



Communicable Disease Guidance

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Introduction

This document outlines the recommended measures K-12 schools should have in place to reduce the risk of transmission of communicable disease, as determined by the BC Centre for Disease Control and Ministry of Health (public health).

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.**

Health check:

A health check means a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, within school settings.

Physical distancing

1. Staff and students should be encouraged to respect others **personal space** (the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person).
2. We follow CCLR regulations for classroom setups allowing staff and children to have sufficient space to support physical distancing.
3. 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.
4. Visual reminders to psychical distance are provided for students/parents and staff.
5. Drop -off and pick-up will remain outside the building.
6. Parents are encouraged to call the classroom for any school child matter at [604-731-8810](tel:604-731-8810) or email sitka@familymontessori.com
7. Due to the space in the FMSS office, only two people will be allowed at any time. Outside public coming into the office will be limited to one person.
8. Parents are encouraged to call ([604-224-2643](tel:604-224-2643)) or email the office (info@familymontessori.com) for any administrative matter instead of going in person

Personal measurements

Illness protocol

- If a student or staff member is experiencing symptoms, they **MUST** stay home and seek for guidance
- The [When to Get Tested for COVID-19](#) resource or the [B.C. Self-Assessment Tool](#) provides more information on whether you should get a test for COVID-19. Those unsure or concerned about

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.**
- The 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

Children and staff in the school setting who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance on the [BCCDC](#) website as to how long they should self-isolate. They can return to school when they no longer need to self-isolate as long as symptoms have improved, and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.

Public health measurements

1. **Vaccines** : Vaccines are important tools to protect against many serious communicable diseases. Vaccination protects from serious illness due to COVID-19 and is the most effective way to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities. People 6 months and older are eligible for COVID-19 vaccines. More information about COVID-19 vaccines is available from the [BCCDC website](#). Students and staff are also encouraged to ensure they are up to date on [all recommended vaccines for other communicable diseases, including COVID-19 vaccines](#).
2. **School exposures and notifications:** With higher levels of community transmission, a shorter virus incubation period, and the increased use of rapid antigen testing, contact tracing and close contact notification by public health is no longer effective to minimize spread of COVID-19. Public health has transitioned to individual self-management (i.e., individuals care for themselves, engaging with health care providers when needed), with public health focused on identifying and responding to larger clusters and outbreaks. Individuals who test positive are to notify those they live with or have had intimate contact with.

School closures

Schools may be affected by two different kinds of closures.

1. Health closure of a school, which is determined by the local health authority due to the COVID19 case count in, or related to, a school.
2. Functional closure of a school, which is determined by the school due to a lack of staff to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, support, and/or custodial to ensure the health and safety of students. This would likely be due to a high absenteeism of all staff or certain employees required for a school to function and the inability to replace those absences.

FMSS has created an emergency plan to continue operating with shorter staff; however, a functional closure may happen if more than two full-time staff members get sick or are required to self-isolate. FMSS will communicate to the affected families and present an alternative plan if this happens.

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)

The decision to wear a mask beyond when it is recommended by public health is a personal one, based on individual preference. Some students and staff may choose to continue to wear a non-medical mask or face covering throughout the day or for certain activities. The choice of staff and students to choose whether they practice additional personal prevention measures should be respected.

FMSS will continue to have masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one.

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)

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. Personal items must be labelled with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.
2. Reusable utensils must be cleaned and sanitized after each use.
3. 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. Children should not share food, drinks or utensils.

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*.

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.

Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities

Currently, FMSS don't have any children with disabilities/diverse abilities; however, if this change over the next months, FMSS will ensure:

- To discuss the needs to understand better the supports the child and family may require
- Children with disabilities/diverse abilities won't be excluded from the learning group.

Communication

1. Parents and staff are encouraged to approach the Principal if any safety concerns arise (principal@familymontessori.com) (604-224-2643)
2. Any update to the Communicable Disease Plan, Daily routines and expectations will be sent to all families via email.
3. Parents should check FMSS website (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 25, 2022
- Public Health Guidance for Communicable Disease (including COVID 19) Management in Child Care Settings. Updated: August 25, 2022