



# 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 directive, beginning on September 7, 2021, St. Francis de Sales School resumed K-7 in-class instruction: *Stage 3*. In-class instruction is provided 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. The information is based on the best evidence currently available and is updated as new information becomes available.

In line with the K- 12 in-class instruction for all students within current health and safety guidelines for schools, staff utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in preventive practices and do not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature.

## **MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK**

### **Restricting Access**

- In accordance with the Ministry of Education's K-12 Restart Plan, beginning on Sept. 8th, St. Francis de Sales School resumed in-class instruction in a controlled manner while ensuring health and safety measures are in effect. Students are grouped into: Kindergarten, Gr. 1, Gr. 2; Gr. 3-5; Gr. 6-7. These arrangements are for playground supervision primarily.
- Classrooms run at full capacity: 30 students and three staff (teachers/education assistant).
- Access to the building is less restricted. 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. However, they may enter the building for meetings with the teacher. Parent volunteers may help with supporting some aspects of school life such as athletic coaching and musical accompaniment. Sign in/out procedures are in place. Masks are expected to be worn.

- 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.

## **Maintaining Physical Distancing**

### **i.) Regulating Physical Distancing During the School Day**

- Physical distancing continues to include avoiding physical contact, minimizing close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible within the space available.
- 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.
- 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. are permitted.
- 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
- Washroom areas are monitored and supervised. Traffic flow to and from the washroom is controlled. Staff assist with movement.
- Assemblies are being held in two groups: Gr. 5-7, and Gr. 1-4 at this time. Kindergarten students do not yet attend assemblies.
- Where physical distancing measures cannot be maintained, such as in the office area, use of the partially open windows facilitate communication that is safe.
- All staff and students are required to wear non-medical masks at all times (except when eating or sitting alone in a classroom/staffroom), understanding that these have limitations.
- All visitors must wear masks.

## 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 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.

### ii.) Food and Drink

- Food and drinks may not be shared by students.
- Group food preparation activities (Hot Lunch) have been reintroduced and parent volunteers are aware of safety procedures. These volunteers are not 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, unless they have a medical appointment.

#### 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. Music equipment and sports equipment is sanitized after each use.
- Mr. Bencze sprays all frequently touched surfaces in common areas with an approved disinfectant daily.
- Washrooms are cleaned **daily**, 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 accessible for refilling water bottles only. Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles.
- Items that are not easily cleaned (e.g. fabric or soft items) are limited.
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. books, magazines, worksheets, etc.) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) are low risk items. Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as normal in the Learning Commons/Library. There is no need to clean, disinfect or quarantine these items for any period of time.
- 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.
- Garbage and recycling containers are emptied daily.
- The mattress in the medical room is encased in plastic and is disinfected 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.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Health and Sickness**

- Should children and staff have more than one common-cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms, they should stay home; they may 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 work with the school to ensure there is management of any clusters or outbreaks. Parents will be notified if public health directs it.

### **i.) Daily Health Assessments**

- Staff members must assess themselves daily for more than one symptom 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 more than one symptom of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before they are to come to school.
- If a student develops COVID symptoms, parents/guardians **MUST** keep their child at home until **their symptoms have resolved**; they should be assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases. **Testing may be recommended for anyone with these symptoms, even mild ones.**

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

- Individuals who show more than one sign of illness may be sent home until they are well.
- 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 may 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. We apply physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene principles while waiting for pick up. We avoid touching a student's body fluids (mucous/saliva). We wash hands thoroughly before donning gloves and after removing them.
- Staff members clean/disinfect the area where the child was relocated. Garbage is removed.
- Allergy symptoms should 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 required for those who are considered a close contact of a case that has been confirmed by public health, 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 **14 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.

### 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.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Cloth and disposable masks can be labeled with the students initials and should 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.
- Due to the recent rise in cases of COVID-19 in BC, the Provincial Health Officer has recommended the following time limited changes to the Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings (Masks) section, and any other sections where mask guidance is provided, to the Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools. **Effective immediately, all staff, adult volunteers and visitors, and all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 should wear a non-medical mask or face covering (a "mask") at all times while indoors at school, subject to the exceptions noted below.**
  - The recommendations above should not apply as follows:
    - To a person who is unable to wear a mask because they do not tolerate it (for health or behavioural reasons);

- To a person unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. actively playing a wind instrument, high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- If a person is eating or drinking;
- If a person is behind a barrier;
- While 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.

Schools continue to be encouraged to support student mask use through positive and inclusive approaches, and not punitive or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma.

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating in school if they are not wearing a mask.

- Masks are not to be worn during high-intensity sport activities (stationary or with movement, indoor or outdoors).  
During high intensity physical activity, respiration rates are increased (resulting in a wet mask) and the wearer is more likely to touch their face and adjust the mask frequently. These factors lessen the protective value a mask may offer. In addition, a wet mask is more difficult to breathe through; those wearing masks during high intensity activities should change them as soon as they become wet.
- Staff are aware of the limitations in regard to respiratory droplets, and **masks are expected to be worn at all times** unless eating or working alone in classrooms/staffroom.
- 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 even if social distancing can take place.

### 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 classroom lineups on the gravel field across from the school. Students in **Kindergarten will gather inside** the fenced area outside their classroom.
- Students in before school care will be escorted to the field, or to Kindergarten.
- Staff members collect students starting at 8:45.

- In the event of the field being unusable due to severe rain, students will be admitted at 8:30 through the front doors of the school, whereupon they must sanitize their hands and head straight to their classroom.
- Students may not be dropped off in the alley.
- As most of the children in our school are not vaccinated, mask wearing or keeping the 2 m distance is recommended for parents/grandparents/older siblings when dropping off/picking up students from school.

### **Entering the Building**

- All staff enter the building through the back doors of the school.
- All students are guided to entry doors by a staff member after being collected.
- Students in K enter from their own doors.
- Students in Grades 1, 3 and 4 enter through the front doors; students in Grade 6 follow them.
- Students in Grade 2, Grade 5 and 7 enter through the east door by the Grade 2 classroom before going upstairs.

### **Exiting the Building**

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

### **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 A-M will be dismissed first. 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 quickly and heading home.
- Students in after school care are escorted back into the building for their afternoon snack.

### **Recess & Lunch**

- Students are restricted to certain zones to take physical distancing into account.
- Each zone has a staff supervisor to ensure students are safe in their play. An additional supervisor will circulate in case a child needs to enter the school.

### **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 required* to change into black dress shoes.
- Bring appropriate outerwear for the weather.
- Personal, labeled hand sanitizer is optional; (odour free please).



## **Before/After School Care**

- Students who register for this program may arrive at 7:00. Masks must be worn.
- 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.
- Kindergarten students are escorted to/from the classroom by a staff member.

## **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 regularly.
- All staff are trained and informed as to how to keep themselves safe while at school.
- 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.

## **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.

## **ASSESS AND ADDRESS RISKS FROM RESUMING OPERATIONS**

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

## **Additional Information:**

### Recordkeeping

*Classroom Teachers*

- Prepare a classroom seating chart, and update these as they change. This may be shared with public health if needed. Strict attendance is kept.

#### *Office Staff*

- Keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors who enter the school.
- Monitor school attendance to track student and/or staff absence and compare against usual absenteeism patterns at the school.

#### Ventilation and Air Circulation

We ensure that the ventilation system operates properly, and have installed air purifiers in all classrooms, the Learning Commons, the activity room and the staffroom.

- Should the ventilation be temporarily compromised eg. during a power outage, all classroom windows, doors and hallway windows will be opened; classes will take place outside if the weather allows.

#### **PREP (Parish Religious Education Program)**

- Classes are currently held in our school.
- 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.