4. Administrator Protocols for Managing Communicable Disease Activity at School

BCCDC Guidance

Most communicable diseases experienced by students and staff within school settings may be managed by the individual/family and through routine preventative measures, such as staying home from school until well enough to participate in regular activities. Resources are available to support management of routine communicable diseases, including [HealthLink BC](#), the [BCCDC Guide to Common Childhood Diseases](#), the [Sneezes and Diseases website](#), and other school health resources hosted on health authority webpages ([Vancouver Coastal Health](#); [Fraser Health](#); [Interior Health](#); [Island Health](#); [Northern Health](#)).

Public health may become directly involved if certain reportable diseases, such as measles, are identified where there are effective interventions available to prevent further spread and protect against severe disease.

Additional time-limited public health measures may also be implemented at the discretion of the local Medical Health Officer or the Provincial Health Officer in response to broader risk of communicable disease transmission in the community.

School or district administrators can contact public health if they have concerns about communicable disease transmission within the school setting and require additional support.

A. 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, practice health awareness, and to stay home when sick. Discovery school will do this.

To protect personal privacy and to support accuracy, Discovery School will exercise caution in providing communicable disease notifications beyond when they are recommended by public health.

B. Functional Closures

A functional closure of a school is the temporary closure of a school determined by a school 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. Discovery School will notify their Medical Health Officer and the Ministry of Education and Child Care (educ.covid@gov.bc.ca) when they are considering or implementing a functional closure.

The school will notify the division or school community (depending on the staff/student illnesses via email notification.

C. 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.

- For smaller schools like Discovery (e.g., student population under 100) where large fluctuations in school absenteeism rates can be due to small numbers of students away, schools should contact public health if they determine an abnormal number of students are away due to illness over 2- 3 days. Discovery will follow these recommendations.

Links:

[Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#)

<http://www.bccdc.ca/>

<https://bc.thrive.health/>

[B.C. Self-Assessment Tool](#)

[When to Get Tested for COVID-19 resource](#)

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/>