

## **St. Anthony of Padua School Covid-19 Communicable Disease Prevention Plan**

Based on guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control and experience to date within B.C. and other jurisdictions showing schools as low-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission, even with increased risk of COVID-19 in some communities, K-12 students can participate in **full-time, in-class instruction** in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.

Further to the Provincial Health Officer statement on June 17, 2021, employers are no longer required to maintain a COVID-19 Safety Plan but must instead transition to Communicable Disease Prevention Plan. Communicable disease prevention focuses on reducing the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, and includes both ongoing measures (e.g. hand hygiene, cleaning) and additional measures to be implemented as advised by public health.

This plan outlines the current prevention measures in place at St. Anthony of Padua School to reduce the risk of communicable diseases, including COVID-19. As already stated, Schools continue to be considered low-risk settings for COVID-19 transmission.

St. Anthony of Padua School will regularly review this communicable disease plan, with the St. Anthony of Padua School Joint Health and Safety Committees/PEC and address areas where there are identified gaps in implementation. BCCDC has developed a COVID-19 School Communicable Disease Checklist that will be used to support these communicable disease plan reviews.

Medical Health Officers continue to be able to place local Public Health Orders requiring additional health and safety measures beyond the guidance in this document at their own discretion, based on their authority under provincial legislation. These measures may be put in place during times of increased community transmission of COVID-19, and within communities with low vaccination uptake, based on local epidemiology and in proportion to the risk. Local Public Health Orders may be placed for entire regions or communities, including but not limited to schools (unless schools are specifically exempted), or for specific settings or activities within a health authority region. For schools, the local Medical Health Officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a grouping of schools, a school district, all schools within the health authority region, or some combination thereof, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk. Additional regional measures are likely to be similar to some of those in place during the 2020-21 school year, and may include:

- limits on gatherings and events;
- reconfiguring room arrangements or incorporating more activities that maximize space between people and reduce face-to-face contact;
- limiting visitors;
- recommending increased mask use.

Learning groups are not expected to be an additional prevention measure for regional recommendations.

### **Supportive School Environment**

St. Anthony of Padua School encourages students to practice personal preventive measures like wearing a non-medical mask, regularly practicing hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, and having students respect others personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person. St. Anthony of Padua School will support student's personal preventive measures by:

- Staff teaching, reinforcing and modeling these behaviours
- Sharing information from BCCDC, and PHO with parents and families
- Use of signage

Staff will utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in preventative practices.

### **Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures (Prevention Measures)**

The current Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease measures will be used to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in schools and include in order: 1. Public Health Measures, 2. Environmental Measures, 3. Administrative Measures, 4. Personal Measures and 5. Personal Protection Equipment. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced. Control measures in place already will continue and will be reinforced by regular communication from the school.

Infection prevention and exposure control measures (prevention measures) help create low-risk environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. These are more effective in controlled environments, like schools, where multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely and consistently implemented.

## **1. Public Health Measures**

### **Vaccines**

The vaccines used in B.C. are highly effective against COVID-19, including among variants of concern. While COVID-19 is present in our communities, there will continue to be COVID-19 exposures in schools and cases amongst students and staff.

### **Public Health Case Management**

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to follow Public health (including the Provincial Health Officer and BC Centre for Disease Control) guidance regarding individual and community recommendations to manage the risk of COVID-19 in B.C. St. Anthony of Padua School will take direction from public health who monitor cases of COVID-19 and determine if actions should be taken to prevent or control spread. As well, we will share public health information with staff, students, and families, including providing direction on if and when exposure notifications should be sent.

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to maintain daily attendance records for staff, students, and visitors (including itinerant staff, teachers on call, parents/caregivers, and volunteers), and keep accurate class lists to assist with contact tracing if necessary. This includes maintaining attendance records for all school-supported activities, including extracurricular activities and field trips.

### **School Exposure & Notifications**

An exposure occurs if a person attends school when they may have been potentially infectious with a communicable disease (e.g. COVID-19) and there is a risk of transmission to others. When a potential exposure at a school is identified, public health will work with the St. Anthony of Padua School to understand who may have been exposed and determine what actions should be taken, including identifying if other students or staff members have been exposed.

Public health considers vaccination status when investigating school exposures. Staff and students who are not fully immunized and are identified as close contacts are more likely to be asked to self-isolate than those who are fully immunized.

To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained, public health will only disclose a confirmed case of a communicable disease if the person was infectious when they attended school. Public health will only provide the personal information needed to support effective contact tracing.

Public health expects to transition to notification practices that ensure those who are potentially at risk for communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, due to an exposure at school (e.g., those who are close contacts) are directly notified and informed of what subsequent actions they should take (e.g., monitor for symptoms, self-isolate, seek testing, etc.). St. Anthony of Padua School will provide notifications only if directed to do so by the school medical officer.

### **Outbreak & Clusters**

A cluster refers to two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 that occur among students and/or staff within a 14-day period, and isolated transmission is suspected or confirmed to have occurred within the school.

An outbreak is when there is sustained, uncontrolled, widespread transmission of COVID-19 within a school, and a Medical Health Officer determines extraordinary public health measures are necessary to stop further transmission in the school or school community.

If a cluster or outbreak occurs at St. Anthony of Padua School, additional measures may be recommended or required by a Medical Health Officer to prevent further transmission of a communicable disease. This may include implementing additional health and safety measures within the school, testing of all potentially exposed individuals or in rare cases, ordering the school to close for a certain amount of time.

### **Regional Differences and Local Public Health Orders and Recommendations**

Medical Health Officers continue to be able to place local public health Orders requiring additional health and safety measures beyond this guidance at their own discretion, based on their authority under provincial legislation. These may be put in place during times of increased community transmission of COVID-19, and within communities with low vaccination uptake. They are based on local epidemiology and are proportional to risk.

Local public health Orders may be placed for whole regions or communities, or for specific businesses or activities within a health authority region. For example, a health authority may issue a regional Gatherings & Events Order that limits indoor gatherings to a specific number of people or to a specific type of activity. Schools within that region would need to ensure extracurricular and social gatherings and events complied with the Order unless schools were specifically excluded.

For schools, the local Medical Health Officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a grouping of schools, a school district, for all schools within a health authority region, or some combination thereof, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk.

St. Anthony of Padua School will respond as advised to do so by those in authority to do so.

### **School Communicable Disease Checklist**

St. Anthony of Padua School has completed the Communicable Disease Checklist in creating our Communicable Disease Prevention plan.

## **2.Environmental Measures**

### **Ventilation & Air Exchange**

**At St. Anthony of Padua School doors and windows are kept open as much as is safe to do so.**

Our school 's mechanical heating and ventilation system is designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort of workers and maintained so it works properly. Our school windows and doors will remain open as weather permits, if it doesn't impact the functioning of ventilation systems.

Since our system is computer controlled and capable of adjustment, it has been adjusted to maximize the amount of outdoor air coming in. Filters have also been upgraded.

Our Communicable disease prevention measures will be balanced against other risks, like excessive heat events in warmer months or poor air quality from wildfire smoke.

While taking students outside more often is no longer recommended for COVID-19 prevention, it is still encouraged due to its overall health benefits and in good weather this will be continued at St. Anthony of Padua School.

### **Emergency and Evacuation Drills**

Schools should continue to practice various emergency procedures, including six school fire evacuation drills required annually by BC Fire Code 2.8.3.2, lockdown drills, etc.

- Staff should be notified in advance of emergency/evacuation drills.
- Full evacuations are required to comply with the fire drill requirements of BC Fire Code 2.8.3.2. ▪ Schools must continue to review their fire safety plans on a minimum annual basis, as per the BC Fire as pandemic related protocols). Changes to school fire safety plans, including fire drill procedures, should be developed in cooperation with the local fire department.
- Emergency procedures may require modification to adhere to communicable disease plans (e.g. designating additional muster locations to reduce crowding where required, making efforts to minimize involuntary physical contact between participants, etc.). Schools may also need to consult with their local medical health officer for guidance on current public health Orders, which may affect site specific emergency and evacuation procedures.

In the event of an actual emergency, procedure modifications may be suspended to ensure a timely, efficient and safe response.

**St. Anthony of Padua School regularly practices Fire Drills and other emergency situations.**

### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

St. Anthony of Padua School is cleaned once every school day and will be increased if need be.

Frequently-touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day and when visibly dirty. These include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g., door handles, hand rails, tap faucets, shared gym equipment, etc.). Garbage containers will be emptied daily.

Surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g., desks used by a few students, lockers, manipulatives) should be cleaned at least 1x/day. Other general cleaning should occur in line with regular practices.

Objects made of materials that are not easily cleaned (e.g., foam, play dough, etc.) or typically cleaned intermittently (e.g., fabrics, soft toys, etc.) can continue to be used. They will be cleaned according to regular practices.

Textbooks, paper, other paper-based products, laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers do not need to be cleaned and disinfected, or quarantined for any period of time.

Frequently touched surfaces continued:

- Items used by larger numbers of students and staff, including doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, faucet handles, toilet handles.
- Limiting access to water fountains is no longer recommended. Hand hygiene should be practiced before and after use.
- School communicable disease plans should not include restricting access to water, washrooms or other spaces that support student learning and well-being (e.g. gymnasiums, libraries, support rooms, etc.). Schools should return to full operation of all spaces in alignment with the protocols outlined in this document.
- Appliances (staff and students can share the use of appliances and other objects, but treat items like microwaves, refrigerators, coffee pots, photocopiers or laminators as frequently touched surfaces)
- Service counters (e.g., office service window, library circulation desk)
  - 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, play dough, etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.
  - Carpets and rugs (e.g. in Kindergarten and Strong Start classes) can also be used.

### **CLEANING AND DISINFECTING BODILY FLUIDS**

Follow these procedures, in conjunction with school/district policies, 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 (e.g., gloves, Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting). .

### **Physical Barriers**

Physical barriers are no longer recommended for communicable disease prevention and will cease being used at student desks. They may be used at personal discretion of individual staff if they deem the need to do so.

## **3. Administrative Measures**

### **Gatherings & Events**

School extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools) will occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders.

### **Space Arrangement**

In learning environments, schools can return to classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches. Use all available space. Cohorts/learning groups are no longer recommended. They are also not expected to be an additional prevention measure for regional recommendations.

Although public health no longer recommends learning groups and physical distancing of 2M as communicable disease measures for the K-12 setting, there are a number of strategies that St. Anthony of Padua School will use to create space between people and to support students and staff in returning to school using a trauma-informed approach:

- students and staff are reminded to respect others' personal space. And will model as necessary.
- if room size allows people, will be spread people out in learning environments and for gatherings and events.
- implement strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.
  - focus on entry and exit areas, and other places where people may gather or crowd.

In indoor spaces, people should have enough room to carry out the intended activity without involuntarily physical contact with another person. In indoor common spaces (e.g., hallways, cafeterias, etc.), schools may continue to use floor markings and posters to direct traffic flow. St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to use staggered entry and dismissal times, recess and lunch breaks to enable this to occur as is reasonably possible.

For indoor activities that bring together multiple classes or other groupings of students in close proximity for a prolonged period of time (e.g., school assemblies, multiple classes doing physical activity in a gym), St. Anthony of Padua School will ensure that people are spread out within the available space. This is expected to be achievable within room capacity limits (where applicable). Whole school events (ie school mass, assemblies) may be conducted by livestream.

Due to the current surge in cases because of the Omicron variant, staff meetings and school assemblies will follow current PHO Gathering and Events Order restrictions on indoor organized gatherings (50 people or 50% capacity, whichever is greater). Meetings will preferably take place by Zoom.

The PHO Gathering and Events Order (50 people or 50% capacity, whichever is greater) also applies to social events at schools such as parties, celebrations and performances.

Strategies that prevent crowding will be used at drop off and pick up times. In the morning, students may arrive and enter classrooms from 8:40 - 8:55, with students with last names beginning with the first letters of the alphabet arriving earlier, and the latter arriving later up to 8:55. Likewise in the afternoon, students with last names beginning with letters A-M should be picked up between 2:40 and 2:50, while those with last names beginning with N-Z should be picked up between 2:50 and 3:00.

Students will wash/sanitize hands upon entry to the school property.

St. Anthony of Padua Staff will continue to take students outside more often due to its overall health benefits.

### **Staff-Specific Considerations**

Staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development days, etc.) will occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for workplace gatherings and events and any related WorkSafe BC guidance. We will continue to spread out in larger rooms when we meet and use electronic means (Zoom) to conduct larger scale meetings where we are unable to do so.

**All staff must wear a non-medical mask when they are at the school.**

### **Visitors**

**All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are at the school.**

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to ensure visitors follow the school's communicable disease plan, including completing a daily health check and not entering the school if they are sick. St. Anthony of Padua Schools will keep a list of the date, names, and contact information of all visitors who enter the school for 45 days following their visit.

We will continue to limit those who enter the school building and allow access to those who make appointments or have a duty to perform at the school.

### **Access to School Site**

- **Visitors, including parents, will have limited access to the school and only with a mask on. Parents should not come to the school during the day to drop off lunches, supplies, etc.**
  - **If parents/caregivers need to contact St. Anthony of Padua staff they are encouraged to do so by phone or email. In person visits should be for essential purposes and arranged in advance by appointment.**
- Visitors must be aware of, and follow school protocols, be limited in their access to necessary spaces only, and will be asked to confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering the school building.

### **Communication and Training/Orientation**

St. Anthony of Padua Schools clearly and consistently communicates guidance, recommendations and Orders from regional Medical Health Officers and the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), including COVID-19 resources to its staff and community. This is done in a multiple formats for ease of understanding (e.g., visual representation, videos using sign language, etc.).

St. Anthony of Padua School will provide school communications that include evidence-based information, provided by the Provincial Health Officer and BC Centre for Disease Control, to build awareness that the risk of contracting COVID-19 from students is minimal and to help address inaccurate information that might be circulating in the school community.

St. Anthony of Padua School provides COVID-19 safety orientation opportunities for staff prior to students arriving for the first day of school, in consultation with their local staff health & safety representatives.

As per WorkSafeBC guidance, employers need to involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for their workplace. Currently, the Worksafe BC Committee is made up of staff members, meets monthly, solicits input from all staff, and makes meeting minutes available to all by posting them in the staff room.

WorkSafeBC recommends that employers ensure the following:

- everyone entering St. Anthony of Padua School, including workers from other employers, have received information on workplace measures, practices and policies at St. Anthony of Padua School
- All workers understand the measures in place at the workplace.
- Supervisors are knowledgeable about the measures, practices, and policies in place, and incorporate these into supervision practices at the workplace.
- Workers know how to raise health and safety concerns.

### **Curriculum, Programs and Activities (including Extracurricular Activities)**

All curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines, including school-led activities held off campus (e.g. sports academies, community-based programs/courses).

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to implement ongoing communicable disease prevention practices (e.g. cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity.

Equipment used will continue to be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines outlined in this

document.

Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles, instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between use.

Hand hygiene should be practiced before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment and whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Guidelines specific to visitor access during school hours (e.g. guest speakers), will be followed.

For PE and music, St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to implement universal communicable disease prevention practices specific to the activity. See below:

## **PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PHE)/OUTDOOR PROGRAMS**

**Students are to wear their PE uniform to PE and should wash it regularly.**

Spread out students and staff within available space, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible.

K-12 staff and students are required to wear masks during PHE/outdoor program classes when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.

Students are not required to wear masks during high-intensity physical activities; mask use during these activities is left to the discretion of Staff. High-intensity physical activities should be conducted outdoors whenever possible.

For low intensity activities (e.g. walking), students are required to wear masks when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.

Shared equipment can be used. Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball), as well as proper respiratory etiquette.

Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

## **MUSIC PROGRAMS**

Handwashing is to be practised before and after using shared equipment.

Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

All guidance published through the Music Teachers Coalition will be adhered to.

## **SCHOOL LIBRARIES / LEARNING COMMONS**

St. Anthony of Padua School Library is open for use by staff and students.

At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing/return of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

- Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. books, magazines, worksheets, etc.) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) are low risk items. Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as normal. There is no need to clean, disinfect or quarantine these items for any period of time.
- The BC Teacher Librarians Association has developed Recommendations for Access to Library Learning Commons Resources to Meet COVID-19 Requirements. In the case of any discrepancy in guidance, schools and school districts are expected to follow the Ministry of Education guidelines.

## **Supporting Students With Disabilities/Diverse Abilities**

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS**

St. Anthony of Padua School has health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse abilities. Students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19. For guidelines specific to children with immune suppression (e.g. students who have had a recent organ transplant, who are receiving chemotherapy, those with an illness impacting their immune system). Parents/caregivers/students who are severely immune compromised are encouraged to contact Mr. Perry to discuss available options for their child (including ensuring appropriate preventative measures are in place for in-class instruction or at home support schooling).

A CISVA Immunocompromised Children in School High Risk Assessment And self- isolation form will need to be filled out prior to approval of school accommodations. This is for very rare cases in the school.

There is no change to levels and means of support to those students on IEPs except where a medical condition may require it.

## **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/DIVERSE ABILITIES WHERE PHYSICAL CONTACT MAY BE REQUIRED**

Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student.

When staff are working with a student indoors, staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield). Additional personal protective equipment is not required beyond that used as part of the personal care routine normally encountered in their regular course of work (e.g., gloves for toileting).

When working with students where seeing facial expressions and/or lip movement is important, options include having the staff member wear a mask with a transparent section to enable visualization of the mouth available from the Principal.

In addition to a non-medical mask, 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.

## **ITINERANT STAFF AND SPECIALISTS**

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to use itinerant staff, TOC's and specialists. They will know St. Anthony of Padua procedures while providing services while wearing a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield as mandated.

Non-medical masks and face shields are available for staff.

## **PLAYGROUNDS**

There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. Playgrounds are a safe environment. The following measures should be taken when using playgrounds:

- Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play
- Attempt to minimize unintentional physical contact between students
- Sand and water can be used for play if children wash their hands before and after play. COVID-19 does not survive well on surfaces, other than hard surfaces. There is no evidence showing that the virus survives on sand, in water or on play dough.

**Extracurricular and social gatherings and events** (including sports and arts events within and between schools) will occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders. The CISVA EAC Commission will provide guidance to school on extracurricular sports at key times during the year that will fall in line with PHO directives.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are permitted. When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- For transportation, including school bus transportation, public transit and carpooling, see guidance in the transportation section in this document.
- Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines.
- Alignment with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.
- Schools should consider guidance provided for overnight camps from BCCDC and the BC Camps Association when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.

Local and international field trips will occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for local and/or international travel. St. Anthony of Padua School will follow the direction of the sites we visit for field trips.

St. Anthony of Padua Schools will use guidance provided for overnight camps from the BCCDC and the BC Camps Association when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation. St. Anthony of Padua School will follow the direction of the camp they visit – Camp Squeah.

## **Transportation**

If and when St. Anthony of Padua School contracts a school bus, we will return to regular seating and onloading/offloading practices. Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day and when visibly dirty. These include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g. door handles, hand rails, etc.). Surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g. seats) should be cleaned 1x/day. Other general cleaning should occur in line with regular practices. A conversation will occur to see if this was done by the bus driver prior to loading.

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to:

- Encourage bus drivers and passengers to practice hand hygiene and before and after trips and to practice respiratory etiquette as needed,
- Spread passengers out if space is available, and
- Open windows when the weather allows.
- Travel with the same people whenever possible,
- Set the vehicle's ventilation to bring in fresh outside air, and do not re circulate the air, •
- Clean hands before and after trips.

For people taking mass transit (e.g. municipal buses, the SkyTrain, ferries, etc.), hand hygiene should be practiced before and after trips. Riders should follow any other safety guidance (including mask guidance) issued by the relevant transit authority.

## **HOT LUNCH PROGRAM**

Schools can continue to provide food services.

**Schools should continue to emphasize that food and beverages should not be shared.**

Students, staff and parents involved in food preparation and distribution will practice relevant food safety practices, including hand hygiene. These will be monitored by administrative and kitchen staff.

### **Community Use of Schools**

St. Anthony of Padua School will allow community use of school facilities so long as the user group follows our St. Anthony of Padua School Communicable Disease prevention plan and procedures and related public health guidance, recommendations, and Orders.

### **Work Experience and TRAINING PROGRAMS**

- St. Anthony of Padua trains EA Assistants from local programs. In collaboration and communication with these institutions we:
  - Ensure that staff and students in the K-12 school and attendees from these institutions are aware of communicable disease prevention measures in place.
  - Diligent student self-assessment of health when transitioning is in place
  - Attendees monitor health daily and wear a mask like all school staff.

### **Water Stations & Fountains**

Our St. Anthony of Padua Water Fountains placed around the school are re opened for use. Janitorial staff will continue to clean and disinfect water fountains as a frequently touched surface and encourage hand hygiene before and after use. St. Anthony of Padua School regularly tests its potable water sources and passed recent testing for lead content in July 2021.

### **FUNDRAISERS**

Schools can continue to offer fundraisers that can be implemented in line with the guidelines set. If the fundraisers involve the sale of food items, they should also align with the Guidelines for Food and Beverages in BC Schools.

### **Personal Items & School Supplies**

Students and staff can continue to bring personal items and school supplies to school for their own use. Students may not share items at this time.

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices, wind instruments). We will continue to not permit outside food drop off of fast food and meals and treats. Please send your child with lunch and snacks from home at the start of the day.

Students can continue to use their lockers (where applicable), as it is better for personal items to be stored in a locker than to be stored in classrooms or carried throughout the school. Classroom teachers will continue to manage the flow of students around lockers to minimize crowding in these spaces.

## **4. Personal Measures**

### **Daily Health Check**

St. Anthony of Padua staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers and students may not come to school if they are sick. Everyone who enters the school buildings must complete a **daily health check**. **See our [sapadua.ca](http://sapadua.ca) website for health check forms or see below.**

A daily health check means a person checking daily to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing any symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) before coming to school. Daily health checks can be supported by the BCCDC resource on [when to get tested for COVID-19](#) or the Ministry of Education's [K-12 Health Check](#). The school does not need to confirm a daily health check has been done or monitor students and staff for symptoms of illness.

No one should come to school if they are sick or otherwise directed to self-isolate by public health. **If staff or**

**students show up sick, or display the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 they will be isolated and sent home immediately.**

### **Self-Monitoring, Self-Isolation and Additional Measures**

Public health will continue to identify and notify close contacts who are required to self-monitor or self-isolate. Due to the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, fully vaccinated close contacts (i.e., 14 days have passed since their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine) are more likely to be asked to self-monitor, not self-isolate. If a person is required to self-isolate, public health ensures they have access to health-care providers and that other appropriate supports are in place. Students and staff are only required to self-monitor or self-isolate if directed to do so by public health. School administrators must ensure the necessary plans are in place for students to be able to continue their educational program if they are required to self-isolate. School districts/authorities should also have contingency plans in place to arrange coverage for staff who are required to self-isolate.

Other people who are not identified as close contacts of a confirmed case, but who may have interacted with the person who tested positive while they were infectious, may also be advised by public health to self-monitor for symptoms.

Those required to self-monitor can still attend school. If they develop symptoms of COVID-19, they should stay home and seek testing.

School medical officers may require additional measures to be taken which may include:

- Requesting students and staff to stay home until contact tracing has been completed
- 

Self-isolation of a full class(es)

- Temporary restrictions or modifications of certain school activities

School medical officers will consider similar measures, as outlined above, in the event of a school cluster. Only in exceptional circumstances would a school medical officer consider a school closure.

### **Self Isolation 14 Days After International Travel**

St. Anthony of Padua School's daily health check policies will align with current federal travel regulations as suggested by the PHO to including exemptions for full vaccinated travelers. As of August 27, 2021:

- Fully vaccinated travelers 12 years and older can qualify for exemption from the mandatory 14-day quarantine period and Day 8 testing requirement (though must still complete the pre-entry testing requirement and randomized arrival testing if required)
- Unvaccinated travelers under 12 who accompanied by travellers who qualify for the fully vaccinated traveller exemption can qualify for exemption from the mandatory 14-day quarantine period (but still must complete the pre-entry, randomized arrival and Day 8 tests)
- Quarantine and testing are considered to be separate requirements – receiving a negative pre-entry or arrival test result does not exempt a traveler from the quarantine period.

### **Communications and Protecting Personal Privacy**

School medical officers will play the lead role in determining if, when and how to communicate out information regarding an exposure to the school community. To protect personal privacy rights, public health will not disclose that a student or staff member tested positive for COVID-19 unless there is reason to believe they may have been infectious when they attended school. In this case, public health will provide only the information required to support effective contact tracing and only to the school administrator or delegate.

Public health will notify close contacts, including if any follow-up actions are recommended (e.g. self-isolate, monitor for symptoms, etc.). School medical officers will also work with the school administrator to determine if additional notifications are warranted (e.g. notification to the broader school community).

In some regions, public health will request support from schools in distributing notification letters/e-mails. In others, public health will issue the notifications directly via a letter/e-mail or phone call.

To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained and that information provided is complete and correct, schools and school districts/authorities should not provide any public statements about potential or confirmed COVID-19 school exposures unless communications have been reviewed and approved by the school medical officer or delegate prior to release (see the *Key Contacts* section for contact information by health authority).

**School Administrator or Staff Informed of a Staff or Student Testing Positive for COVID-19** There may be

circumstances where a staff member, student or parent/caregiver contacts a school administrator, teacher or support staff to inform them that they/their child tested positive for COVID-19, but the school administrator has not yet been contacted by the school medical officer. Teachers or support staff who receive this type of disclosure should inform their school administrator but should not share the information with other staff or students, recognizing the importance of respecting personal privacy.

Public health will already be aware of the confirmed case and will initiate contact tracing. School medical officers will only contact the school administrator if it is determined that the person who tested positive was infectious while they were at school (an exposure) or if they were potentially infected at school. There may be a delay in the school medical officer notifying the school administrator until the contact tracing required to make that determination has been completed (this process may take a few days from when the confirmed case was notified).

### **Rumour of COVID-19 Case Circulating in School Community**

St. Anthony of Padua School cannot act on unconfirmed rumors regarding a case of COVID-19 in the school community. If a member of the school community tests positive for COVID-19, public health will contact any individuals who may be close contacts, including those who may have been exposed at school.

### **Close Contacts of a Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

If public health determines that a student or staff is a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19, the close contact will be asked to self-monitor for symptoms, and may be required to self-isolate. Only health authorities can determine who is a close contact.

School administrators will not be notified by the school medical officer if a student or staff is identified as a close contact of a confirmed case. Close contacts asked to self-monitor may continue to attend school. If COVID-19 symptoms develop, they should stay home and get tested.

Close contacts required to self-isolate must not attend school. Necessary plans are in place for students to be able to continue their educational program while absent from school if they are required to self-isolate.

### **If Symptoms Develop at School**

At St. Anthony of Padua School if a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school the following procedure will be used:

1. Move the person to a space that is comfortable, safe, and supervised (if necessary). This can be a separate location (e.g., another room, a common space, or outdoors if weather allows), or in the same space (e.g., a classroom) if the person can consistently be 2-metres away from others.
2. Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible (if applicable).
3. If the ill person requires assistance, where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance. If not possible, staff should wear a mask if available and tolerated.
4. Provide the person with a mask or tissues if they are exhibiting respiratory symptoms (to cover their coughs or sneezes). Masks should not be worn if the person has gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g., is at risk of vomiting). Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
5. Avoid touching the person's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva, vomit). If you do, practice hand hygiene.
6. Practice hand hygiene after the person has left.
7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces in spaces where the person's body fluids may have been in contact while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.).

### **What To Do When Sick**

Staff and families can go to the BCCDC website to find information about what to do when they are sick with COVID-19 symptoms. Staff, students, and parents/caregivers can also use the BC Self-Assessment Tool app, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance. Information on region-specific services (e.g., testing and vaccination sites) is

available on health authority websites.

Staff and families can also visit HealthLink BC or call 8-1-1 for support on what to do when sick with any symptoms of illness, including non-COVID-19 symptoms.

### **Returning to School After Illness**

When a person can return to school after being sick depends on the type of illness they had. • If they had COVID-19 or another communicable disease, they can return according to the guidance provided to them from public health.

- For other illnesses, generally, the person can return when their symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all activities at school.

If a person is unsure if they are well enough to attend school, they should call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance.

St. Anthony of Padua School does not require a health care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.

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. If the household member tests positive for a communicable disease (including but not limited to COVID-19), public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on next steps.

### **Hand hygiene**

Students, staff and visitors wash hands multiple times in a day via sinks or hand sanitizer stations.

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water reduces the spread of illness. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene.

#### **How to practice diligent hand hygiene:**

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19. • Temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water, though warm water is preferred for personal comfort.
- If sinks are not available (e.g., students and staff are outdoors), use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (also called alcohol-based hand rub) containing at least 60% alcohol.
- 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.
- To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the BCCDC's hand hygiene poster.

#### **Strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:**

- Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene.
- Use portable hand-washing sites or alcohol-based hand rub dispensers where sinks are not available. • Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly.
- Use posters and other methods of promotion.
- Consider student-friendly posters on how to wash your hands.
- Show handwashing videos.
- Ensure hand washing supplies are well stocked at all times including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.

#### **When Student and Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:**

- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student's desk or locker).
- Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple classes with shared equipment.
- After using the toilet.

- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking.

#### **When Student and Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:**

- 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 body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).
- After cleaning tasks.
- After removing gloves.
- After handling garbage.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

#### **Respiratory Etiquette**

Everyone should:

- 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.

Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices among students.

## **5. Personal Protective Equipment**

### **Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings**

Public health continues to monitor community risk of COVID-19 as we progress toward high levels of vaccine coverage. Schools continue to be considered low risk settings for COVID-19 transmission, particularly in the context of a highly immunized population; however, non-medical masks will be recommended for the start of the school year. This will allow for an added layer of protection as schools transition to new measures. The non-medical mask guidance is expected to be reviewed later this fall with the intention that wearing a mask will eventually transition to a personal choice. Regional recommendations may also be issued by local medical health officers based on community risk. Mask requirements should, at minimum, adhere with any regional or provincial public health Orders.

Personal protective equipment (including masks) can provide an additional layer of protection. Non-medical masks and face coverings (masks) have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. They provide some protection to the wearer and to those around them.

In the event a regional or provincial public health recommendation or Order requires stricter non-medical mask use than what is outlined in this document, that recommendation or Order should be followed.

Those wearing masks should still continue to respect others personal space.

Masks should not be used in place of the other safety measures.

#### **K-12 STAFF:**

All K-12 staff may wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses.

- Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are encouraged to consult with their healthcare professional.

For information on PPE when working with students where seeing facial expressions and/or lip movement is important, see the Guidelines for Staff Working with Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities where Physical Contact may be Required section.

**K-12 STUDENTS:**

Masks are optional. Teachers will instruct students in the proper use of masks and support parent and student choice on this issue.

**VISITORS:**

Visitors must undergo a health check before entering the school and must not enter if they have any symptoms of illness.

Masks are not required within school settings for general use.

Students and staff should be supported to know how to properly put on, wear, take off and store non-medical masks and other face coverings. Related information is available on the BCCDC website and the Government of Canada website.

St. Anthony of Padua School will continue to update this plan and communicate updates as needed to parents, staff and students.

*Revised 10.04.22*