



## VCS On-Campus Safety Protocols

**UPDATES WILL OCCUR**

### K - 12 Overall Objective

*To continue working towards the mission and vision of Vernon Christian School by Equipping students for a life of discipleship by providing excellent education in a Christ-Centred community.*

These protocols are based on materials developed by the Provincial Health Officer around risk mitigation measures for education providers.

### OBJECTIVE: At-School Safety Procedures

- To provide a consistent approach to how we manage students in the building
- To provide a clear approach to how students will be monitored and supervised
- To reduce anxiety in the workplace

### Access to the School

Before accessing the school, it is important to be familiar with the following processes:

#### Perform a Daily Health Check

- Parents, caregivers, school staff and other adults routinely entering the school should assess themselves daily for key symptoms of illness prior to entering the school.
- Parents and caregivers should assess their child daily for key symptoms of illness before sending them to school. If their child is sick or is required to self-isolate as per public health direction, they should not come to school.
- For school staff, an active daily health check must be completed in line with the requirements of the Provincial Health Officer's Order on Workplace Safety.
  - Other adults in the school should also complete an active daily health check.

The following resource can be used to support daily health checks: [K to 12 Daily Health Check](#)

These steps do not replace usual health care. Health questions can be directed to 8-1-1 or your healthcare provider. A full list of COVID-19 symptoms is available from [BCCDC](#). A daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious.

### **Symptoms of Illness and Return to School**

Students, staff or other adults should stay at home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness: [When To Get Tested for COVID-19](#)

### **What to do when you test positive for COVID-19**

Public health has transitioned to individual self-management (i.e., individuals care for themselves, engaging with health care providers when needed), with public health focused on identifying and responding to larger clusters and outbreaks. [Individuals who test positive](#) are to notify those they live with or have had close contact with.

### **People who test positive for COVID-19 will need to:**

1. Self-isolate and manage their symptoms
2. Complete an online form to report your test result
3. Notify close contacts

Self-isolation essentially means keeping away from others to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Visit the BCCDC website to learn more about how to self-isolate: [bccdc.ca/covid19selfisolation](https://bccdc.ca/covid19selfisolation)

If you are managing your illness at home you can end isolation when all three of these conditions are met:

1. **If you are fully vaccinated:** At least **5 days** have passed since your symptoms started, or from the day you tested if you did not have symptoms. You should wear a mask even in settings where a mask isn't required and avoid higher risk settings, such as long term care facilities and gatherings, for another 5 days after ending isolation. Fully vaccinated means you received both doses of a 2-dose series (e.g. AstraZeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech, or Moderna vaccine) more than 7 days ago, or have received a single dose of a 1-dose series (e.g. Janssen/Johnson and Johnson) more than 14 days ago.

**If you are not fully vaccinated:** at least **10 days** have passed since your symptoms started, or from the day you tested if you did not have symptoms.

2. Fever has resolved for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, and

3. Symptoms are improving and you are able to participate in your usual activities.

Continue to isolate for longer if you have a fever or are not feeling better.

When you end isolation, you are not considered contagious. However, it can take longer to recover from the illness. Most people recover within two weeks. Some people with more severe symptoms can take up to twelve weeks or more to feel entirely better. If you are unsure or concerned, connect with your health care provider, call 8-1-1, or go to an Urgent and Primary Care Centre to be assessed.

If you are a traveler returning from outside Canada and test positive for COVID-19, you need to follow the quarantine requirements set by the Federal government. Visit the Government of Canada website for more information: [travel.gc.ca/travel-covid](https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid).

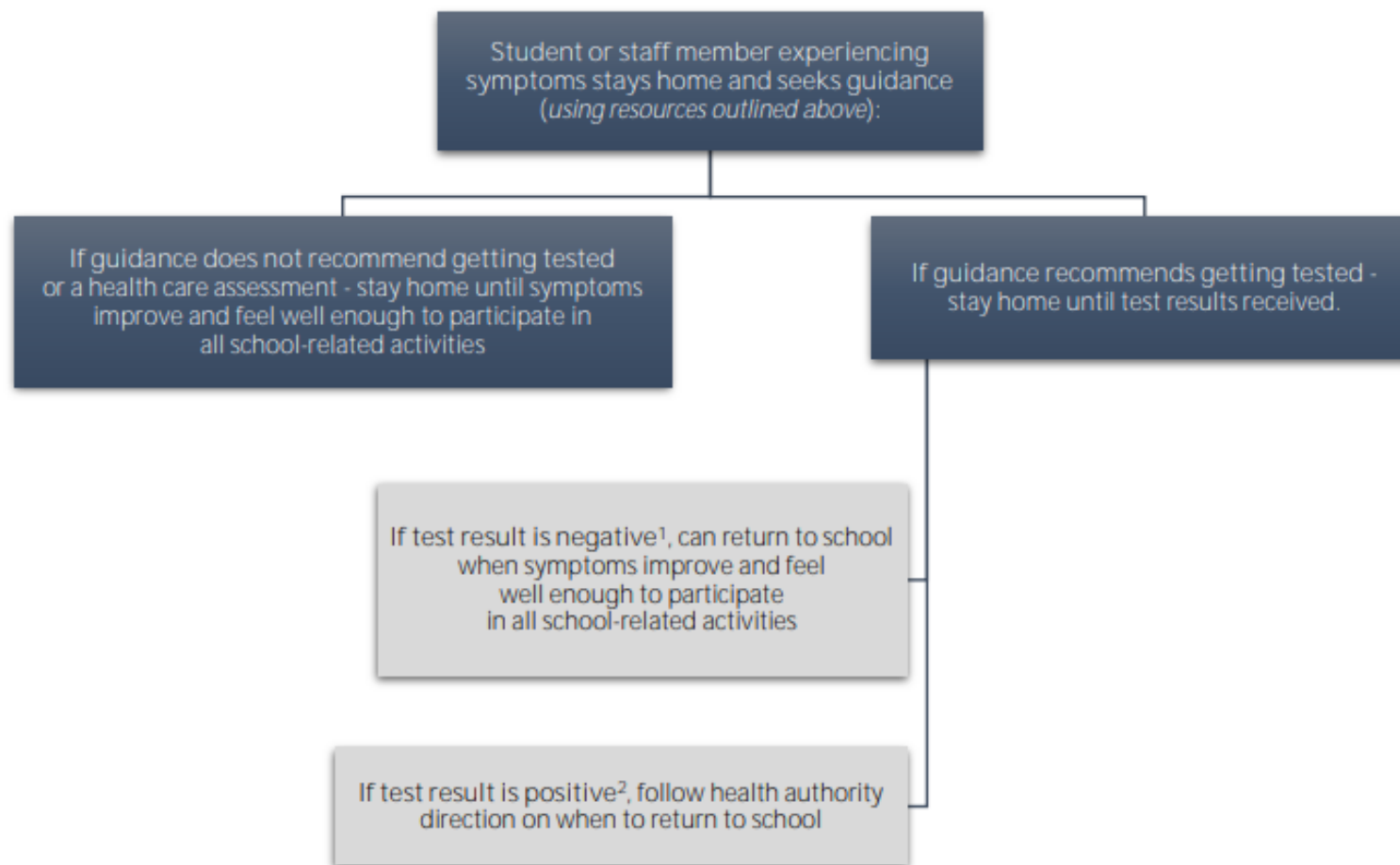
### **Complete an Online Form to Report your Test Result**

Some people may benefit from additional medicines and/or services based on your health history, where you may have been during your infectious period, such as where you work or live. Public health will receive your response, and contact you if you are eligible for specific treatments and/or services.

Report your results at: [reportcovidresults.bccdc.ca](https://reportcovidresults.bccdc.ca)

More information on Managing Symptoms, Vaccination after COVID-19, and Notifying Close Contacts: [Tested Positive for COVID-19](#)

For further information on what to do if you are experience COVID-19 symptoms, please refer to the following flowchart:



1. 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.
2. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test. Visit the [BCCDC website](#) for more information on [positive test results](#).

### Further Directives:

- 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 COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they may return to school.
- Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

### Parent/Visitor Access & Community Use

VCS will once again leave the front, main doors unlocked for visitor access during school hours. **However:**

- Visitors entering the school should be limited to those supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing (e.g. teacher candidates, meal program volunteers, etc.)
- All parents/visitors are required to contact the office prior to entry, and are limited to the front entrance area.
- Visitors will be required to complete a daily health check prior to entering either campus.
- A sign in/sign out process will continue to be used. This process will include individuals' contact information and acknowledgement that they have completed a Daily Health Check.
- **Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others' personal space** while on school grounds, including outside.
- All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school

After hours community use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures:

- Use must occur in line with those activities permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders
- Diligent hand hygiene
- Respiratory etiquette
- Ensuring participants stay home if they are feeling ill
- Where possible, limiting building access to only those areas required for the purpose of the activity

## Daily Schedule & Traffic Flow

### Start-time (M/W/F)

- Elementary Campus (EC): 8:20am bell
- Secondary Campus (SC): 8:30am bell

### Start-time (Tu/Th)

- Elementary & Secondary: 8:55am bell

### *Add Supervision Times & Lunch times to master schedule*

### Exit & Entrance Plans

- **Secondary Campus:**
  - Gr.7-9 (South external doors)
  - Gr.10 (Front doors)
  - Gr.11-12 (North doors)
- Elementary Campus (supervised by staff):
  - Preschool to Grade 4: External door use in each classroom
  - Grade 5 & 5/6: **West** gym entrance (lakeside)
  - Grade 6: Enter through portable
  - Students' personal items will be kept in the hallway cubbies after start-of-day hand washing/sanitizing is completed
  - Eating only within classroom
- **Main entrances will be open during school hours:**
  - EC & SC students report to main offices if late
  - Guests: report front office for access and sign-in with data collecting

### Mid-day Breaks:

- Elementary - Staggered breaks:
  - Break 1:
    - K-2 → OUT 10:20-10:40, EAT 10:40-10:55
    - 3-6 → EAT 10:25-10:40, OUT 10:40-11:00
  - Break 2:
    - K-2 → OUT 11:55-12:25, EAT 12:25-12:40
    - 3-6 → EAT 12:10-12:25, OUT 12:25-12:55
- Secondary - Shared breaks (no cohort requirement):

- AM Break (Mo/Tu/Th/Fr): 10:05-10:15
- LUNCH (Mo-Fr): 11:40-12:15
- PM Break: 1:35-1:45

#### **Designated rooms/zones (lunch & breaks):**

- Middle School - south wing, classrooms & Commons
- High School - north wing & classrooms

#### **Wednesday Chapel Schedule:**

- High School: 10:00-10:40
- Middle School: 10:55-11:35
- Note: Indoor assemblies/chapels are limited to 50 people or two classes (whichever is larger), in a single space.

#### **Day-End Staggered Dismissal:**

- Primary (K-2): 2:50pm
- Intermediate (3-6): 2:55pm
- Middle School (7-9): 3:00pm
- High School (10-12): 3:05pm

\*Parents are encouraged to vacate the campus as soon as possible at pick up time to avoid crowding and alleviate traffic congestion.

#### **Parking Lot Pick-up Times:**

Please follow these drop-off and pick-up times as they apply to you:

#### **Pick-up**

- Elementary Campus Students Only: 2:50-3:00pm\*
- Secondary Campus Students Only: 3:00-3:15pm\*

#### **Mask-Use Policy for Parent Community**

Parents must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside either campus.

## In the Building

### Areas of Occupancy

Teachers will arrange desk areas where students are seated in a way to respect others personal space. Available space will be used to spread people out, both in learning environments and for gatherings and events, where possible.

#### Elementary Building

Space	Protocol	Procedure	Notes
<b>Outdoor Space</b>	Teachers and EAs will be on site to ensure students' are respecting each other's personal space.	Students will be encouraged to respect each other's personal space.	Outdoor play spaces such as the play field, playground, and paved court outside of the gym are open to use.
<b>Administration Areas</b>	Reserved for VCS staff and volunteers only.	Parents/visitors are encouraged to call ahead to reserve a meeting time with administration.	
<b>Student Classroom Space</b>	<p>Respecting each others' personal space will be promoted while in the classroom and will be monitored by teachers and EAs.</p> <p>There is no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted on textbooks, paper, or other paper-based products. Schools can share books or paper-based educational resources with students.</p> <p>VCS will maximize space between people and implement strategies that prevent crowding during class.</p>	Limit and, whenever possible, avoid face-to-face seating arrangements.	
<b>Common Areas (hallways)</b>	The flow of people in common areas will be managed.	Students will be reminded to respect each others personal space.	



		Regular learning activities that bring together multiple classes (e.g., examinations, physical education) should be spread out across multiple locations/spaces whenever possible, but do not need to be reduced in size.	
<b>Staff Room</b>	Use available space to spread people out and respect room occupancy limits.	Wash hands before and after preparing food.  Surfaces in this room will be cleaned daily by janitorial staff.  Leave door OPEN.	Students are not permitted in the staff room.
<b>Restrooms</b>	All washrooms will be open for use.  After using the restroom. <b>Wash hands thoroughly.</b>	Will be cleaned daily.	If possible, EA to escort primary students to the restroom, and wait in hallway.
<b>Drink Fountains</b>	Drink fountains will be open for use. Hand washing before and after is emphasized		Staff & students encouraged to bring their own bottles from home.

### Secondary Building

Space	Protocol	Procedure	To Remember
<b>Student Classroom Space</b>	Respecting each others' personal space will be promoted while in the classroom and will be monitored by teachers and EAs.  There is no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted on textbooks, paper, or other paper-based products. Schools can share books or paper-based educational resources with students.  VCS will maximize space between people and implement strategies that prevent	Limit and, whenever possible, avoid face-to-face seating arrangements.	

	crowding during class.		
<b>Common Areas (hallways, Commons-room)</b>	Students can socialize with each other while respecting personal space.	Regular learning activities that bring together multiple classes (e.g., examinations, physical education) should be spread out across multiple locations/spaces whenever possible, but do not need to be reduced in size.	
<b>Staff Room</b>	Use available space to spread people out and respect room occupancy limits.	Wash hands before and after preparing food.  Surfaces in this room will be cleaned daily by janitorial staff.  Leave door OPEN.	Students are not permitted in the staff room.  Staff & students encouraged to bring their own bottles from home.
<b>Administration Areas</b>	Reserved for VCS staff and volunteers only.	Parents/visitors are encouraged to call ahead to reserve a meeting time with administration.	
<b>Restrooms</b>	All washrooms will be open for use.  After using the restroom, <b>Wash hands thoroughly.</b>	To limit hallway traffic, one student restroom break per class is permitted.  Will be cleaned daily.	
<b>Drink Fountains</b>	Drink fountains will be open for use. Hand washing before and after is emphasized		Staff & students are encouraged to bring their own bottles from home.

### Student Care Spaces - Additional Info

Space	Protocol	To Remember
<b>Building</b>	Enter - wash hands or sanitize - every time	<b>Gym: OPEN</b> <b>Changerooms: OPEN</b> <b>EC Kitchen: OPEN</b>

		<b>SC Food Rm: OPEN</b> <b>SC Autoshop: OPEN</b>
<b><i>Learning and Playing</i></b>	Respecting others' personal space will be encouraged.  Limit use of frequently-touched items that can't be easily cleaned.  Wash hands or sanitize every time upon entering the room.	
<b><i>Outdoor Spaces</i></b>	Outdoor exercise time is encouraged.  Sharing of sports equipment is permitted.  Walks and running on the field are okay while respecting others' personal space.	<b>Playground: OPEN</b> for all to use. <b>Gaga Pit: OPEN</b> for all to use. <b>Sports Court: for all to use.</b>
<b><i>Eating</i></b>	Students will eat in their designated rooms or outdoors <b>where permitted.</b>  Ensure washing of hands before and after eating, for both staff and students.  Sharing of food and drinks will not be permitted.  Food waste: students and staff must put waste in the designated garbage bins immediately upon finishing lunch/snack time..	Do not leave food and food waste 'out in the open'. Pack away or discard in the garbage bins, and then wash hands  Microwaves will be <b>available.</b>

### General Ventilation and Air Circulation

At this time, there is no evidence that a building' ventilation system, in good operating condition, would contribute to the spread of the virus. Good indoor air ventilation alone cannot protect people from exposure to COVID-19; however, it may reduce risk when used in addition to other preventive measures.

- The VCS maintenance team will ensure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are regularly maintained and in good working order.
- Where possible, opening windows if weather permits and HVAC system function will not be negatively impacted.

## School Gatherings And Events (including Extracurricular)

VCS will hold school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, parent-teacher interviews, etc.) virtually (or with a 1-class in-person limit). If gatherings and events must be in person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), VCS will not allow spectators at this time.

### Sports

Extracurricular sports tournaments will be paused for the time being. Sports tournaments are a single or multi-day gathering of three or more sports teams, who come together outside regular league play for the purpose of teams playing against multiple other teams, but does not include:

- A gathering where team members compete on an individual basis against members of other teams, or
- A gathering where the result will decide if a team will advance to play in a national or international competition.

Spectators are not allowed at this time.

## Student Management & Hygiene

### Hygiene

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. If a sink is not available (eg. when entering the school at the start of the day), alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be provided. Students will be encouraged to wash hands frequently but especially:

- Upon entering the school and before leaving at the end of the day
- Immediately after sneezing, coughing, using a tissue
- Immediately after using the toilet
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- When moving between different learning environment (eg. outdoor-indoor transitions)

- Before and after eating, drinking, food preparation, handling contact lenses, etc

**REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.  
WASH YOUR HANDS.**

- 1**  
Wet hands with warm water
- 2**  
Apply soap
- 3**  
For at least 20 seconds, make sure to wash:
- 4**  
Rinse well
- 5**  
Dry hands well with paper towel
- 6**  
Turn off tap using paper towel

Specific areas to wash:

- palm and back of each hand
- between fingers
- under nails
- thumbs

Contact information:  
 1-833-784-4397 | @canada.ca/coronavirus | phac.info.aspc@canada.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada / Agence de la santé publique du Canada | Canada

Students may bring their own sanitizer or plain soap if they are on the list authorized by Health Canada or have a medical condition that requires specialized soaps. (See the [List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada](#) for products that have met Health Canada’s requirements and provide details to the office.)

**Physical Distancing & Space Arrangement**

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 VCS will implement to help create space between people and to support students and staff in returning to school:

- Remind students and staff about respecting others personal space.

- Use available space to spread people out, both in learning environments and for gatherings and events, where possible.
- Implement strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.
- Take students outside more often, where and when possible.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.

### **Personal Protective Equipment:**

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

Masks continue to be required by all staff, students and visitors in schools and on buses, based on the BCCDC's identified benefits of wearing masks:

- Masks have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19, by helping to stop the spread of droplets from a person's mouth and nose when talking, laughing, yelling, singing, coughing, or sneezing.
- Masks provide protection to the person wearing them and to those around them.
- Masks complement and build on the other safety measures in schools. They work best when everyone who can wear a mask is wearing one.
- Mask requirements in K-12 schools are similar to requirements in other indoor public spaces (e.g., shopping malls, grocery stores, recreation centres, post-secondary institutions, public transit, etc.).

#### **Exceptions for Staff, Students, and Visitors**

- If the person is unable to wear a mask because of
  - A psychological, behavioural or health condition, or a physical, cognitive, or mental impairment, or
  - They are unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person.
- Strategies/options to support those with exemptions include:
  - Can the person wear a [different type of mask](#), or a face shield (without a mask)?
  - If the issue relates to having to wear a mask all day, can the person wear a mask during face-to-face classroom activities and hallway transitions but be able to take the mask off while working alone at their desk/workstation?
  - Can they use existing opportunities to remove masks more often, like spending breaks outdoors when the weather allows?

**Please contact the Principal at your child's campus for a link to the Mask Exemption Form.**

#### **Further directives**

- Students are encouraged to bring their own approved, non-medical mask to use.

- VCS will make available disposable, non-medical masks in the event that students forget theirs at home.

VCS will support student mask use through positive and inclusive approaches. VCS does not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to determine if a person does not tolerate a mask.

Face shields are a form of eye protection for the person wearing it. They may not prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer. **Face shields should not be worn in place of masks**, except for those communicating using lip-reading, when visual facial cues are essential, or when people may be unable to wear a mask. Clear masks that cover the nose and mouth are another option when visual communication is necessary.

### [Guide: How to Wear a Face Mask](#)

#### **If Student Develops Symptoms at School:**

Staff must:

- Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.
- Provide the student with a non-medical mask if they don't have one. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
- Avoid touching the student's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene.
- Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.
- Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill student. If not possible, staff may wear a mask if available and tolerated.
- Once the student is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene.
- Workers responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).

**Anyone experiencing symptoms of illness should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health-care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.**

#### **Safety for Staff**

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 VCS will implement to help create space between people and to support students and staff in returning to school:

- Remind fellow staff about respecting others' personal space.
- Use available space to spread people out, both in staff only environments and for gatherings and events, where possible.
- Avoid crowding in shared spaces (eg. staff rooms).

- Take students outside more often, where and when possible.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.

### Hygiene:

- Janitorial staff will ensure that hand washing supplies are available at all times (eg. soap, paper towels and, if needed, alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
- Follow handwashing signage that is posted at each washing station and wash hands frequently.

### Personal Protective Equipment:

#### **Masks/Face Shields**

All K-12 staff are required to 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.

#### **Updated Exceptions for Staff, Students, and Visitors**

- If the person is unable to wear a mask because of
  - A psychological, behavioural or health condition, or a physical, cognitive, or mental impairment, or
  - They are unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person.
- Strategies/options to support those with exemptions include:
  - Can the person wear a [different type of mask](#), or a face shield (without a mask)?
  - If the issue relates to having to wear a mask all day, can the person wear a mask during face-to-face classroom activities and hallway transitions but be able to take the mask off while working alone at their desk/workstation?
  - Can they use existing opportunities to remove masks more often, like spending breaks outdoors when the weather allows?

Supporting students with complex behaviours, medical complexities or receiving delegated care may require staff providing health services or other health care providers to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a medically complex or immune suppressed student.



## Further Directives

- People providing these services at VCS must wear a mask (medical or non-medical) when providing services and the service cannot be provided from behind a physical barrier. Additional PPE over and above that needed for routine practices and the use of a medical or non-medical mask is not necessary.
- Those providing health services at VCS may be receiving different guidance related to PPE from their regulatory college or employer. Health service providers are encouraged to work with their employer to confirm what PPE is recommended for the services they provide in school settings.
- VCS does not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm if staff or visitors cannot tolerate a mask.

### [Guide: How to Wear a Mask](#)

#### **If Staff Member Develops Symptoms at Work**

Staff should go home as soon as possible.

If unable to leave immediately:

- Symptomatic staff should separate themselves into an area away from others.
- Maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.
- Use a tissue or 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 separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).
- Staff members who develop symptoms are expected to receive a COVID-19 test from the local public health authority.

**Anyone experiencing symptoms of illness should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health-care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.**

## School Cleaning & Disinfecting

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. VCS will be cleaned and disinfected by the janitorial staff in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings.

This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once in a 24-hour period. (See Frequently Touched Surfaces section below for examples of frequently touched surfaces.)
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Use common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products and closely follow the instructions on the label.
- Empty garbage containers daily.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.

## Frequently Touched Surfaces

Frequently touched surfaces include:

- Items used by larger numbers of students and staff, including doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, faucet handles, toilet handles.
- Shared equipment (e.g. computer keyboards and tablets, glassware and testing equipment for science labs, kitchen equipment for culinary programs, sewing machines and sewing equipment for home economic programs, PE/sports equipment, music equipment, etc.)
- 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, playdough, etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use. Carpets and rugs (e.g. in Kindergarten and StrongStart classes) can also be used.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. Laminated or glossy paper-based products (eg. children's books or magazines) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) can be contaminated if handled by a person with COVID-19; however, the risk is low. There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time, or for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.

## Transportation

### Buses

- Bus drivers 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) on school buses except while driving.

- Students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings when they are on the bus. Students in Grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a non-medical mask or face covering on school buses but are not required to do so - mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.
  - Non-medical masks or face coverings should be put on before loading.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school (see the Daily Health Check section for more information). If a child is sick, they must not take the bus or go to school.
- Students should clean their hands before and after taking the bus.
- Spread passengers out if empty seats are available.
- Open windows when the weather permits.

## **Carpooling**

Personal or school-related:

- Spread out vehicle occupants as much as possible.
- Travel with the same people whenever possible.
- Open windows when the weather allows.
- Clean hands before and after trips.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly.

For carpooling related to school activities, students, staff and other adults must follow the mask requirements outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment section. For personal carpooling, as per public health recommendations, people 9 and older are encouraged to wear masks while carpooling (masks are not suggested if carpooling with members of the same household).

## **Vaccines**

Public health strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive 2 doses) against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them including those who are not eligible to be vaccinated.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, including where to get immunized, please visit [ImmunizeBC](https://www.immunizebc.ca/).

## Helpful Resources

[Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)

[Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)

[COVID-19: Return to School](#)