



Evergreen Independent School Communicable Disease Prevention Plan 2021-22

Evidence-Based Approach	<p>School is essential for supporting the healthy development of the whole child. Learning in a classroom environment supports peer to peer interaction, wellness and social-emotional development.</p> <p>The following plan outlines the health, safety and exposure control measures that have been put into place to reflect relevant best practice from the <u>Provincial Health Authority, BC CDC and BC Ministry of Education</u> for a return to in-class instruction in 2021-2022.</p> <p>The Communicable Disease Plan covers many topics, including mask use, hand hygiene, vaccinations, regional responses to the pandemic, cleaning, ventilation, gatherings, extracurricular activities, meals and sports.</p> <p>Evergreen will continue to align its Safety Plan with best practices and will update it as necessary in accordance with Ministry and Provincial Health Authority guidance.</p>
Key Principles and Communication	<p>All schools are to adhere to the standards, guidelines and protocols from the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC. All boards of education and independent school authorities are required to have communicable disease plans in place that adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.</p> <p>The communicable disease guidelines outlined in this document have been developed to complement guidance from <u>the BC Centre for Disease Control (Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K12 Schools)</u> and <u>WorkSafeBC</u>.</p> <p>Evergreen will clearly and consistently communicate guidance, recommendations and Orders from regional Medical Health Officers and the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), including COVID-19 resources.</p>
Supportive School Environment	<p>There is no substitute for in-class instruction. It provides students with face-to-face teacher-led learning, peer engagement, supports social and emotional development, and decreases feelings of isolation. School also provides many students access to supports they can't get at home and is integral to their overall health.</p> <p>Evergreen is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asking staff to model appropriate practices• Sharing reliable information from the Provincial Health Authority and BC Centre for Disease Control• Promoting safety through the use of visual aids and signage.• Using positive, inclusive, and supportive approaches to engaging students in preventative practices• implementing health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse abilities

	<p>Strategies are in place to support students to practice personal prevention measures such as hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (e.g., signage, included in morning announcements, etc.).</p> <p>Personal Space Strategies are in place to encourage staff and students to consider and respect other’s personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.</p>
<p>Personal Measures</p>	<p>Daily Health Checks Staff, parents and students are regularly reminded of their responsibilities to complete a Daily Health Check.</p> <p>Stay Home When Sick / What to Do When Sick Staff and students are regularly reminded to stay home when they are sick and are provided with resources on what to do when they are sick (e.g., the BC Self-Assessment Tool app).</p> <p>Symptoms Develop at School Practices are in place to appropriately respond when a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness while at school.</p> <p>Returning to School After Illness Health care provider notes (i.e., a doctor’s note) are not required to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.</p> <p>Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette Hand cleaning facilities are available and accessible throughout the school and are well maintained.</p>
<p>Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures</p>	<p>Evergreen is committed to ensuring that our infection prevention and exposure control measures (also known as communicable disease measures) are in place to create a safe environment and reduce the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. This document provides guidelines and best practices.</p> <p>Control measures are more effective in settings such as schools where there is a consistent grouping of people and multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely implemented, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness policies for students and staff • Reinforcement and adoption of effective personal practices (e.g., hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) • Environmental measures (e.g., enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, increased ventilation)
<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>As a result of the pandemic, we know students, educators, staff and administrators are living with anxiety, stress and other mental health needs. Evergreen is committed to supporting mental health and well-being through school-wide mental health prevention and promotion programs.</p> <p>At the school and classroom level, this includes educational programs designed to support students to build resiliency, coping skills and knowledge that contribute to their overall wellbeing.</p>

Vaccines	<p>Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools and communities. The vaccines used in B.C. remain highly effective against COVID-19, including among variants of concern (Source: BC CDC, August 24, 2021)</p> <p>Public health strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive 2 doses) against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them.</p>
Personal Protective Equipment	<p>Masks</p> <p>All students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are required to wear a mask indoors in schools and on school buses.</p> <p>Exceptions to the mask policy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioral reasons • 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. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Playing a wind instrument ○ Engaging in high-intensity physical activity ○ 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 (for example, a hearing impairment), where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important <p>Non-medical masks are available for students or parents who have forgotten theirs.</p>
Learning Groups and Physical Distancing	<p>Learning Groups and Physical Distancing</p> <p>Strict physical distancing is no longer required. Schools can continue to create space between people, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow people to pass through easily • Preventing crowding at pick-up and drop-off times • Reminding students and staff about respecting others’ personal space, using visual supports, signage, prompts and video modelling as necessary • Using available space to spread people out where possible • Taking students outside as much as possible
Visitor Access	<p>Visitors are asked to follow the school’s communicable disease plan, including completing a daily health check and not entering the school if they are sick.</p> <p>A sign in/sign out process is in place for all visitors and staff who are not typically onsite.</p>

	<p>All visitors are asked to wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school.</p> <p>Parents are encouraged to make appointments when wishing to meet with staff.</p> <p>Visitor access will be limited to those areas required for the purpose of the visit (e.g. school office for drop-off/pick-up of items, gymnasium for a sports event, etc.), and parents/caregivers should be encouraged to drop-off/pick-up students outside of the school.</p>
<p>Staff Gatherings</p>	<p>Staff gatherings and events occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders.</p> <p>This includes using the space available to spread people out as much as possible and preventing overcrowding.</p>
<p>Daily Health Check Illness and Self- Assessment Protocols</p>	<p>Daily Health Check</p> <p>Staff, parents and students are reminded through school newsletters of their responsibilities to complete a Daily Health Check and are provided with resources on how to complete one (e.g., the K-12 Health Check app).</p> <p>Parents and caregivers are responsible for assessing their children daily before sending them to school.</p> <p>If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they <u>must</u> not enter the school.</p> <p>Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Illness</p> <p>Students, staff or other adults must stay home if they are required too self-isolate.</p> <p>Additional information on self-isolation requirements and support is available from BCCDC.</p> <p>Students, staff or other adults are asked to stay at home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools.</p> <p>If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will be given a mask and separated from their classmates or colleagues • Separated children will be supervised and cared for • The student's parent or guardian will be contacted, and asked to have their child picked up as soon as possible • Staff will be asked to go home as soon as possible • Custodial staff will clean and disinfect the areas the person used <p>The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/caregivers and students can use the K-12 Health Check app.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and other adults can use the BCCDC’s When to get tested for COVID-19 guidance • Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online Self-Assessment Tool, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider <p>Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Students, staff or other adults must stay home if they are required too self-isolate.</p>
<p>Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette</p>	<p>Hand Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective method. The water temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water. • Evergreen provides regular opportunities for students to practice hand hygiene. • Handwashing will be encouraged upon school entry and before/after breaks and eating, using washroom and using frequently touched shared equipment. <p>Respiratory Etiquette</p> <p>Students and staff will practice respiratory etiquette by coughing and sneezing into their elbow, sleeve, or a tissue and immediately performing hand hygiene.</p>
<p>Personal Items</p>	<p>Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students and staff will be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g., food, drinks, unwashed utensils, wind instruments).
<p>Carpooling/Bus Transportation</p>	<p>Carpooling</p> <p>Schools have been asked to share the following guidance with staff and families regarding carpooling arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread out vehicle occupants as much as possible • Travel with the same people whenever possible • Open windows when the weather allows • Clean hands before and after trips • Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly

	<p>Bus Transportation to Field Trips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted buses and drivers will be required to follow COVID protocols • Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school (see the Daily Health Check section for more information) • If a child is sick, they must not go to school • Students are asked to clean their hands before and after taking the bus. • Students will be spread out if empty seats are available • Windows will be opened when the weather permits • Bus drivers and students are encouraged to practice respiratory etiquette while on the bus • Active transportation such as walking is encouraged wherever possible due to the overall health benefits
<p>Cleaning and Disinfecting</p>	<p>Cleaning Frequency</p> <p>The school will ensure general cleaning of the premises, cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once in a 24-hour period. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning and disinfecting any surface that is visibly dirty • Emptying garbage containers daily <p>Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces The requirements for daily cleaning and disinfecting outlined above do not apply to spaces/equipment that are not being used by students, staff, or visitors.</p> <p>Limiting access to water fountains is no longer required. Students/staff are encouraged to practice hand hygiene before and after using a water fountain.</p> <p>Teachers and staff will follow School policies for cleaning bodily fluids, if necessary, including the wearing of gloves.</p> <p>Other general cleaning, such as wiping down desks after lunch, occurs in line with regular practices.</p>
<p>Ventilation and Air Circulation</p> <p>Emergency and Evacuation Drills</p>	<p>All HVAC systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, and are working properly.</p> <p>In order to enhance school ventilation Evergreen will move activities outdoors when possible (for example, lunch, classes, physical activity) and consider moving classrooms outside when space and weather permit.</p> <p>Evergreen will continue to practice various emergency procedures, including school fire evacuation drills, lockdown drills, etc.</p>
<p>Fundraisers and Community Use of Facilities</p>	<p>Evergreen will continue to offer fundraisers which will be implemented in line with the guidelines outlined in this document and will follow school policy. Fundraisers involving the sale of food items will align with the Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools.</p>

	Community use of school facilities, including the Pavilion, will be aligned with related public health guidance, recommendations, and Orders.
Junior and regular Kindergarten	<p>Evergreen will provide information about communicable disease prevention measures as part of communications to students and their families prior to school start.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/caregivers must follow guidelines for visitors • Opportunities will be provided for Jr./Kindergarten students to practice social distancing, and proper hand washing • Frequently touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g., fabrics) or at all (e.g., sand, foam, playdough, etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use • Carpets and rugs will be used, but cleaned on a regular basis
Curriculum, Programs, Field Trips, Fundraisers and other Activities	<p>Students will participate in Music and Physical education programs, with additional safety measures in place.</p> <p>Masks are not required outdoors or when doing activities that cannot be performed while wearing a mask.</p> <p>Physical Education</p> <p>Students are encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g., before and after a sports game using a shared ball).</p> <p>Students are asked to follow proper respiratory etiquette at all times.</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Students must continue to wear masks while singing, except when outdoors where they will be expected to follow social distancing protocols.</p> <p>Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected, and students are encouraged to wash their hands before and after use</p> <p>Students will be asked not to share equipment that touches the mouth, like an instrument mouthpiece or mouthguard, unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.</p> <p>Field Trips</p> <p>Local field trips are permitted in accordance with existing school policies and procedures, and as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health.</p> <p>Additional measures specific to field trips include transportation guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice hygiene before and after trips • students spread out on the bus • windows open when weather allows • wearing masks while on the bus

	<p>Playgrounds</p> <p>There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This includes sand, water and other outdoor equipment. Playgrounds are a safe environment. <p>Evergreen will ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play and recesses.</p> <p>School clubs and Co-Curricular Activities</p> <p>Clubs and Co-curricular activities will occur in alignment with the guidelines in this document.</p> <p>Fundraisers</p> <p>Evergreen will continue to offer fundraisers that can be implemented in line with the guidelines outlined in this document.</p>
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Resources:

[BC Centre for Disease Control: Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools \(August 24, 2021\)](#)

[BC K-12 Education Recovery Plan: Guidelines for Boards of Education and Independent School Authorities for the 2021-22 School Year \(August 24, 2021\)](#)

[Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings \(August 24, 2021\)](#)