

Communicable Disease Prevention Plan - *Approved: Sept 5, 2022*

Cedars Christian School

Introduction

The health and safety of staff and children 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 2022/23 school year (Updated: Aug 25, 2022); the BC Centre for Disease Control [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) (Aug 25, 2022) and [Public Health Guidance for Communicable Disease Management in Child Care Settings](#) (Aug 25, 2002); and the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (Aug 25, 2022).

Cedars seeks to inform all community members of their roles and responsibilities in promoting and maintaining a safe and healthy school, child care, 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 participate in school and child care programming.

Although this Plan has been primarily drafted in the context of [BC's Response to COVID-19](#) 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 and child care context. A variety of measures are identified in each section of this Plan. Personal practices are promoted through staff modeling, conversation and posters. Some of these measures have required focus and attention but have, over time and with practice, faded to the background as routine. **Vaccinations are important public health tools to protect against serious communicable diseases.** There is currently no provincial mandate for vaccinations of eligible staff and students. Members of the Cedars community are encouraged to review vaccine information posted on the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) website and make informed choices regarding vaccinations.

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*.

Specifically, within the school and child care settings of Cedars Christian School, this means:

1. Daily health assessments.

- a. Staff and other adults are **required** to complete a daily health check for symptoms of illness ([including COVID-19](#)) **that would limit their ability to participate fully in routine activities prior to coming to the school.**
- b. 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.

2. Staying home and self-isolating when required.

- a. Those with [symptoms](#) of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease are required to stay home.
- b. Persons experiencing COVID-like symptoms are encouraged to use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) or consult with a health care provider.
- c. Persons experiencing non-COVID-like symptoms (not recommended for COVID testing) may return to school *when they feel well enough to participate fully in routine activities without the use of fever-reducing medication*.
- d. Health-care provider notes are not required to confirm the health status of staff or child beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual (pre-COVID) practices.
- e. Staff and child absences due to illness are to be reported to the main office by phone, email, or by using our school's [online form](#).
- f. Additionally, staying at home is required for:
 - i. Those awaiting COVID-19 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 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 children will be sent home if symptomatic.* Children who become sick will wait in a separate, supervised setting until notified parents/caregivers can pick their child up. Children will be offered a non-medical mask if they do not have one and/or given the option to wait outside with a supervisor. Older children (with permission) and staff who become sick are to go home immediately. **Spaces and materials that the infectious individual used will be cleaned and disinfected prior to their use by other persons.**

4. Respecting others' personal space.

Note: The PHO no longer recommends physical distancing of 2 metres as a communicable disease measure for school and child care settings. Children, staff, and visitors will be reminded to “*respect others' physical space*”.

- a. *Learning and gathering spaces selected, configured and used to best meet learner needs and good pedagogy.* Consideration will be given to strategies that respect space between people.
- b. *Using outdoors often.* Staff and children will be encouraged to take breaks outside when weather permits. Some learning and play spaces will be set up outside for use in good weather.

5. 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 child, staff, and community member comfort levels regarding personal space
 - ii. Room occupancy limits and using largest spaces available whenever possible to allow for people to spread out
- b. School will provide contact information to the public health office, upon official request, to assist public health actions in accordance with school policy.

- c. Visitors, parents and caregivers are **not permitted to enter** school buildings if they are required to isolate for any public health reason.
- d. *Staff and child 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 or child care setting.

6. Indoor non-medical masks.

- a. Non-medical masks are made available to individuals upon request.
- b. At Cedars, respect will be shown to students and adults who choose to wear a non-medical mask, and to those who do not.

CLEAN with Care

Environmental cleaning and disinfection, and personal hygiene measures prevent indirect transmission from contaminated surfaces. **Increased air exchange and filtration influence air quality.**

Specifically, within the school and child care settings 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, and toilet handles.
- c. *Routine, staff-initiated classroom cleaning and disinfecting.* Surfaces in shared spaces (elementary electives, high school classrooms) will be cleaned and disinfected between user groups.

2. Practicing hand hygiene.

- a. *Hand hygiene will take place* at significant transitions, before/after use of shared materials, start of day, and before eating.
- b. *Rigorous hand washing with soap and water;* hand-sanitizing when necessary. Portable washing stations will be 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. Regular maintenance of HVAC systems.

- a. **Mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems will be inspected bi-annually for proper functioning.**
- b. **Air filters with the highest MERV rating will be employed to filter recycled air.**
- c. **Windows will be opened regularly to allow fresh air circulation where weather permits and where HVAC operations are not negatively impacted.**
- d. **Portable HEPA filter units will be considered for spaces where windows and/or mechanical ventilation are not available.**