

# Communicable Disease Prevention Plan - Revised: Jan 10, 2022

## Cedars Christian School

### Introduction

The health and safety of staff and students is of primary importance in our work at Cedars Christian School. The purpose of this Communicable Disease Prevention Plan [Plan] is to outline the Cedars-specific application of the [Provincial COVID-19 Safe Schools](#) plan for the 2021-22 (accessed: Oct 6, 2021); [COVID-19 Protocols for School & District Administrators and Staff](#) (Aug 24, 2021); BC Centre for Disease Control [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) (Sept 3, 2021); the [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (Oct 1, 2021); [K-12 Educational Recovery Plan](#) (Aug 24, 2021); and [WorkSafe BC's Step 3 Restart: Communicable Disease Prevention](#) guidance (accessed: Oct 6, 2021).

Cedars seeks to inform all community members of their roles and responsibilities in promoting and maintaining a safe and healthy school and workplace setting with respect to the prevention of all communicable diseases, including COVID-19. This Plan provides clarity and/or context for some of the health and safety guidance linked above. It is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of all health and safety measures. Staff and parents/caregivers are encouraged to review all of the documents linked above to inform their work and/or decision to have their children return to in-class instruction. Note: Unless otherwise stated, this document outlines health and safety plans in the context of [BC's Restart Plan](#) (Step 3).

Although this Plan has been primarily drafted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and BC's [K-12 Educational Recovery Plan](#) (Aug 24, 2021), the key message of **“Give SPACE - CLEAN with Care”**, and many of the measures outlined below also apply to transmission reduction of *any* communicable disease in a K-12 school context. COVID-19 vaccinations are strongly recommended at this time; however, there is currently no provincial mandate for vaccinations of eligible staff and students. Individuals are encouraged to make an informed choice regarding vaccinations. All members of this community are encouraged to review vaccine information posted on the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) website. The prevention measures in each section are listed to reflect their relative effectiveness in relation to the CDC's [Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease](#) (p.5). Some of these measures have required focus and attention but have, over time and with practice, faded to the background as routine.

**Update (Jan 2022):** On December 29, 2021 the Province and BCCDC published addendums to their [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) and [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#), respectively. Additional prevention measures outlined in these documents are **highlighted in yellow** in this revised Communicable Disease Prevention Plan.

# Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Diseases

## Give SPACE

Public health measures to *reduce transmission* of communicable diseases involve giving one another space by *reducing contact intensity* and *minimizing the number of overall contacts*. This means adjustments to the *type* (close/distant) and *duration* (brief/prolonged) of contact and the number of people gathering in a setting at one time.

*Specifically, within the K-12 setting of Cedars Christian School, this means:*

### 1. Daily health assessments.

- a. Staff are **required** to complete a daily health check for common-cold, influenza, and [key COVID-19 like symptoms](#) prior to coming to work. Parents/Caregivers are **required** to assess their child(ren) daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to use one of BC's [Self-Assessment Tools](#) for daily health checks for their child(ren). Staff or Parents/Caregivers that are unsure how to interpret symptoms are encouraged to use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) or consult with their physician.
- b. Staff and student absences due to illness are to be reported to the main office by phone, email, or by using our school's [online form](#). Individuals are not required to report COVID-positive status.
- c. Health-care provider notes are not required to confirm the health status of staff or students beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual (pre-COVID) practices.

### 2. Staying home and self-isolating when required.

- a. Those with one or more "[key symptoms](#)" (*fever, chills, cough, loss of sense of smell or taste, difficulty breathing*) are required to stay home.
- b. Those with one of the following "[other symptoms](#)" are advised to stay home. Those with two or more of these symptoms are required to stay home for at least 24 hours. If symptoms persist, they are to stay home. "**Other symptoms**" include: *sore throat, loss of appetite, headache, body aches, extreme fatigue or tiredness, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea*.
- c. Additionally, staying at home is required for:
  - i. Those with [key COVID-19 symptoms](#) awaiting test results.
  - ii. Those with a positive COVID-19 test result - **for a minimum of 5 days (for those fully vaccinated) or 10 days (for those partially or unvaccinated) from the first day you presented symptoms and symptoms have resolved or as otherwise directed by public health officials.**
  - iii. Those identified by public health officials as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19 **who are partially or unvaccinated, will need to isolate for 10 days since your last contact. Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated individuals (or individuals who have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days) are not required to self-isolate if identified as a close contact.**
  - iv. Those returning from travel outside of Canada **who are partially or unvaccinated** are required to isolate for a minimum of 14 days from the first day you reenter the country. [Requirements vary](#) for fully vaccinated individuals.

### 3. Going home if you are sick.

- a. *Staff members and students will be sent home if symptomatic.* Students who become sick will wait in a separate, supervised setting until notified parents/caregivers can pick their child up. Students will be provided a non-medical mask if they do not have one and/or given the option to wait outside with a supervisor. Older students (with permission) and staff who become sick are to go home immediately.

### 4. Respecting others' personal space.

Note: The PHO no longer recommends physical distancing of 2 metres as a communicable disease measure for the K-12 setting. Students, staff, and visitors will be reminded to “*respect others' physical space*”.

- a. *Learning and gathering spaces selected and used in a manner that maximizes the ability to respect others' personal space.* Desks/tables will be arranged to minimize face-to-face seating, and strike a balance between good pedagogy (teaching and learning) and respecting others' physical space. It is **not** expected that students are seated 2 metres apart.
- b. *Adjusting schedules, staggering breaks, and managing movement.*
  - i. Primary and intermediate breaks will be staggered.
  - ii. High school students will respect spaces used by elementary students at times when breaks overlap.
  - iii. Flow of people in common areas and hallways with directional markers to prevent crowding.
- c. *Using outdoors often.* All students will be encouraged to take breaks outside when weather permits. Some learning spaces will be set up outside for K-12 use in good weather.
- d. *Non-essential materials and furniture will be removed from classroom and shared spaces, and additional classroom spaces will be opened for high school breaks to reduce crowding.*

### 5. BC Restart (Step 3) administrative actions.

- a. *School gatherings and events will be carefully vetted.* Gatherings and events will be permitted in alignment with local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and orders. Consideration will be given to:
  - i. Respecting student, staff, and community member comfort levels regarding personal space
  - ii. Room occupancy limits and using largest spaces available to allow for people to spread out
- b. Virtual options will be utilized for larger staff meetings, school gatherings and events.
- c. School will provide contact information to the public health office, upon official request, to assist in contact tracing in accordance with school policy.
- d. Visitors will be encouraged to make appointments and parents / caregivers encouraged to conduct business virtually whenever possible.
- e. *Volunteer opportunities will be carefully vetted.* Consideration will be given to the need and number of volunteers required to meet this need.
- f. Visitors, parents and caregivers are **not permitted to enter** school buildings if they have been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19, or are required to isolate due to travel outside of Canada. All visitors, parents and caregivers will be required to follow health and safety guidelines - including wearing a mask while in the building, and signing in at the main office for emergency and contact tracing purposes.

- g. *Intra- and inter-school programs, activities, and sports will be reinstated* in alignment with local, regional, provincial, and federal public health recommendations and orders; and the [Return to School Sports Plan](#) from BC School Sports. **Games between two teams and individual sport matches may continue; however, tournaments are cancelled and there will be no spectators until further notice.**
- h. *Community use of school facilities* (birthday parties, gym rentals, etc.) **are cancelled until further notice.**
- i. **Staff and student absences due to illness will be monitored closely for potential activity signals. School closures may be considered based on availability of staff and public health orders implemented to prevent excessive transmission in the school setting. Protocols around notifications and school closures can be found in our school [Communication Plan](#).**

## 6. Indoor non-medical masks.

- a. All levels of prevention measures (*vaccinations, staying home when sick, cleaning and disinfecting, adapting learning environments, respecting others' personal space, managing flow of people, hand hygiene*) will continue to be explored along with the use of non-medical masks.
- b. In the most recent, provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidelines **and the current [PHO Face Coverings Order](#)**, non-medical masks are required indoors for adults and K-12 students - except when:
  - i. There is a barrier in place
  - ii. Eating and drinking
  - iii. Engaged in high-intensity physical activities
  - iv. Playing musical instruments
  - v. Providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment), where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important
  - vi. Driving a bus
- c. Non-medical masks are provided to students who present COVID-like symptoms at school prior to going home or being picked up by a parent/caregiver.
- d. At Cedars, respect will be shown to students and adults who choose to wear a non-medical mask, and to those who have claimed exemptions for circumstances listed below:
  - i. Person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons
  - ii. Person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person

*Note:* Health-care provider notes are not required to confirm if a student or adult cannot wear a mask. Mask exemptions must be claimed in writing through the school Principal.

**[Potential strategies to reinforce and enhance other safety measures](#) will be explored with individuals who are granted mask exemptions, including: wearing a face shield, and wearing a mask for short durations and/or for certain activities.**

## **CLEAN with Care**

Environmental cleaning and disinfection, and personal hygiene measures prevent indirect transmission from contaminated surfaces.

*Specifically, within the K-12 setting of Cedars Christian School, this means:*

### **1. Regular cleaning and disinfecting.**

- a. *Professional, general cleaning and disinfecting **once a day**.*
- b. *Targeted, professional cleaning and disinfecting of frequently-touched surfaces **once per day**.* This includes door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, desks, tables, and chairs.
- c. *Routine, staff-initiated classroom cleaning and disinfecting.* Shared equipment will be disinfected after use. Surfaces in shared spaces (elementary electives, high school classrooms) will be cleaned and disinfected between user groups.

### **2. Practicing hand hygiene.**

- a. *Hand washing will take place at all significant transitions*, including: start/end of day, between activities, before and after snacks and outdoor play.
- b. *Rigorous hand washing with soap and water*, hand-sanitizing when necessary. Portable washing stations will be installed and maintained in the cabins without sinks to support hand washing with soap and water as our primary cleaning methodology. Approved alcohol-based hand rub will be made available at main building entrances and in locations where hand washing is not easily accessible.

### **3. Limiting shared materials and technology.** Although paper-based learning resources are not deemed to be a risk, students will generally be discouraged from sharing school supplies (pencils, calculators, etc.). All shared technology will be cleaning and disinfecting prior to and after use.

### **4. Sharing of food and drink will be prohibited.** Individual water bottles are recommended, and may be filled at water stations around the school.