



RE: Exposure protocol and mask information

Dear NLPS families,

As cases of COVID-19 are appearing in schools across British Columbia, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you the protocols set in place by the BCCDC, Province of B.C. and the Provincial Health Office. The following information is what to expect when there is a confirmed COVID-19 case or symptoms in a school.

Protocol if a student or staff member develops symptoms of illness while at school:

- Provide the individual with a mask if they don't have one.
- Provide the individual with a space where they can wait comfortably that is separated from others.
- Make arrangements for the student or staff member to go home as soon as possible.
- Clean and disinfect the areas that the individual used.
- Request that the individual stay home until COVID-19 has been excluded and symptoms have improved.

Protocol in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case in a school:

- If an individual who has been in a school has tested positive for COVID-19, Island Health will initiate contact tracing to determine how they were infected and who else may have been at risk of infection.
- If there was a potential exposure at a school (i.e. the confirmed case attended school when they may have been potentially infectious), Island Health will work with school administration to investigate who may have been exposed, and to determine what actions will be taken, including identifying if other students or staff are sick or have been exposed and should monitor for symptoms or self-isolate.
- If there was no exposure at school (i.e. the confirmed case did not attend school when they were infectious), Island Health will not notify the school district.
- Island Health staff will identify and directly notify close contacts of a confirmed case who are required to self-isolate.
- Students and staff are only required to self-isolate if directed by Island Health – this includes members of the learning group of the confirmed case.
- Students who are directed to self-isolate will receive learning supports while they are away from school.
- Other people who are not identified as close contacts of a confirmed case, but who may have interacted with the confirmed case while they were infectious, may be advised by Island Health to self-monitor for symptoms but can still attend school.

If any COVID-19 exposure is determined to have occurred at the school (that is a student/staff member is COVID-19 positive and was at the school during their period of

communicability), there will be a public notification on the [Island Health webpage](#) after collaborating with the school and school district to contact trace and inform those who require isolation. To protect individuals' privacy, the school district and Island Health will not disclose the name of the student or staff member.

It will be Island Health that contacts everyone who they determine may have been exposed, including if any follow-up actions are recommended. It will be at this time that the district works with the Medical Health Officer to determine if additional notifications are warranted - this could include staff and the broader school community.

Mask information for our younger students

Masks are not required for our elementary students to wear while at school, however, students can wear one if they wish. Schools keep masks on hand if a student becomes ill while at school and they will be asked to wear it until they are picked up. If you wish for your elementary-aged child to wear a mask while at school, speak with someone at their school about acquiring a reusable mask.

Research has shown that wearing a mask alone is not enough to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Children must also avoid touching their mask and face, wash their hands often and stay home when sick. Younger children also may not have the capacity to correctly wear a mask, therefore it is recommended that we focus on proper hand hygiene and physical distancing measures.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Saywell".

Scott Saywell
Superintendent/CEO