



ALERT BAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

School District No. 85
(Vancouver Island North)

The following is an outline of the Alert Bay Elementary School's Communicable Disease Plan for the 2022-2023 school year. This plan has been updated August 30, 2022.

This plan is subject to change based on relevant local, regional, Provincial and Federal health recommendations and is guided by the B.C Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-safe-schools>

| Step 1: Understanding the Risk | |
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| | <p>Communicable disease prevention focuses on reducing the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, and includes both ongoing measures (e.g. hand hygiene, cleaning) and additional regional measures to be implemented as advised by public health during the period of elevated risk. COVID-19 will continue to circulate in our population; however, transmission within K-12 settings accounts for a minority of COVID-19 cases.</p> <p>Vaccines are important tools to protect against many serious communicable diseases. The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to ensure they are up-to-date on all recommended vaccines for communicable diseases, including COVID-19 vaccines.</p> |
| Step 2: Communicating | |
| | <p>Alert Bay School must have an orientation session for staff and others entering the building to provide an overview of the key principles and guidelines implemented at the school level.</p> <p>The school will consistently communicate guidance, recommendations and orders from regional Medical Health Officers, and the Provincial Health Officer.</p> <p>The school Principal will relay information to staff, and families using multiple formats such as newsletters, the school website, the PAC Facebook site, email or a notice in each child's home book.</p> <p>https://abes.sd85.bc.ca/ Facebook Group: Alert Bay School PAC</p> |

Step 3: Measures, Practices, and Policies to Reduce Risk

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| <p>Supportive School Environments</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff should utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in preventative practices (such as hand hygiene) and should not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature. ▪ Staff should also utilize a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g. gatherings and events) and interacting with other staff and students, including considerations around respecting others’ personal space. |
| <p>Daily Health Checks</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before coming to work, all staff members must conduct a daily health check/ self-assessment. ▪ Parents and Caregivers should assess their child(ren) daily for illness before sending them to school. <p>https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e2s1</p> <p>https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/covid/daily-health-check-english.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff, students, or other persons who are experiencing new symptoms of illness should stay home and follow BCCDC Guidance. <p>If the person is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:</p> <p>http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19</p> <p>If the person is experiencing other symptoms, isn’t recommended to take a COVID-19 test or tests negative for COVID-19:</p> <p>BCCDC Guidance states that they may attend school if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g. seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved enough to where they feel well enough to return to regular activities and their fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g. ibuprofen, acetaminophen).</p> |
| <p>Staff/Students Who Become Sick at School</p> | <p>Some students or staff may not be able to be picked up immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A space is available where the student or staff can wait comfortably and is separated from others (at least 2 meters). ▪ The student or staff member will be provided with a non-medical mask. ▪ Children will be supervised. ▪ Supervising staff will wear a non-medical mask if they are unable to maintain physical distance, avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible, and practice diligent hand hygiene. ▪ The area where the ill student or staff member waited will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after use. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Individual will be asked to stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities. |
| Hand Hygiene | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rigorous hand-washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness. ▪ The school will promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly. For example, display hand hygiene poster at handwashing sites. Staff will encourage students to wash their hands regularly and/or use hand sanitizer when handwashing is not practical. |
| Hygiene, Spacing and Mask Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cough and sneeze into elbow, sleeve, or a tissue. ▪ Throw away used tissues immediately, and perform hand hygiene. ▪ If students, visitors or staff members have travelled outside of Canada they are subject to federal guidelines regarding mask use. ▪ For the first 14 days after entry to Canada all travelers must properly wear a well-constructed and well-fitting mask when in public spaces. This includes schools and daycares. <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 behavioural 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"> ○ Engaging in speech and language therapy ○ 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. ▪ Visitors must be approved by a staff member and have direct relation to student learning. ▪ All high-touch surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized at least once within a 24 hour period when school is in session or when visibly dirty. ▪ Although 2 meters distancing is difficult, other measures should be considered to help create space between people to support staff and students using a trauma informed approach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remind students and staff about respecting personal space ○ Use signage and visual supports |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use available space to spread out ○ Implement strategies to prevent crowding in areas where people may gather, or, pick up and drop off times ○ Manage flow of people in common areas |
| Supporting Students with Diverse Abilities/Disabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student. ● All students in Grades K -12 are not required to wear a mask unless they choose to do so. All personal choices with regards to masking or not masking will be supported by the school. |
| Visitor Access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents are encouraged to make appointments with the staff they wish to visit. ● Information for visitors is posted by the entrance to the school. ● Schools are responsible for ensuring that visitors, including itinerant teachers, and SD personnel not usually on site, are aware of communicable disease protocols and have completed a daily health check, prior to entering the school. ● Parents/caregivers can come into the school building using the front door. All visitors must sign in at the office. ● Exterior doors with the exception of main school entrances will be kept locked during the day to limit entry to facilities. |
| Ventilation and Circulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Classroom heat pumps have HVAC filters installed. |
| Staff Only Spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gatherings must occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial, and federal public health recommendations and Orders, and any related WorkSafe BC guidance. |
| School Gatherings and Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When planning assemblies or school gatherings, apply a trauma-informed lens, respecting student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space. ● When hosting gatherings and events in-person, use space available to spread people out as much as possible, and ensuring enough space is available to prevent involuntary physical contact between attendees (i.e. overcrowding). |

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| <p>Busing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus drivers will wash or sanitize hands prior to entering the bus. • Students are to clean their hands prior to leaving home to take the bus, when they leave school prior to boarding the bus, and when they arrive home. • Students will sit where the bus driver asks them to. |
| <p>Step 4: Monitoring and Update Plan as Necessary</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff/parents are provided with any new information in a timely manner and review with staff the process for reporting any concerns. ▪ Updated information for families will be posted on the PAC Facebook page, the school web site and the district website. ▪ New information relating to communicable diseases will be posted on the Health and Safety bulletin board in the office. |