



**Our Lady of Mercy School**

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Dear Parents,

For the 2021-22 school year, all schools transitioned from the COVID-19 Safety Plan to a COVID-19 Communicable Disease Plan. (*What a horrible name the government picked!*) This document outlines the plan, and is informed by the Ministry of Education and Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance BC Center for Disease Control.

As the COVID-19 landscape evolves, OLM continues to update our OLM's Communicable Disease Plan to reflect the changes to provincial or health region requirements. We expect that there will be more cases in the community but we will continue to do what we can to prevent spread and keep our students and staff safe and healthy.

Below is OLM's COVID-19 School Communicable Disease Plan that highlights and ensures that the enhanced safety measures are in place.

1. Entrance and Exits

- Strategies are in place to prevent crowding during transition times (Movement to specialty classes like gym and music will be done outside rather than through the main hallway)
- Cohorts will have a designated area for playing

2. Visitor Access

- Adults will be restricted to the office area, maximum 2 at a time
- All visitors are to verify their health by using the Electronic Scanner
- Parents are encouraged not to drop off lunches
- Parents are encouraged to email or phone the school
- Visitors/Parents are limited to those that are supporting activities that are of direct benefit to student learning and well-being

3. Pick-up and Drop-off

- Parents/adults are to wear a mask on the OLM School grounds, even when briefly getting out of their car to drop off or pick up their child
- Parents/adults are to stay in their designated area for pick up and drop off and are not to be in the areas where students line up
- Please drop off your child as close to 8:45 whenever possible as students need to stay in their designated classroom line to prevent gathering amongst cohorts
- Parents and students are to leave the school property immediately upon dismissal
- The playground will be closed before and after school

#### 4. Space Arrangements

- In indoor spaces, students and staff will have enough room to carry out intended activities without involuntary physical contact
- Spaces are configured to maximize space between people
- Learning spaces are arranged to maximize the space available and to avoid students directly facing one another (where possible)
- Students will not gather on the classroom carpet

#### 5. Gathering and Events

- School assemblies will continue to be held virtually
- One cohort at a time will attend school masses

#### 6. Extracurricular Activities

- If a Grade 7 basketball game is played, spectators are not present
- Parents are responsible for driving students to and from games
- Sports tournaments are paused
- Choir is paused

#### 7. Hand Hygiene

- OLM will continue the Hand Hygiene protocols from September 2020
- Hand cleaning facilities are available and accessible throughout the school

#### 8. Increased Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least 2x a day
- The maintenance person wipes the students' desks during recess
- Two times a week parent participation groups clean the classroom
- We have employed SterilePro cleaning company to disinfect after PREP
- Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1X a day
- Cleaning products have been WCB and PHO recommended and approved
- OLM has purchased an Electrostatic Sprayer used to eliminate bacteria
- Practices are in place to clean and disinfect any surfaces a person's body fluids have contacted after they have displayed symptoms of illness

#### 9. Ventilation and Air Exchange

- Classrooms have Surgically Clean Air (MERV 19) Jade Purifiers in the classroom (PHO requires MERV 13)
- Classroom windows and doors will remain open whenever possible

#### 10. Daily Health Checks

- It is the parent's responsibility to complete (verbally) a Daily Health Check
- The Daily Health Check can be found on our OLM website and on the BC Government's K-12 Health Check App

#### 11. Stay Home When Sick

- Staff and students are reminded to stay home when they are sick
- The Daily Health Check has excellent information to make an informed decision

12. Symptoms Develop at School

- Practices are in place to appropriately respond when a staff member or student develops symptoms of illness while at school

13. Personal Prevention Practices

- Staff and students are required to wear masks in accordance with the PHO Order on Face Coverings
- Proper fit is a key factor in mask effectiveness
- Plexiglass barriers are used in the classroom for small group teaching, at the teacher's desk, and at the discretion of the teacher for other learning times

14. Personal Space

- Strategies are in place to encourage staff and students to consider and respect others personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.
- Personal space is taught within the curriculum and is part of OLM's Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe, Behavioural Matrix

Parents are important partners in keeping our school safe and we appreciate your efforts. We also recognize that, once again, this may mean inconvenience and sacrifice for your family. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

*"God is the light that illuminates the darkness, even if it does not dissolve it, and a spark of divine light is within each of us."*

-Pope Francis