

# COVID 19 Phase 3 Education Health and Safety Guide

# Construction Health and Safety Consultants Guelph, OntarioCOVID 19 Phase 3 Education Health and Safety Guide

# Foundational Principles

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## About COVID -19:

## Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses mostly found in animals. In humans they can produce symptoms that are like the common cold and flu. Symptoms can range from mild to severe. It can be spread through droplet transmission. Infected persons can spread droplets up to two meters, for example when coughing or sneezing, but they do not stay suspended in the air due to their size. These droplets can infect other people via entry on surfaces like the eyes, nose, and mouth through transfer from hands. Droplet transmission is different from airborne transmission; airborne transmission allows microorganisms to be suspended in the air for long periods and inhaled and droplet transmission does not.

## Children are Low Risk

Children fortunately are not impacted as much by COVID and often if they are infected have no symptoms or a mild course of illness. The spread of COVID-19 among, or from, children is very rare, and that’s why the Ministry of Health and the BC Center of Disease Control say that schools are a low risk.  Children are a very low risk for being infected by COVID-19. At this time there have been no serious hospitalizations for children under 19 in BC. Equally important is that the evidence is showing even when they are infected, they are not ‘efficient transmitters’.

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## Clean Schools

* Custodians will carry out ongoing cleaning and disinfection focusing on high touch areas throughout the day.
* Custodians will deep clean schools nightly

## Healthy Occupants

1. All staff who work in our schools must complete Daily Health Self-Assessment
2. Staff should promote understanding of the Daily Health Self-Assessment within their work environment and/or school population
3. Students and any other attendee must complete the Daily Health Self-Assessment prior to attending at the school or worksite.
4. Staff and students must stay home if sick.
5. Staff and students must go home if sick.
6. In the event of onset of student illness, staff must follow the Sick Child Protocol

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## Physical Distancing

1. All persons are to maintain Physical Distancing, remaining a minimum of 2 meters apart.
2. The maximum density in a multi-user location, must be less than 5m2 per person.
3. Bus capacity will be reduced to 16-32%, with regular distancing maintained between passengers.

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## Training and Education

All school district personnel are required to:

1. Review health and safety documents and all periodic updates as distributed by the District
2. Review orientation PowerPoint prepared by District Health and Safety Manager.
3. Participate in any ‘hands-on’ training or education sessions as required to operationalize health and safety guidelines

# Protocols

## Preventative Measures

### 1.1 Cleaning

* All used spaces are cleaned and disinfected daily by custodial staff.
* Twice a day high touch surfaces such as entrance and exit handles, washroom faucet and toilet handles, and hallway seats and tables are cleaned and disinfection by Custodians.
* Custodial services will provide, readily accessible, spray bottles with approved and properly mixed disinfectant, cleaning cloths and/or paper towels for ‘as needed’ cleaning by any staff member.
* All supplies will be appropriately labeled.
* A safe storage area will be designated by the school for all ‘as needed’ cleaning supplies.
* Each school will be thoroughly cleaned nightly using Viral Transmission – Cleaning and Disinfection protocol.
* Custodial staff will ensure ongoing top-up of hand washing supplies and alcohol-based sanitizer.

### 1.2 Hygiene

Good hygiene like measures taken to prevent the common cold or flu, and physical distancing are considered the most effective way to prevent COVID-19 illness, including:

* Washing hands frequently with soapy water for at least 20 seconds
* Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
* When coughing or sneezing:
  + - Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.
    - Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.
  + Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
* Stay home if you feel unwell.
* Seek medical attention if you show signs of illness and follow containment procedures.
* Maintain distance of 2meters (6 feet) from anyone coughing or sneezing.

Handwashing is required:

* Before leaving home, on arrival at work and before leaving work.
* After using the toilet.
* After breaks and sporting activities.
* Before eating any food, including snacks; including assisting others with eating.
* Before touching face (nose, eyes, or mouth).
* Before administering medications.
* Before food preparation, handling, or serving.

### 1.3 Daily Health Self-Assessment

Anyone who wants to attend school must check themselves for symptoms of any sickness prior to going. Symptoms include:

* Coughing
* Sneezing
* Fever (> 37.5 **°**C using thermometer)
* Sore throat
* Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
* Headache
* Chills
* Feeling unwell/fatigue
* Aches and pains
* Diarrhea
* Nausea/vomiting

If you show any signs of the listed symptoms, please stay home. Please use the [BC CDC COVID-19 self-assessment tool](https://bc.thrive.health/) for guidance.  Please notify your school and call out of your absence.

## School Based Requirements

### 2.1 Hand Washing Facilities

* Soap and water are the preferred method of sanitizing hands. Hand sanitizers should only be used as an alternative to hand washing where sinks are not available.
* The maximum occupancy for student washrooms must be posted
* Where necessary, additional hand washing stations will be positioned throughout the school
* Handwashing instruction should take place at least once weekly with each group of students in Elementary
* Handwashing signage will be posted throughout the school

### 2.2 Contained area

* Principals will select a separate area that can be used for separating a sick child while awaiting parental/caregiver pick-up, that also allows for supervision.
* The selected area will, ideally, have access to a sink and handwashing supplies. As a minimum it will be supplied with a hand sanitization dispenser, and waste receptacle.
* The selected location shall not be the first aid room, so as to not impede the timely provision of school first aid services.

### 2.3 Water Fountains

* Water fountains will not be in use during this time
* Bottle filling stations will remain open to provide drinking water source where needed, but students and staff are encouraged to bring the necessary water for the day with them.

### 2.4 Food Safety

* Students are not to share food or drinks
* Staff and students are encouraged to bring necessary food for the day and take related belongings home at the end of each day.
* Any food served will be done so in a way to minimize transmission, including the use of regular handwashing, distancing while serving food, and selection of products to limit handling.

## Classroom Environment

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### 3.1 Handwashing/sanitizer

* Classrooms that do not have a sink should develop a plan for regular hand hygiene.

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### 3.2 De-cluttering

* Classroom staff will de-clutter classrooms to facilitate effective and efficient cleaning.
* All non-essential supplies and equipment will be removed or relocated within a designated space in the classroom or school.
* Where possible fabric and soft surface materials, such as carpets and blankets will be removed.
* Desktops and counter surfaces must be kept clear to facilitate ongoing disinfection throughout the day and allow for nightly custodial cleaning/disinfection.
* Teaching staff will direct students to take home any unnecessary personal items and keep their desks clean and uncluttered.
* Limit the number of rooms being used in the school to allow for custodial efficiencies.

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### 3.3 Toys and Manipulatives

* Toys and manipulatives will be reduced to the maximum extent possible. Only those items which can be readily disinfected will be selected to remain.
* Staffs will develop a plan for the disinfecting of selected toys and manipulatives.
* No plush toys.

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### 3.4 Science and Shop areas

* Science and shop teachers will develop a plan for ongoing disinfection of high touch areas within the science and shop areas, and will educate, direct and supervise students to ensure adequate cleaning and disinfection of equipment, supplies and tools before and after use.

## 3.5 Keyboards and Electronic devices

Keyboards and Electronic devices, Mobile phones, iPads and other frequently touched electronics like tablets, remotes, keyboards, mice and gaming consoles can carry germs. These electronics should be cleaned and disinfected when shared.

* Use the district provided isopropyl based cleaning product to clean the device.
* Do this by spraying the black cloth first with the solution and then wipe the piece of equipment until it is clean and the product has mostly evaporated away.
* Never spray directly onto the device.
* Do not immerse devices in liquids and do not use alternated cleaning products such as hydrogen peroxide or vinegar as they do not work and may damage screens.
* Ideally, check with the manufacturer of your device for the best cleaning methods (e.g. did you know that you're not supposed to clean the tip of an Apple Pencil?).
* Turn off any electronics and unplug all connections before cleaning.

## Healthy attendance

## 4.1 School or Site Attendees (Student, Staff or other)

* All attendants must complete a Daily Health Self-Assessment (see section1.3)
* Should the potential attendee show any signs of illness they are not to attend the school or worksite.
* Any person with symptoms outlined on the Daily Health Self-Assessment is to complete the BC CDC self-assessment tool or consult with their medical practitioner to follow any recommendations for testing and / or isolation. If an individual's condition is determined not to be infectious, through a combination of testing and general symptom improvement, the individual may be able to return to their usual activities.

## 4.2 Sick Attendee Procedure

* Any staff member who begins to suffer symptoms throughout the work day should go home or seek medical attention immediately.
* Any child exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms must be separated from others and supervised in a separate waiting area until they are able to leave. Pick-up protocol is to be followed.
* In any shared areas such as classrooms, hallways and washrooms, any immediate hazards, such as bodily fluids must be cleaned following the Safe Work Procedure for Bodily fluids.
* High touch surfaces throughout the school will continue to be cleaned on the regular schedule.
* Access only needs to be restricted to the separate waiting area, which needs to be cleaned and disinfected prior to being used by a different user.
* Principal will inform Health and Safety Manager and or the Custodial Manager for cleaning.

## 4.3 Pick up Protocol

* Parents/caregivers must be notified and advised to pick-up the student immediately.
* Should any child present with symptoms, they will be sent home.
* Designated parent or caregiver will be contacted for pick up for students aged 12 years or younger, should they show symptoms**.**
* Schools will ensure the ‘pick up’ individual is formally listed in each child’s file for safe release.
* When the parent or caregiver arrives to pick up their child, they will phone school indicating they are in the parking lot.
* The student will be brought out to the parent, or caregiver.

## Physical Distancing

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### 5.1 On the Bus

* Families are encouraged to make alternate arrangements to using Bus Service, if they are able.
* Bus service will operate with 16-32% of regular capacity on each bus.
* Students will be required complete the daily health self-assessment prior to riding.
* Students will use hand sanitizer upon entry and will not be able to enter should they present flu like symptoms as listed in the Daily Health Self-Assessment.
* As per ‘Pick Up Protocol’, students aged 12 years or younger will be released to a parent or caregiver, should they not be able to be admitted on the bus.
* Should the student show symptoms on the bus, they will be released at the closest SD79 property to the Principal on site for pickup.
* Physical distancing will be utilized by spacing students one student per seat with no student sitting behind the driver.  The driver, where possible, will exit the bus for riders to board.  In situations where the driver cannot exit the bus safely, they should utilize the face shield provided during boarding.
* All buses will be cleaned twice a day with high touch areas such as stairwell railings cleaned at transfer stations

### 5.2 Within the Building

* Consider traffic flow planning to reduce congestion in hallways and tight spaces.
* Consider appropriate signage to encourage and instruct people on feasibly utilizing physical distancing.
* Schools will design markers and/or physical barriers, such as cones and or desks to visually designate physically distancing space for workspaces, such as clerical spaces etc.

### 5.3 Close Personal Care

* All staff and students must endeavor to maintain Physical Distancing at all times.
* While people are advised to stay home, or remove themselves when ill, we still have to be prepared to provide first aid in the event there is an emergency or injury during the departure of an ill individual. First aid attendants have infection control measures built into their training and procedures. However, should the attendant find themselves in a situation where they need to provide care for an individual with flu like symptoms they should take extra precautions. They may do this by guiding and directing the individual themselves to self-administer care. Should this not be feasible and they determine a need to provide close contact care, they proceed as if all risks are present and should protect themselves with appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). If the tasks present the risk of COVID droplet transmission, a N95 respirator and gloves are minimal PPE required; goggles are to be used if droplets are able to splash into the individuals eyes.
* Where other forms of close contact are required, no additional PPE is required, above that used normally for universal precaution unless an individual is presenting with flu like symptoms. Should the individual present with flu-like symptoms, gloves and an N95 respirator are minimal PPE required; goggles are to be used if droplets are able to splash into the individuals eyes.

### 5.4 Outdoor Play Activities

* Teachers should endeavor to maximize outdoor play/instruction.
* Physical distancing is encouraged between the teachers and children.
* Playground equipment (i.e.: balls, sand kipping ropes etc.) should be disinfected at the end of each day.

### Playgrounds

As the playground is not cleaned and disinfected, it is important to use the following precautions:

* If you have any symptoms of illness (i.e.: sore throat, fever, congestion), do not use the playground or access the premises
* Hand washing, in soapy water for 20 seconds is required immediately before and after playground use.  Hand sanitizer can be used as an alternative.
* Physical distancing is encouraged between the caregiver(s) and children

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### 5.6 Maximum Occupancy Within Schools

* Non-classroom, common spaces (i.e.: staffroom, photocopy room, etc.) will be assigned occupancy limits per room.
* School density targets are 50% K-5 and 20% 6-12.

### 5.7 How to Support Physical Distancing

* Avoiding close greetings like hugs or handshakes.
* Help younger children learn about physical distancing by creating games. For example:
  + - use hula hoops to visually show space.
    - have children spread their arms side to side and spin around slowly trying not to touch their friends.
* Take children outside more often, perhaps breaking children into smaller groups to maintain a degree of distance.
  + - Set up regular outside learning activities such as, snack time, arts and craft time.
* Consider different classroom configurations to maintain distance between children (e.g. separating desks) or different locations in the school (e.g. different classrooms, gym or library, outside).
* Increase the space between children during activities such as snack/lunch (e.g., move or separate tables, move chairs farther apart).
* When children want to use the same area/activity, redirect some children to another area.
* Reinforce and remind of the rule of ‘hands to yourself’.
* Provide reassurance, good listening and maintain routines.
* Maintain familiar activities and routines, as possible, as it can reinforce the sense of security for children. At the same time, build in those physical distancing strategies into your learning activities.

## PPE

### 6.1 Face masks

* PPE is the last and least effective of the infection prevention an exposure control measures and should only be considered after exploring all other measures.
* Use of PPE is only recommended if there is direct close contact with an individual with flu like symptoms.  This includes tasks such as First aid and Personal care; where the individual cannot perform tasks themselves through coaching and individual displays flu like symptoms.  PPE requirement is a N95 mask and gloves and a kit is labelled for this purpose in the first aid room.
* As noted in supporting documentation mask use may help reduce transmission in public environments by assisting keeping an infected individuals droplets from contaminating other individuals.  For this reason, workers who choose to wear their own mask while working will be permitted to do so.  However, this has not been shown to decrease the risk for them to be exposed or infected with COVID-19 and may actually increase their risk. The increased risk is associated with the perceived protection and increased likelihood to touch their face.
* Masks are not recommended for small children as they may increase the risk of infection with improper use and disposal. With young children, in particular, masks can be irritating and may lead to increased touching of the face.

### 6.2 Gloves

* Broad spectrum glove use may increase transmission, and as such workers will not be permitted the use of gloves unless performing a tasks where they constitute required PPE as defined within the Safe Work Procedures for that task.
* Gloves may be used by staff providing first aid, staff providing close personal care or custodians working with cleaning agents. Glove use does not replace the safety provided by good hand washing and sanitation practices.

## Arrival and Departure Procedures

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### 7.1 School Staff

* School staff should avoid congregating and socializing in groups.
* Time your arrival and departure to promote Physical Distancing and avoid congestion.
* Model and reinforce good Physical Distancing.

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### 7.2 Students

* Consider staggered start and dismissal times for students to reduce the congestion.
* Discourage group socialization.
* Continuously remind and reinforce Physical Distancing requirements among students.

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## Access Control

### 8.1 Access to the School

* School buildings will be restricted to students and staff. Parents, families and public will be required to complete interaction with the school by phone, email, mail or set up an appointment. This protects specific school occupants, but also the relative community the occupants dwell within.
* Maintenance and itinerant staff must, in all cases, check-in at the front office when carrying out work in schools.
* To avoid gathering, staff and students may be assigned a particular entrance at the site.
* No non-essential use of schools for community events/activities

### 8.2 After Hours

* Staff, other than custodians, will not have access to school buildings after hours.
* Hours for teachers will be between 7:30 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday with no access on the weekend. "This is to ensure that the Friday evening Deep-Clean is not contaminated or subject to any unknown exposures"