



## **Communicable Disease Guidance Parents**

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## Introduction

Our experience in B.C. during the 2020-21 school year, which aligned with evidence gathered nationally and internationally, saw schools as lower-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission when infection prevention and exposure control measures were in place. Enabling children to return to closer-to-normal learning, recreational and social activities is an important pandemic recovery action. Children continue to be at low risk for serious outcomes from COVID-19, including variants of concern detected in B.C.

This document is intended to support FMSS community. Families and staff must follow school routines to safeguard the health and safety of everybody.

## Learning Groups

Learning groups are no longer required.

## Physical distancing

In the classroom

1. Jericho and Sitka classrooms follow CCLR regulations for classroom setups allowing staff and children to have sufficient space to support physical distancing.
2. Teachers will avoid close greetings like hugs or handshakes.
3. Teachers will continue promoting physical distance between the children, which includes arrange tables to maximize space between students.
4. During resting time, the distance between cots will be increased to follow the physical distance guideless. Children should be placed head-to-toe or toe-to-toe if the space is tight.
5. Visual reminders to psychical distance are provided for students/parents and staff.

Between children

1. Teachers will establish different expectations regarding physical distance based on age and/or developmental readiness.
2. Younger children (preschoolers) should be supported to have minimized direct contact with one another, while older children (kindergartens) should be supported to maintain physical distance whenever possible.
3. Teachers will help children learn about physical distancing and less physical contact by modelling and reminding them basic principles such as **"two arm lengths apart."**

## Parents

1. Drop -off and pick-up will remain outside the building.
2. Parents and caregivers should maintain physical distance and avoid crowding while on school grounds, including outside.
3. Parents are encouraged to call the classroom for any school /child matter to support the social distancing guidelines.  
Jericho: [604-224-2633](tel:604-224-2633) or email [jericho@familymontessori.com](mailto:jericho@familymontessori.com)  
Sitka : [604-731-8810](tel:604-731-8810) or email [sitka@familymontessori.com](mailto:sitka@familymontessori.com)

## Office

1. Due to the space in the FMSS office, only two people will be allowed at any time.
2. Outside public coming into the office will be limited to one person.
3. Parents are encouraged to call ([604-224-2643](tel:604-224-2643)) or email the office ([info@familymontessori.com](mailto:info@familymontessori.com)) for any administrative matter instead of going in person to support the social distancing guidelines.

## Visitors

1. Each classroom will minimize the number of additional adults entering into the environment unless that person is providing care and/or supporting the inclusion of a child in care (e.g. speech-language pathologist, health nurse, etc.)
2. All visitors **must wear a non-medical mask** when they are inside the school. Exceptions will be made for visitors who cannot tolerate mask for health or behavioural reasons.
3. Visitors must confirm they have completed the Health Check requirements (FMSS Visitors Health Check Form) before entering the building.
4. Each location will keep a list of the date, name and contact information for any visitors who entered the school.

## Traffic flow

1. Use floor markings and posters to direct the flow through the school.

## **Daily screening**

To keep everybody safe, it is important to remember that parents/caregivers are responsible for monitoring their children daily for symptoms and not sending them to school if they are sick. **Anyone who is sick will not be allowed in school.**

### Daily screening for children:

1. Every Sunday, parents/caregivers must fill out the **FMSS online Health Check** for assessment of any symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms)

2. Parents /guardians will continue to be responsible for assessing your child/ren **daily** for key symptoms of illness before entering school and informing the school of any change in your child/ren's health.

Daily screening for staff:

1. Staff must fill out daily **before** coming to school the **FMSS online Health Check** for assessment of any symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms)

## **Personal measurements**

Illness protocol

- Staff and children are expected to follow the guidance from BCCDC. This is outlined in [When to get tested for COVID 19](#) (Appendix A)
- If a student or staff member is experiencing symptoms, they **MUST** stay home and seek for guidance (Appendix B)
  1. If guidance **does not recommend getting tested** or a health care assessment - stay home until symptoms improve and feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities
  2. If guidance **recommends getting tested** - stay home until test results received.
    - If result is negative, can return to school when symptoms improve and feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities
    - If the result is positive, follow health authority direction on when to return to school
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If the household member tests positive for COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they may return to school.

Developing symptoms of illness at school

1. Children
  - Children who show signs of illness will be sent home from school. **Parents/caregivers need to arrange immediate pick-up of the sick child.**

- Each classroom will have a separate, supervised area available for children who have symptoms of illness, where they can rest until they can be picked up.
  - Provide the child with a mask (if available and tolerated) or tissues if they are exhibiting respiratory symptoms (to cover their coughs or sneezes). Masks should not be worn if the person has gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g., is at risk of vomiting). Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
  - Teachers should avoid touching the child's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva, vomit). If not possible, practice hand hygiene.
  - Teachers must ensure this area is cleaned and disinfected after the child has left.
2. Staff
- Staff who show signs of illness and is already at school **must go home immediately** and be assessed by a health-care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases.

### **Self-isolation**

- Students, staff or other adults must stay home if they are required to self-isolate.
- Additional information on self-isolation requirements and support is available from [BCCDC](#)

### **Public health measurements**

1. **Vaccines** : Are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools. Everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive 2 doses) against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them – including those who are not eligible to be vaccinated. Both doses are needed to get the most effective protection against serious cases of COVID-19 and provide longer-lasting protection.
2. **Attendance**: Schools should continue to maintain daily attendance records for staff, students, and visitors and keep accurate class lists to assist with contact tracing if necessary. Daily attendance records should be kept for at least 45 days to assist with contact tracing and retrospective analysis by public health (if needed).
3. **School exposures and notifications**: When a potential exposure at a school is identified, public health will work with the school to understand who may have been exposed and determine what actions should be taken, including identifying if other students or staff have been exposed. Public health considers vaccination status when investigating school exposures. Staff and students who are not fully immunized and are identified as close contacts are more likely to be asked to self-

isolate than those who are fully immunized. To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained, public health will only disclose a confirmed case of a communicable disease if the person was infectious when they attended school.

4. **Regional differences and local public health orders and recommendations:**. For schools, the local Medical Health Officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a grouping of schools, a school district, for all schools within a health authority region, or some combination thereof, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk.

## **Outdoor Spaces and Ventilation**

1. Keep adequate ventilation by opening all the windows in the classroom, if possible.
2. When using fans in ventilated spaces, air should be moved from high places to lower places instead of blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to another's. Avoid horizontal cross breezes. Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed should be avoided, except when necessary during high or excessive heat events
3. Have children outside often. Teachers are encouraged to plan as much as possible outdoor learning activities and/or outdoor snack time.
4. Children **must** have at least 30-40 min of outdoor playtime daily.
5. Children must wash their hands before and after going into the playground.
6. Teachers need to have hand sanitizer available at all times during playtime in case a child/teacher/parent/caregiver needs to clean their hands while outside.

## **Respiratory Etiquette**

1. Teachers will remind the children to use their elbow sleeve or a tissue to cough or sneeze. Children and staff must throw away used tissues and immediately wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.
2. Teachers will remind children not to touch their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. If needed, use tissue paper instead and wash their hands after.

## **Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)**

1. All staff, volunteers and K student are required to wear a mask **indoors** in school.

Except when:

- A person is unable to wear a mask because they don't tolerate it (for health or behavioural reasons)
- A person is 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 a person is eating or drinking
  - If a person is behind a barrier (e.g., a divider, a cubicle, or in a room by themselves)
2. Masks are not a replacement for the need for physical distancing.
  3. Face shield is a form of eye protection for the person wearing it. This may not prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer. Face shields should not be worn in place of a non-medical mask.
  4. The use of a mask for children (preschool and k's) is based on their personal or family/caregiver choice, and their choice must be respected.
  5. Each location will have a box of disposable masks at their emergency kit in case they need it.
  6. Those providing health services should wear a mask when working in close proximity with students who are at a higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 (e.g., children with immune suppression)

## **Emergency and Evacuation Drills**

1. Teachers will continue to practice emergency and evacuation drills (e.g. fire, earthquake, lockdown). During these practices, staff will follow the health and safety guidelines described in this document.

## **General cleaning and disinfecting**

1. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day and when visibly dirty. These include cabinet handles, stair railings, toilet handles, tables, chairs, washrooms, shared office spaces, desks, keyboards, light switches, and communications devices, PE equipment and music
2. Books, paper, other paper-based products, laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers do not need to be cleaned and disinfected, or quarantined for any period of time.
3. Tables and chairs will be disinfected at the end of each session by using a diluted bleach solution. The solution should be left on the surface for at least 3 mins before wiping it off (bleach solution CCLR recommendation is 1-part household bleach and nine parts water)
4. Teachers will wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids; they need to wash their hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
5. Montessori materials will be disinfected during the session if needed.
6. Cots and mats should be labelled for each child. They will be cleaned and disinfected prior to use and after they are used.
7. The linens should be placed in individual containers after being used. Do not shake the linens.

8. The linens must be laundered once a week and placed in a sealed plastic bag or washable bag.
9. Laundry should be placed in a laundry basket with a plastic liner. Do not shake dirty items. Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C)
10. Garbage containers must be empty daily.
11. Compost must be placed in a sealed bag after each session and must be thrown away daily.

## **Washing hands**

Rigorous handwashing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.

1. Staff and children must wash their hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If sinks are not available (e.g., children and staff are outside), supervised use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be considered.
2. Staff should model washing hands properly ***in a fun and relaxed way***.
3. Teachers should assist younger children with hand hygiene as needed.
4. Hand washed signage must be display in washrooms or/and near any sink in the building.

Children must wash their hands:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home
- Before eating and drinking
- After using the toilet
- After sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue
- After putting fingers in their mouth or nose
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty, if hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- When moving between different learning environments (e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions, from the music room to the classroom, etc.)

Staff must wash their hands:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home
- Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch).
- Between different learning environments (e.g. outdoor-indoor transitions, from the music room to the classroom).
- Before and after eating and drinking.
- Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.
- Before and after giving medication to a student or self.
- After using the toilet.
- After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).
- After cleaning tasks.
- After removing gloves.

- After handling garbage.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

## **Personal items**

1. Staff is encouraged only to bring items that are necessary and to avoid any sharing.
2. Children will need to carry their belongings independently into the school.
3. Children should not share toothbrushes, facecloths, and other personal items.
4. Personal items must be labelled with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.
5. Reusable utensils must be cleaned and sanitized after each use.
6. Children cannot bring personal toys/jewelry to school.

## **Snack & lunch**

1. Children will bring their water bottle, snack and/or lunch.
2. Containers and utensils must be labelled with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.
3. During Stage Two, homemade food items to share (e.g. birthday treats) won't be permitted.

### Children

- Children need to wash their hands before and after having snacks.
- Children should not share food, drinks or utensils.
- Children should not be allowed to prepare or serve food.

### Staff

- Staff must wash their hands before and after any food preparation.
- Staff is encouraged to remain on-site and not to leave during lunch or break times.

## **Music & French classes\***

1. During these classes, any shared equipment or material should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines.
2. Children will practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in any extra-curricular classes\*.
3. Extra-curricular teachers are required to wear a mask in school except when: they are eating or drinking. Masks are not a replacement for the need for physical distancing.

## **Physical education**

1. During these classes, any shared equipment or material should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines.
2. Encourage outdoor activities as much as possible.

## **School gatherings and events**

1. Social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders.

## **Communication**

Parents:

1. Parents are encouraged to approach the Principal if any possible exposure or safety concerns arise ([principal@familymontessori.com](mailto:principal@familymontessori.com)) (604-224-2643)
2. Any update to the Communicable Disease Guidance, will be sent to all families via email.
3. Please check FMSS website ( [www.familymontessori.com](http://www.familymontessori.com)) for any updated information regarding COVID-19.
4. Monthly Memos are sent with any relevant information on the first week of each month.
5. A paper copy of the Communicable Disease Guidance and extra resources (How to prevent hand washing, cover cough and sneezes, etc.) will be placed at the School's Policies and Procedures Binder that can be found in the hall at each location.

### References

- Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines K-12 Settings. Updated, August 24, 2021
- Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12. School Settings. Updated, August 24, 2021
- Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings. Updated: February 12, 2021

# Appendix A

## COVID-19

### When to get tested for COVID-19

Based on current evidence, some symptoms are more likely to be related to COVID-19 than others.

If you or your child have any of the symptoms listed below, follow the instructions.

SYMPTOMS		WHAT TO DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fever (above 38° C)</li> <li>Chills</li> <li>Cough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of sense of smell or taste</li> <li>Difficulty breathing</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 or more of these symptoms:</b> Get tested and stay home.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sore throat</li> <li>Loss of appetite</li> <li>Headache</li> <li>Body aches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme fatigue or tiredness</li> <li>Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>Diarrhea</li> </ul>	<p>If you have <b>1 symptom:</b> Stay home until you feel better.</p> <p><b>2 or more of these symptoms:</b> Stay home and wait 24 hours to see if you feel better. Get tested if not better after 24 hours.</p>
<p>If you are a <b>close contact*</b> of someone who has COVID-19 and have any of the symptoms listed above: Get tested and stay home.</p>		
<p>Check your symptoms with the B.C. Self-Assessment Tool. If you have any questions, or the symptoms get worse, contact your healthcare provider or call 8-1-1.</p>		

\* You will be notified if you are a close contact. For more information on close contacts, go to <http://www.bccdc.ca/covid19closecontacts>

For more information on COVID-19, go to [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)

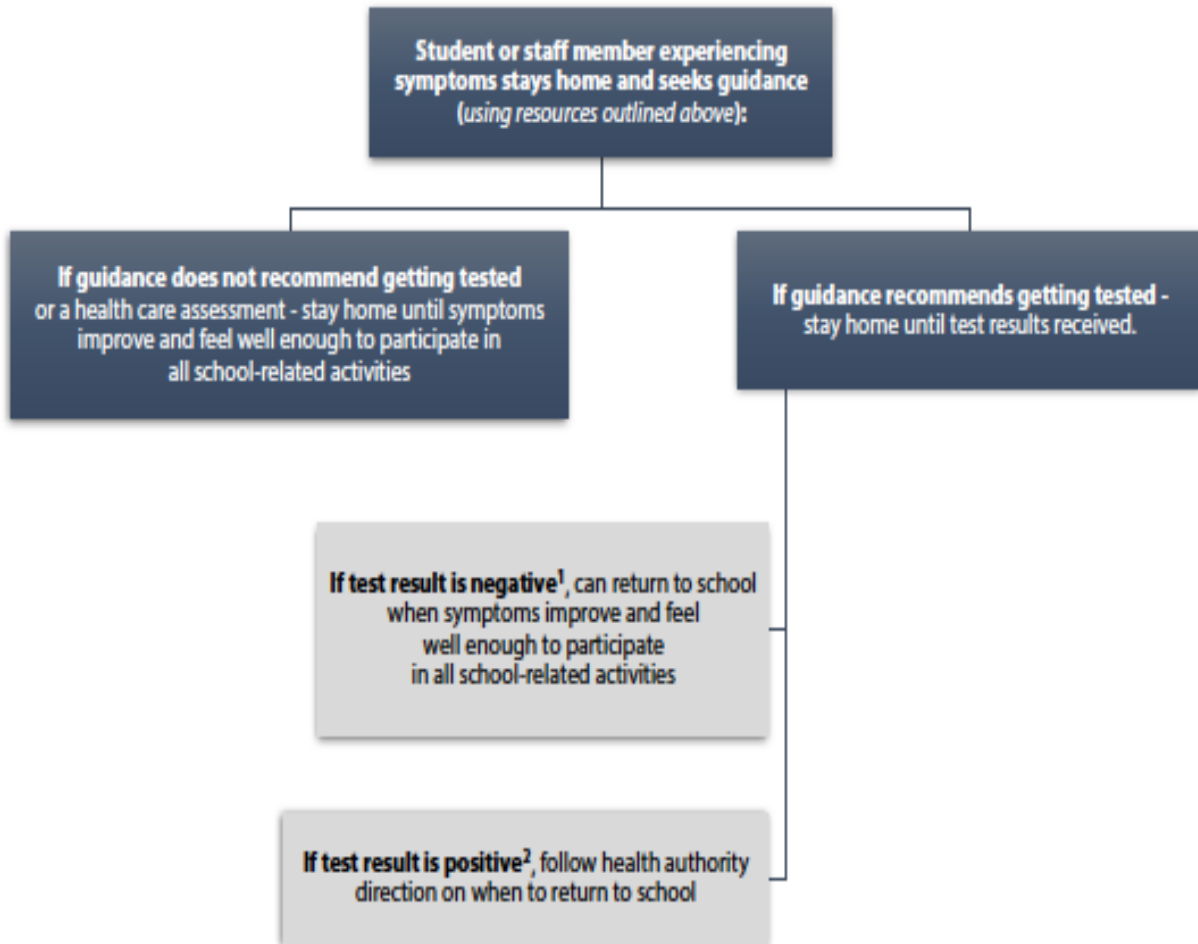
If you develop severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing (e.g. struggling to breathe or speaking in single words) or chest pain, **call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.**



January 6, 2021

## Appendix B

### COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School



1. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness. [BCCDC](#) has information on receiving negative test results.
2. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test. Visit the [BCCDC website](#) for more information on [positive test results](#).