

Our Lady of Mercy School's Safety Plan

Our Lady of Mercy School's COVID-19 Safety Plan outlines the policies, guidelines and procedures the school has put in place to reduce the risk of CoVid-19 transmission.

In accordance with the order of the Provincial Health Officer, this plan is posted at the school and also on the OLM's school website, and it has been communicated to parents. It will be updated as new information becomes available.

OLM has developed a COVID-19 Safety Plan following the six-step process described in the COVID-19 and Returning to Safe Operation document.

Step 1: Assess the Risks at School

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways. It can spread in droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face.

The risk of person-to-person transmission increases the closer you come to other people, the more time you spend near them, and the more people you come near.

The risk of surface transmission increases when many people contact the same surface and when those contacts happen over short periods of time.

Measures in Place

Higher Risk Areas have been identified, either through close physical proximity or through contaminated surfaces.

- We have involved staff members, Janitorial staff, administration and the EC Maintenance member
- We have identified areas where people gather, such as staff room, student and staff washrooms, gym tables and chairs,
- We have identified high traffic surfaces such as door knobs, door handles and light switches
- All students and staff personal devices and school materials are brought to and from home
- All food and beverage is brought to and from home
- All garbage is brought back home

Step 2: Implement Protocols to Reduce the Risks

- All staff and students who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days or were identified as a close contact of a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must stay home and self-isolate in accordance with guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

- Via email parents have been given clear communication (a list of symptoms and questions to ask their child) on their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.
- Parents have been given clear direction that they must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. If a student develops symptoms while at home, parents or caregivers must keep their child at home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, and their symptoms have resolved.

First Level Protection (Elimination)

- We have established and posted an occupancy limit for our premises.
- In order to reduce the number of people at school, we have considered work-from-home arrangements, virtual meetings, rescheduling work tasks, and limiting the number of visitors
- We have established and posted occupancy limits for common areas such as staff rooms, meeting rooms, hallways and washrooms.
- We have implemented measures to keep staff members and students at least 2 metres apart, wherever possible.

Parents understand that if a student develops symptoms while at school:

- Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.
- Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.
- Contact 811 or the local public health unit to notify them of a potential case and seek further input.
- Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill student. If not possible, staff may wear a mask if available and tolerated, or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth.
- Provide the student with tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. 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.
- 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).

Measures in Place

- Staff members working remotely
- Changes of work schedules
- Re-defining of roles, responsibilities and teaching tasks
- Occupancy limits for the gym, the washrooms, the staffroom, the hallway
- Parents have limited access to the school. They are expected to stay inside the car when dropping their child(ren) off
- Screening Forms for people entering the school premise

Second Level Protection (Engineering): Barriers and Partitions

- We have barriers where staff or students can't keep physically distant
- We have included barrier cleaning in our cleaning protocols

Measures in Place

- A barrier has currently in place in the Administration Area

Third Level Protection (Administrative): Rules and Guidelines

- We have identified rules and guidelines for how staff and students should conduct themselves
- We have clearly communicated these rules and guidelines to staff, students and parents

Measures in Place

- Parents, students and staff have a list of rules and guidelines for social distancing, hygiene, washroom needs, physical breaks, hallways
- Cleaning products comply with the BCCDC

Fourth Level Protection (Administrative): Rules and Guidelines

- We have reviewed the information on selecting and using masks and instructions on how to use a mask.
- We understand the limitations of masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets. We understand that masks should only be considered when other control measures cannot be implemented.
- We have reviewed the information on cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.
- Our school has enough hand washing facilities on site 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.
- We have implemented cleaning protocols for all common areas and surfaces.
- Workers who are cleaning have adequate training and materials.

Measures in Place

- As per the BCCDC guidance for K-12 school settings is that PPE such as masks and gloves are not needed, unless physical proximity is not possible or symptoms have arisen
- Staff and students will be trained to properly use masks
- Posters indicated proper usage of masks will be posted
- Our cleaning supplies comply with WSB specifications
- Hygiene Posters are posted
- The Janitor (Mr. Acosta) is responsible for cleaning and has been given the cleaning protocols as outlined by WSB and the BCCDC.

STEP 3: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Health and Sickness

No one who is sick or showing symptoms is to come to school.

- Students and staff should stay home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.
- Staff or students who are unsure of if they should self-isolate should be directed to use the *BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool*.
- If concerned, they can be advised to contact 8-1-1, or the local public health unit to seek further input. They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.

i.) Daily Health Assessments

- Staff members must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school.
- Parents have the responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school. Parents are to ensure their child is free from symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before they are to come to school.
- If a student develops symptoms while at home, parents/guardians **MUST** keep their child at home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, and their symptoms have resolved.

ii.) If student/staff becomes ill during the day

- Individuals who show **any** signs of illness will go home until they are well and symptom-free.

Staff Illness: A Staff member who starts feeling ill while at work is to return home and monitor his or her symptoms.

Student Illness:

- The office will call the parent to arrive as soon as possible when notified their child is ill.
- The office will contact 811 or the local public health unit to notify them of a potential case and seek further input.
- The office will record illness in First Aid records in the event this information is later needed.
- Staff member is to put on a mask and immediately separate the sick child from others into a supervised area until the parent/guardian arrives. Apply physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene principles while waiting for pick up. Avoid touching a student's body fluids (mucous/saliva). Wash hands thoroughly.
- Janitor to clean/disinfect the area where the child was relocated.
- Children with common cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19.
- Self isolation is also advised for those who are considered a close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness.

iii.) Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and the BCCDC Guidelines

- Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 10 days must self-isolate at home; symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and new muscle aches or headache.
- Anyone under the direction of the PHO to self-isolate must follow those instructions.
- Anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada, or who is a contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case is to self isolate for 14 days and monitor symptoms.

iv.) Working from Home

- Work from home policies have been communicated to staff members. When working from home, staff members are to follow the protocol of completing the check-in form before 9:00 a.m.

B. Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff should:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Ensure that used tissues are thrown away immediately and hands are thoroughly washed.
- Refrain from touching their eyes and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, and unwashed utensils.

C. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- According to Ministry Guidelines PPE, such as masks and gloves are not needed
- There is no evidence to support the use of medical grade, cloth, or homemade masks in school settings at this time. Staff should be aware of the limitations in regard to respiratory droplets, and masks should only be considered when other control measures cannot be implemented. Wearing one by staff or students is a personal choice and will be respected.
- Gloves are also a personal choice. Their use would not preclude students and staff members from regular hand washing.

D. Entering the Building

- All staff will enter the building through the main front doors of the school. Do not use the side doors.
- Staff is to report to the office and sign in.
- If numbers warrant it, stagger school start and end time.
- Students in Kindergarten and Grades 1 thru Grade 7 will line up and enter through the side doors by the gym.

E. Exiting the Building

- Students in Kindergarten and Grades 1 thru Grade 7 will exit via the gym doors

F. After School Pick Up

- Parents are to arrive punctually to pick up their children after school.
- Teachers/EAs will escort the children to the pickup area.

- Children are not to play after school but are to go straight home.

G. Recess & Lunch

- These times will be at the teachers' discretion.
- Limit numbers of students outdoors to take physical distancing into account.

H. Student Supplies

- Students coming to school are to:
- Wear their school uniform.
- Bring appropriate outerwear for the weather.
- Bring all their materials for the day including: school supplies, outdoor and their personal device (laptop, iPad).

STEP 4: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND TRAINING

Everyone in the school community (staff, students and parents) will know the policies around staying home when they are sick. This information will be communicated in writing and posted on the school's website.

- All staff will be trained and informed as to how to keep themselves safe while at school.
- Formal staff training and information sessions include:
 - i. the risks of exposure to COVID-19
 - ii. how to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19
 - iii. safe procedures and instructions regarding proper hand washing, cough/sneezing etiquette, etc.
- Staff will be informed of changes made to work policies, practices, and procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the daily check-in, updates will be provided when available.
- The health and safety measures in place prior to the pandemic are still in place.
- The administration will keep records of training meetings. Covid-19 related meetings are documented and minutes available in the staff room and the Principal's office.
- A bulletin board in the staffroom will be dedicated to sharing information with staff about policies and practices for COVID-19
- Signage will be posted around the school including occupancy limits and effective hand washing practices. Signage will also be posted at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the school including anyone with symptoms.

STEP 5: MONITOR THE WORKPLACE AND UPDATE PLANS

- As new information is provided, some of these protocols and guidelines may change.
- Steps will be taken to update policies and procedures and involve the staff in this process.
- All staff is asked to raise any safety concerns with the Principal.

STEP 6: ASSESS AND ADDRESS RISKS FROM RESUMING OPERATIONS

- New employees will be trained.