



St. Francis de Sales School

6656 Balmoral Street, Burnaby BC V5E 1J1

Return to School Safety Plan re: COVID-19

In accordance with the Ministry of Education's K-12 Restart Plan, beginning on September 10, St. Francis de Sales School resumed K-7 in-class instruction. The 2020/21 school year began in *Stage 2* of the K-12 Restart Plan with the goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all students within the revised public health guidelines.

Whenever possible, feasible and practical control measures in accordance with the order of the Provincial Health Officer have been selected to provide the best/widest protection to all staff and students within the school community. This revised plan is posted at the school and also on the St. Francis de Sales School website, and it has been communicated to parents. This information is based on the best evidence currently available and will be updated as new information becomes available.

STEP 1: RISK ASSESSMENT AT ST. FRANCIS DE SALES SCHOOL

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, or from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face.

Things to Consider

During normal operation *prior to* COVID-19:

- St. Francis de Sales School has 253 students plus 31 staff and support workers. Parent volunteers also assist with various activities inside the school including library helpers and hot lunch parents.
- Students and staff congregate and are in close quarters in classrooms, in other learning areas (gym, learning commons, Learning resource centres, activity room), in hallways, in the staffroom and other smaller areas such as the office and the medical room.
- Surfaces that are touched often include door knobs/handles, desks, washroom doors, toilets, taps, light switches, stair railings, office equipment (photocopier, phones), teacher/student laptops, iPads, Chromebooks, classroom materials including books and supplies, library books, gym equipment, etc.
- Staff, students and other adults sometimes attend school when they are sick or have symptoms of colds, influenza, hay fever, allergies, etc.

- The school is used on Tuesday evenings for Parish Religious Education Program classes (PREP).

STEP 2: MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK

A. Restricting Access

- In accordance with the Ministry of Education's K-12 Restart Plan, beginning on Sept. 10th, St. Francis de Sales School resumed in-class instruction in a controlled manner while ensuring health and safety measures are in effect. School density targets of no more than 60 students in a learning group ensure the number of students in our K-Gr. 7 environment aligns with public health guidance.
- Until further notice, classrooms run at full capacity. The maximum in one classroom from K-Gr. 5 will be 30 students and three staff (teachers/education assistant). In Grades 6 and 7, the capacity will be the same.
- Access to the building is restricted. Only staff and students are permitted, unless it is an urgent matter. Parents/guardians must remain outside when they drop off their children. Parents are also not permitted to come in during the school day to drop off lunches/supplies, etc.
- Parent volunteers who prepare hot lunch are trained in safety protocols, and prepare meals in the kitchen, entering/exiting from outside. Staff deliver meals to classrooms and return bins to the kitchen.
- If parents/caregivers need to contact the school principal or their student's teachers, they are directed to do so by phone or email. In-person visits should be for essential purposes and arranged in advance by appointment.
- Visitors must be aware of, and follow safety protocols, limit their access to necessary spaces only, and are asked to confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering the school building. All visitors are required to sign in and out, and leave contact information.

B. Maintaining Physical Distancing

i.) Regulating Physical Distancing During the School Day

- Students and staff must avoid gathering/congregating in groups other than their cohort in hallways or other common areas.
- Classrooms are reconfigured to maximize space between desks/tables where possible.
- Staff, as much as possible, try to maintain a distance of 2 metres from one another and from students.
- Students are trained on how to practise social distancing at school and practise the protocols daily, reviewing after long breaks to ensure that the expectations are integrated.

- Public Health guidelines for the K-12 school setting recognize that physical distancing can be challenging –especially for younger students. There is a focus on physical distancing and reduced physical contact in those situations where physical distancing (2 m) is not practical. Students are to keep their hands to themselves. No hugs/handshakes/high fives, etc.
- Teachers incorporate more activities that encourage space between students and staff. For younger students, teachers adapt group and individual activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items. For older students, teachers minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact. Sneeze guards (plastic screens) help provide an additional level of safety.
- Classes go outside when possible for lessons and/or play-exercise times.
- Staff implements transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone in the hallway.
- Traffic flow is marked in hallways and stairways. Tape on the floor reminds students how far to stay apart and what direction to walk.
- Washroom areas are monitored and supervised. Traffic flow to and from the washroom is controlled. Staff assist with movement.
- Occupancy limits are posted in certain areas (e.g. office, staffroom, LRC, washrooms, activity room, learning commons/library.)
- Assemblies are not being held at this time.
- Where physical distancing measures cannot be maintained, such as in the office area, use of the partially open windows facilitate communication that is safe.
- Although the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) guidance for K-12 school settings is that personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves are not needed beyond those used by staff as part of regular precautions, if other measures are not sufficient, staff use non-medical masks, understanding that these have limitations. They have been trained in these limitations, and this training will be reviewed.

B. Hygiene and School Cleanliness

i.) Personal Hygiene—Hand Washing

- Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness. The school ensures that adequate hand-washing practices are followed: some classrooms have two sinks, and we use the sinks in the staff washrooms as well. When returning from outside activities, students wash with soap and water.
- Hand sanitizer is available to students/staff when they go outside to the playground.
- Staff members wash or sanitize their hands when they arrive as well as frequently throughout the day. Wearing of gloves does not preclude hand washing. Hands must be washed/sanitized before and after using gloves.

- Teachers will provide instruction and assist younger students (as needed) to properly wash their hands. Hand washing signs are posted near all sinks.
- Teachers incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into their daily schedule. Students wash hands/use hand sanitizer when necessary but at least:
 - When they arrive at school and before going home
 - Before eating and drinking
 - After using the toilet
 - After sneezing/coughing into hands or tissue
 - Whenever hands are visibly dirty
 - When transitioning to different area (e.g. outdoor to indoor; gym to classroom)
- If a sink is not available, students/staff use alcohol-based sanitizer. Hand sanitizers are available in each classroom and other areas including the front entry to the school, office, staff room, gym, library, etc.
- Students and parents will be reassured that playgrounds are a safe environment and we encourage appropriate personal hygiene practices before, during and after outdoor play at Rene Memorial Park. The basketball hoops may be used, as well as the gravel field and 'forest'. The back field behind the school will also be used. Staff will ensure students are practising physical distancing as much as possible. Students in Kindergarten-Gr. 4 are assigned play areas that are rotated on a daily basis; students in Grades 5-7 have been allocated areas for the duration of the year.

ii.) Food and Drink

- Food and drinks may not be shared by students.
- Group food preparation activities (including Hot Lunch) will be reintroduced when parent volunteers are determined and when they have been trained about safety procedures. These volunteers will not be allowed entry to classrooms.

iii.) Storing Belongings

- Students use their sanitized blue 'cubbies' to store items. Doors have been removed to reduce points of contact.
- Students should each have a lunch kit/water bottle which will be stored within the classroom to reduce time spent in the hallways.

iv.) Remain on Site

- Staff and students are to remain on site and not leave during lunch or other break times.

v.) School Cleaning/Sanitizing Protocols

- The school is regularly cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) *Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings* guidelines. Cleaning practices are in line with the Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 *Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings*.
- High touch surfaces (door and cabinet handles, stair railings, washroom areas, shared office spaces, desks, communication devices, keyboards, light switches, etc.) are frequently cleaned and disinfected, at least **twice (2) a day**. Staff assist with this.

- Washrooms are cleaned **twice (2) a day** keeping in line with the high touch surface areas protocols.
- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises is completed by the custodians at least **once (1) a day**.
- Shared items where cross-contamination is possible (e.g. shared school supplies, devices, cutlery, etc.) should not be used. Students should bring their own cutlery.
- Drinking fountains are not accessible. Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles.
- Items that are not easily cleaned (e.g. fabric or soft items) are limited. Classroom throw rugs have been removed.
- According to the BC Centre for Disease Control, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper based products. Nevertheless, we will limit the distribution of books or paper based educational resources to students.
- Garbage and recycling containers are emptied daily.
- The mattress in the medical room is encased in plastic and all linens are removed in order to effectively disinfect this room after use.
- The plant manager (Mr. Bencze) ensures that hand washing supplies are available at all times (i.e. soap, paper towels and 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.) Also, cleaning products (e.g. Lysol wipes) are provided for cleaning photocopiers and other common devices.
- The custodians are trained in how to follow cleaning protocols in the school under these new requirements. This includes window cleaning in the office.

STEP 3: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Health and Sickness

- **No one who is sick or showing symptoms may come to school.**
- Should children and staff have common-cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms they must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider, and tested for COVID-19. Testing may be recommended for anyone with these symptoms, even mild ones, after calling 8-1-1.
- When someone is symptomatic, they should self-isolate and follow directions provided by their health care provider.
- 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.
- If a person is found to be a confirmed case of COVID-19, public health staff will ensure there is robust contact tracing and management of any clusters or outbreaks. They will also ensure that children, staff and parents have access to health care providers and that appropriate supports are in place. Parents will be notified if public health directs it.

i.) Daily Health Assessments

- Staff members must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school. Staff members are to sign in at the back entry door each day and complete a form provided by CISVA to indicate they are healthy and have not been exposed to COVID-19.
- 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. Parents are to sign a statement to this effect and submit it electronically to the office before their child's arrival. The statement is a declaration that the student has not presented symptoms that morning or the last 24 hours.
- 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. **Testing may be recommended for anyone with these symptoms, even mild ones.**

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.
- Until they can be retrieved by a caregiver, they will be isolated from others.

Staff Illness: Staff members who start feeling ill while at work are to return home and monitor their symptoms. They are to let the school secretary know how they will get home.

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 PPE (mask and gloves) and immediately separate the sick child from others and put them 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 before donning gloves and after removing them.
- Staff member to clean/disinfect the area where the child was relocated. Remove garbage.
- Children with common cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms must stay home, and be assessed by their health care provider who may also test them.
- Allergy symptoms must be managed with medication so that coughs, runny eyes and nose, and sneezing do not present themselves.
- Students with known allergies must present a doctor's note stating this is the case.
- 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, skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes, fatigue, diarrhea, loss of sense of smell or taste, 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 emailing the office before 9:00 a.m. and again between 2:30 and 3:00 p.m. each day. The office will follow up with those staff members who have not checked in.

B. Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff should:

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

C. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Masking for Grades 4 to 7 is encouraged, where students have an awareness of the proper techniques and efficacy of using masks. Masks should be worn when in the hallways, as students may encounter someone outside their learning cohort. Cloth and disposable masks can be labeled with the students initials and are to be kept in a labeled plastic or cloth bag. Reasonable exceptions for medical conditions will be made. The school will provide disposable masks to students who forget theirs at home.
- Staff should be aware of the limitations in regard to respiratory droplets, and masks are expected to be worn at all times.
- Gloves are a personal choice. Their use would not preclude students and staff members from regular hand washing.
- Staff wear PPE when administering First Aid.
- Itinerant teachers (French, Music and PE and Resource Department) may wear a protective visor during instruction to facilitate reduced congregate exposure. A mask must also be worn if social distancing cannot take place.
- Anytime a staff member works with a student not in his or her learning group a visor is recommended.
- Staff on supervision duty must wear a mask, and wear it if they are supervising indoors or outdoors.
- Anytime a staff member works with a student not in his or her learning cohort, a mask must be worn and a visor is recommended.

D. Student Morning Drop Off

- Parents must park in the lower church parking lot across the street from the church, or in the lower lot near Tim Horton's. The street drop off zone is open, but parents are not to exit their vehicles. All students except Kindergarten will gather in learning group lineups on the gravel field across from the school; these will be marked by a cone. Students in Kindergarten will gather alongside the fenced area outside their classroom.
- Students in before school care will be escorted to the field.
- Staff members collect students starting at 8:45.
- In the event of the field being unusable due to severe rain, students will assemble in designated areas directly in front of the school and be systematically directed inside by staff members. They may only enter through their designated doors.

E. Entering the Building

- All staff enter the building through the back doors of the school. No other doors will be used at this time.
- Staff are to sign in at the back door.
- All students are guided to entry doors by a staff member after being collected.
- Students in K enter from their own doors.
- Students in Grade 1 enter through the front doors, ahead of Grade 3 and 4; students in Grade 6B follow them.
- Students in Grade 2, Grade 5 and 7 enter through the east door by the former Grade 7 classroom before going upstairs; students in Grade 6A follow them.

F. Exiting the Building

- Students exit from the same doors that they entered through, at staggered times, starting at 3:05.
- All students are guided outside by a staff member.

G. After School Pick Up

- Parents are to arrive punctually to pick up their children after school.
- Teachers/EAs escort the children to where they were dropped off on the field.
- On exceptionally rainy/snowy days, children whose last names start with letters M-Z will be dismissed from the back field. This will be announced on the school website by 2:30 on the days when the decision must be made. This is to ensure easier visibility, better spacing, and efficiency in collecting children and heading home.
- Children are not to play after school but are to go straight home.
- Students in after school care are escorted back into the building for their afternoon snack. The room is set up so they can remain in their learning cohorts.

H. Recess & Lunch

- These times are at the teachers' discretion. Students are restricted to certain zones to take physical distancing into account.
- Each zone has a staff supervisor to ensure students remain within their learning cohort when playing outside. An additional supervisor will circulate in case a child needs to enter the school and needs escorting.
- Supervisors have hand sanitizer available for student use on the playground.

I. Student Supplies

Students coming to school are to:

- Wear their school uniform. Summer uniforms will again be acceptable in the spring; parents will be notified of the exact date. (Students *are not required* to change into black dress shoes; they may wear the indoor runners that are used for PE class throughout the day while in the building.)
- Bring appropriate outerwear for the weather.
- Outdoor play equipment (ball, skipping rope, etc.) is provided by the staff and sanitized after use.
- Personal, labeled hand sanitizer is optional; (odour free please).

J. Before/After School Care

- Students who register for this program may arrive at 7:00. Supervisors ensure they interact only with members of their learning cohort.
- Students are escorted to the field at 8:30 to meet their classmates.
- After school care is provided until 6:00.
- Students are escorted to the classroom from the field.
- Supervisors ensure they interact only with members of their learning cohort.
- Kindergarten students are escorted to/from the classroom by a staff member.

STEP 4: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND TRAINING

- Everyone in the school community (staff, students and parents) knows the policies around staying home when they are sick. This information is communicated in writing and reviewed weekly.
- All staff are trained and informed as to how to keep themselves safe while at school. Formal staff training and information sessions were held May 25 and May 26, 2020 and included:
 - 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 are available in Google doc form on our shared drive.
- Signage will be posted around the school including occupancy limits and effective hand washing practices. Signage will also be posted at the main and rear entrances 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 are asked to raise any safety concerns with the Principal or Vice Principal.

STEP 6: ASSESS AND ADDRESS RISKS FROM RESUMING OPERATIONS

- New employees will be trained.
- Parent volunteers will be trained.

Additional Information:

Recordkeeping

Classroom Teachers

- Prepare and submit to the office a classroom seating chart. This will be shared with public health should contact tracing need to occur. Keep strict attendance.

Office Staff

- Keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors who enter the school.
- Keep a list of students who travel outside Canada during the 2020-21 school year.
- Monitor school attendance to track student and/or staff absence and compare against usual absenteeism patterns at the school.
- Report school attendance as well as exposures to FISA every week.

Learning Cohorts

Public Health guidelines for the K-12 school setting recognize that physical distancing is challenging. Lowering the number of in-person, close interactions continues to be a key component of B.C.'s strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Students are placed in Learning Groups or cohorts with no more than 60 people. The principle of Learning Groups is used to limit the number of interactions among students and staff, as well as facilitate an effective and efficient rapid-response contact tracing protocol.

- A cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term. The use of cohorts in schools allows for a significant reduction in the number of individual interactions, while allowing most students to receive in-person learning in a close-to-normal school environment.
- Students will remain in an established cohort during the school day. The composition of the Learning Group will remain consistent for all activities that occur in the school day including but not limited to learning and breaks (lunch, recess, classroom changes, clubs, sports teams, etc.)
- At any given time, the size of a student's cohort will be limited to approximately 60 students.
- Students will stay in assigned cohorts to receive beneficial supports or services (e.g. learning resource). Within these supports or services, it is expected that cohorts and physical distance are maintained as much as is practical while still ensuring the support, program or service continues.
- Learning Groups will go outside when possible for lessons and/or play-exercise times.
- Staff will determine fixed seating arrangements over flexible seating arrangements where relevant.
- A 5-7 minute transition time between itinerant classes will allow for the teacher to clean equipment.
- The playground is divided to accommodate Learning Groups. These areas will rotate on a fixed schedule (not between recess and lunch of that day) to allow for students in Kindergarten through Grade 4 to be able to play in a variety of areas.

Case Finding, Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

At the School Level

- The office will call the parent to arrive as soon as possible when notified their child is ill. Parents will need to have a plan in place.
- 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 members put on a mask and immediately separate the sick child from others and put him/her into a supervised area until the parent/guardian arrives. Physical distancing,

respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene principles are applied while waiting for pick up. Touching a student's body fluids (mucous/saliva) is avoided. Hands are thoroughly washed.

- Staff members clean/disinfect the area where the child was relocated.

At the Public Health Level

- If a staff or student in a school is confirmed by public health as positive for COVID-19, public health will work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken, including if any staff or students who have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate, and if other staff and students' families should be notified.
- Schools will NOT provide notification to staff or students' families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, *unless directed to by public health.*

At the Home Level

- Children with common cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and possibly 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.
- If concerned, parents 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 who may assess them for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.
- Extracurricular activities take place as organized into learning groups.
- Parent Participation – Volunteer jobs in the school when students and staff are present will be highly limited.
- A reminder that homemade food items are not to be made available to other students (e.g. birthday treats, bake sale items).

PREP (Parish Religious Education Program)

- Marguerite Goldsmith, the PREP coordinator, will be trained in the school protocols on Sept. 8 and 9; she will, in turn, train her volunteers on the evening of Sept. 8.
- Classes are currently held online, and may not resume until February.
- All the desks and chairs, door handles etc. will be sanitized before PREP starts by PREP volunteers. They will also sanitize the desks and chairs after PREP.
- Parents are not waiting in the school this year.

Additional Changes

- Grade 7 student volunteer opportunities will be adapted to ensure safety; whistles will be stored differently, vests/stop signs will be sanitized, etc.
 - Choir will not occur at this time; this decision may be reviewed in January.
 - Clubs will be reorganized to ensure only students from the same learning group attend.
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- All class field trips are cancelled until further notice. (Outdoor Education/camp for Grade 7 students has been booked for April just in case we can offer it to students.)
 - Parent information meetings, such as *Human Sexuality and Your Child* will take place virtually. in order to minimize contact and for the safety of all. That evening, parents will be able to log into a link in order to hear a general address by administration, and then each presenter will share important and pertinent information virtually.