

St. Francis Xavier School

COVID-19 Communicable Disease Plan

January 2022 Update



The school supports students in developing their potential and acquiring the knowledge, skills and abilities they need for lifelong success. In-person learning is a part of a student's education and provides peer engagement, supporting social and emotional development and overall wellness. It also provides many students access to programs and services integral to their overall health and wellbeing.

Based on guidance from the B.C. 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 per current public health guidelines for schools. (Excerpt taken from *Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings*)

This Communicable Disease Plan for St. Francis Xavier School was created in consultation with the CISVA Superintendent's Office, the CISVAAA, St. Francis Xavier School administrators, teachers, support staff, PEC members, and custodial/caretaker staff. The guidelines contained herein intend to support St. Francis Xavier School staff, students, parents, caregivers, administrators, and community members to:

- Be informed about communicable disease measures at St. Francis Xavier School and how they support a safe school environment;
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting a safe and healthy school.

This document was created with guidance from the following documents:

[Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings,](#)

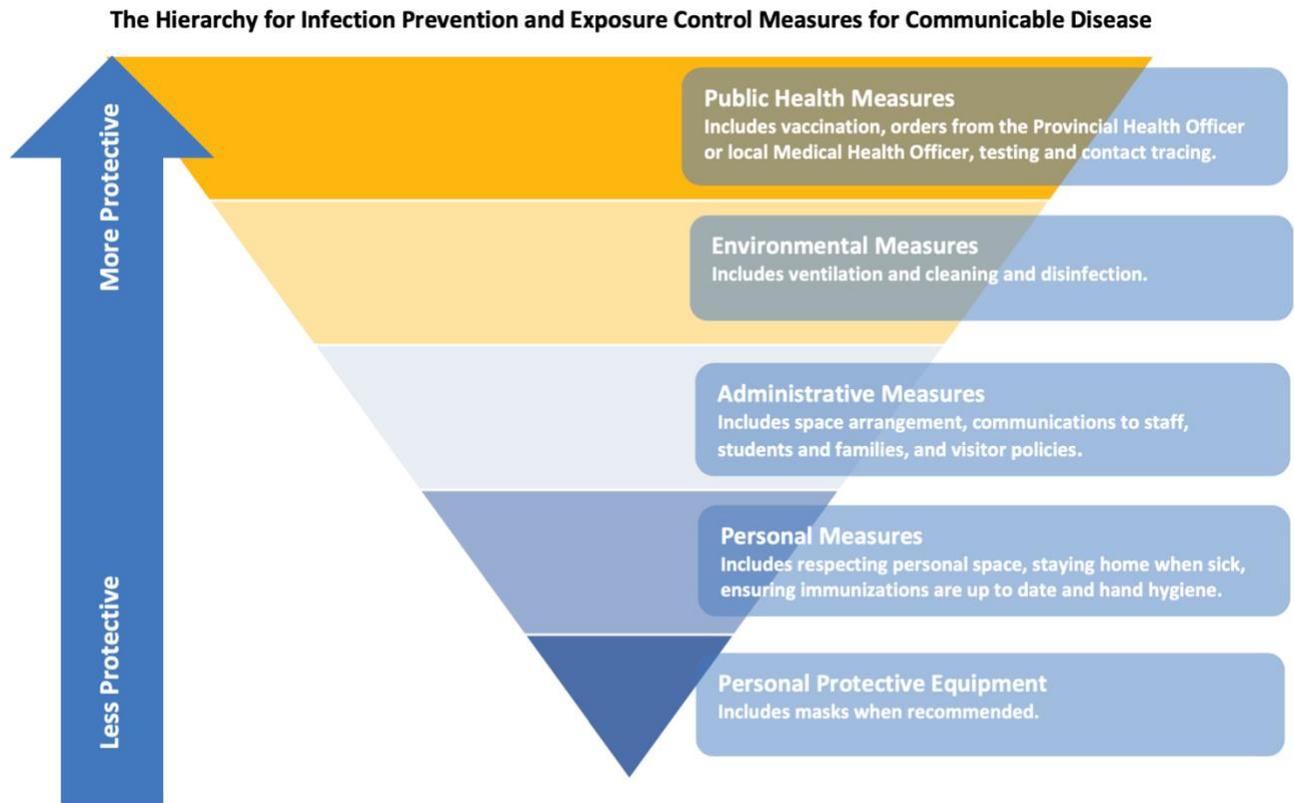
[BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools,](#)

[K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#)

[COVID-19 Protocols for School & District Administrators and Staff](#)

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE RISK

Preventing communicable disease involves taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk for communicable disease transmission in school. The risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. Additional measures will be implemented when advised by Public Health during periods of elevated risk.



- The school principal is responsible for regularly monitoring and reviewing the communicable disease-related information provided by our regional medical health officer (Vancouver Coastal) and the Provincial Health Officer. This includes all of the orders, guidelines, notices, and recommendations they issued. In addition, we follow the policies that our Superintendent provides. This information is regularly communicated to staff to understand and minimize the risk for communicable disease transmission in our school.

STEP 2: IMPLEMENT MEASURES, PRACTICES, AND POLICIES TO REDUCE THE RISK

Ongoing measures – maintain at all times:

Implement policies to support staff who have symptoms of communicable disease to avoid being in the workplace when sick.

- Policies are implemented to support staff who have symptoms of communicable disease to avoid being in the workplace when sick. This includes policy 310, Employee Leaves of Absence.
- A student absentee policy is also available on pg. 7 of the St. Francis Xavier Parent Handbook, and reminders of procedures for "when your child is sick..." are printed in the weekly school newsletter.
- Additional considerations may be implemented by the principal, PEC, health and safety committee, priest, etc.
- Said policies are reviewed regularly in staff meetings. Staff, students, and parents are trained in school policies and procedures.
- Measures are in place, where feasible, to minimize the crowding and to use all space available to spread people out.
- School assemblies will be held virtually, with staff and students viewing from their classrooms.
- School Mass celebrations will occur in the church, with half the classes participating on an alternating, weekly basis. All students and staff will be required to wear masks and sanitize their hands before entering and exiting the church.
- Screening forms for visitors are to be completed before entering the school.
- Health Check posters are located at the entrances. All visitors will be required to comply with the screening questions and only enter if they are healthy.
- Students are taken outside as often as possible, weather permitting.

Provide hand-hygiene facilities and appropriate supplies. Use policies and signage to remind workers to wash their hands and cover coughs and sneezes.

Handwashing:

Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Antibacterial soap is not needed.

- If sinks are not available (e.g., students and staff are outdoors), use an alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 60% alcohol.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not effectively eliminate respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- Incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.

- Staff have posted [handwashing posters](#) by the classroom sinks, and administration has posted signs in all bathrooms and above staff room, and kitchen sinks.

When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.). • After using the toilet. • After sneezing or coughing into hands. • Whenever hands are visibly dirty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at school. • 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 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: Students and staff should:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue.
- Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing food, drinks, dirty utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.
- Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices amongst students.

- **Staff are encouraged to teach and reinforce both handwashing and respiratory etiquette regularly throughout the day**

Teachers have posted posters in all classrooms. Administrators have posted in public areas.

Maintain a Clean Environment through routine cleaning processes appropriate for school practices.

Cleaning Practices:

- We have reviewed the information on cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Cleaning supplies are provided for every classroom and common room.
- Our school has enough handwashing facilities for all our staff and students.
- We have policies that specify when staff and students must wash their hands, and we have communicated good hygiene practices to parents, students and staff. Instructional posters are posted in each classroom, washroom, and common rooms.
- We have implemented cleaning protocols for all common areas and surfaces.
- Workers who are cleaning have adequate training and materials.
- Hygiene Posters are posted in all classrooms and common areas
- [Cleaning posters](#) are posted in janitorial rooms.
- Cleaning staff are provided with substances for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Cleaning staff are provided with gloves.
- Cleaning staff have been instructed to wash their hands after cleaning.
- Custodial staff will do a deep clean at the end of each day.
- Frequently touched surfaces are disinfected twice a day (doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, faucets, cabinet handles, tables, desks, chairs, keyboards, communication devices).
- Custodial and school staff will clean high touch surfaces twice a day and a deep clean in the evening.
- Classroom teachers are responsible for disinfecting visibly dirty surfaces such as desks, tables and sinks during the day.
- Use commercial-grade cleaning products and follow the label
- Classroom teachers are provided with cleaning products for their classrooms.
- All cleaning products must be kept out of reach of their students.
- Paper and paper-covered books can be given to students. Students can submit paper assignments to teachers. There is no evidence that paper products can spread the virus.
- Night-time janitors will empty garbage once a day.
- Staff will wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine)—Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- To decrease high touch surfaces, keep doors to classrooms, library, gym, office, staff room, group bathroom doors open.
- Students/staff will disinfect tables before and after students eat lunch.
- Clean and disinfect the first aid room cot before use and after it is used or soiled. Clean the vinyl surface of the cot after the use of each student. The cot in the sick room should not have any fabric on it.
- Student supplies and equipment: Teachers will encourage staggered visits to lockers when needed. Teachers are encouraged to assign student supplies and learning materials that will only be used by them and are clearly labelled. Parents must label all personal items coming from home, including water bottles, lunch kits and containers, backpacks, clothing, and school supplies. Students are encouraged to bring labelled water bottles to school.

Ventilation and Air Circulation:

- Windows are opened in all classrooms and staff areas each day to ensure adequate air circulation. Portable air purifiers have been provided for all classrooms, staffroom, library, Learning Resource area, music room, and Main Office.
- Air purifier filters are cleaned/replaced regularly by the school maintenance team.
- Building custodians are familiar with the document 'Prevent the spread of communicable disease: ventilation and circulation.'
- The principal does a walk-through regularly to ensure standards are being met.

Masks

- We understand the limitations of masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets.
- We have trained workers in the proper use of masks.
- For staff, masks will be worn at all times. Teachers' masks may be removed if the teacher sits at their desk/workstation with a protective barrier and is 6 feet away from students.
- All students must wear masks except when outside or when eating/drinking.
- Students will be asked to bring a spare mask to school. If a student requires a mask and does not have one, the school will provide a disposable mask.
- All students, staff, and visitors are asked to wear well-fitting 3-layer masks.

Space Arrangement

- Rooms will be arranged to maximize space between students and staff. Different common space, classroom, and learning space configurations will be used to allow for more space between students and adults.

Limit Crowding in Common Spaces

- Staggered morning drop-off and pick-up procedures will help eliminate crowding. Primary and Intermediate classes will alternate outdoor recess and lunchtimes to minimize the number of students outside at one time.
- Give right of way to younger classes. Use one-way hallways and stairwells. Classes will walk single-file when transitioning between spaces.

School Gatherings and Events (including Extracurricular)

- School gatherings and events will be held virtually.
- Inter-school sports games will still commence. Attendance will be limited to players of the two teams competing, coaches, and referees. There will be no spectators.
- Any tournaments will be paused.

Visitor Access

- Visitor access will be limited to supporting activities that are of direct benefit to student learning and wellbeing.

Additional Measures if/when Needed

When a medical or provincial health officer provides guidance/new information about a risk or how to reduce it, our health and safety team will be contacted, assembled, and meet with administration/health officials to discuss risk and establish plans and steps for response and implementation.

Depending on the severity of the risk, a formal meeting with stakeholder groups will be conducted. Consultation with the Superintendent's office will occur as needed. Plans will be documented.

A report will be created to outline strategies for additional measures if needed. Reporting out will occur with stakeholders: PEC, staff, parents, students, the parish promptly.

STEP 3 – COMMUNICATE MEASURES, PRACTICES, POLICIES

To ensure everyone that enters St. Francis Xavier School receives information about our measures, practices, and policies, we have instituted the following:

- Provided all employees with policy 310 (Employee Leaves of Absence) and local school policies, re: staying home when sick.
- Posted signage on entry doors and throughout the school's interior to support the measures we have in place.
- Provided information to make sure all stakeholders know about the practices in place at our school—parent meetings at the beginning of the year, email communication, classroom blogs, etc.
- All workers are aware of the policy for staying home when sick.
- We have posted signage in the school, including effective hygiene practices.
- We have posted signage at the main entrances indicating who is restricted from entering the premises, including visitors and workers with communicable disease symptoms.
- Administrators have been trained on monitoring workers and the workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.
- Communication with staff is conducted through on-site meetings, emails, Whatsapp group chat messages, staff meetings.
- Train staff on workplace policies and procedures:
 - Changes/expectations are communicated to staff as they are made.
 - Review of Communicable Disease Plan on an ongoing basis to see if any changes need to occur.
 - The administration will field questions and concerns about the Communicable Disease Plan and adjust if needed.
 - Changes/adjustments to Communicable Disease Plan will be updated accordingly and communicated to all stakeholders.
 - Communicable Disease Plan is posted to the school website.
- All workers received information about staying home when sick.
- All staff members must complete a daily health check to assess for symptoms of communicable disease.
- Signs have been posted to restrict the entrance of people to the building if showing symptoms - [Symptoms poster](#).
- The administration will monitor safety measures in the school.
- Daily communication with staff.
- The administration will send staff regular emails regarding updates to policies, procedures, ministry documents or developments from Vancouver Coastal Health.
- Records will be kept of inspections, cleaning schedules, health reports, etc.

STEP 4 – MONITOR YOUR WORKPLACE AND UPDATE PLANS AS NECESSARY

- Things may change as the school year progresses. New areas of concern will be monitored and identified, and adjusted as necessary.
- Procedures and policies will be updated as necessary.
- A protocol is in place, so workers know who to go to with health and safety concerns.
- Proper authorities (Ministry of Education, Provincial Health Officer, Worksafe) will be consulted when resolving safety issues.
- The administration will review Communicable Disease Plan regularly and update it as needed.