



Maria Montessori
Academy *Education For Life*

Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K - 12

Preamble:

Developing a Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

Maria Montessori Academy supports students in developing their potential and acquiring the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need for lifelong success. Based on guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control and experience to date showing schools as low-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission, it is our belief that preschool to grade 12 students can participate in full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.

Layers of protection

We understand that different protocols offer different protection. Wherever possible, we use the protocols that offer the highest level of protection and add additional protocols as required. Associated restrictions have been eased but we continue to prioritize the 5 levels of protection: Public Health Measures, Environmental Measures, Administrative Measures, Personal Measures, and PPE.

Public Health Measures:

- Daily attendance records for staff, students, and visitors will be well kept
- Accurate class lists and bus lists will be kept digitally and kept up to date
- All employees and students who have symptoms of a communicable disease (eg COVID-19) should work with public health to determine what actions should be taken.
- Public health considers vaccination status when determining what actions close contacts of a confirmed case should take. Staff and students who are not fully immunized and are identified as close contacts are more likely to be asked to self-isolate than those who are fully immunized.

- Anyone travelling internationally will need to adhere to the restrictions enforced by transportation Canada.

Environmental Measures:

Ventilation and Air Exchange

MMA will:

- Ensure that all HVAC systems are designed, operated and maintained as per standards and are working properly.
- Windows will remain open as weather permits
- Planning for excessive heat or poor air quality from wildfire smoke will be done based on BCCDC resources

Cleaning & Disinfecting

- Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least once a day and when visibly dirty. This includes items touched by large numbers of people (door handles, hand rails, tap faucets, shared gym equipment etc)
- Surfaces touched by fewer people continue to be cleaned once a day (desks, lockers, manipulatives)
- Other cleaning will align with regular practices
- Textbooks, paper, or 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 length of time
- If a person's bodily fluids meet a surface, surface will be cleaned & disinfected immediately by school staff

Administrative Measures:

Gatherings & Events

- School extracurricular and social gatherings will occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial, and federal PHO.
- Currently there are no limitations in place.

Space Arrangement

- We will return to classroom configurations and activities that best meet the needs of the learners while continuing to encourage spacing.
- Cohorts/learning groups are no longer required
- People will have enough space to carry out activities without involuntary physical contact
- People are spread out within available space. Room capacity limits will not be exceeded.
- WSBC will be used to determine measures for staff only spaces
- Staff only gatherings (eg meetings, pro d days etc) will occur in line with directives.
- Finding time for outdoor learning will continue to be encouraged where possible

Visitors

- Will follow the Communicable Disease Prevention Plan
- Will be required to complete a daily health check and will not be permitted to enter the school if they are sick
- MMA will keep a list of contact information of all school visitors who have entered the school

Curriculum, Programs, and Activities

- Field trips, extracurricular and social gatherings and events will occur in line with what is permitted at the local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and orders
- Local and international field trips will occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders
- Universal communicable disease prevention practices will be implemented for music and PE specific to the activity

Bus Transportation

- Can return to regular seating and on/offloading practices
- Frequently touched surfaces to be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day and when visibly dirty
- Other general cleaning will align with regular practices
- Hand sanitizer will be encouraged prior to on/offloading
- Windows are open when weather allows
- The bus driver, staff, students, adults, volunteers may wear masks on school buses if they wish to do so.

Food Services

- Fundraisers involving food can return to regular operational and food safety practices.

Community Use of Schools

- MMA will continue to allow community use of school facilities and use will be aligned with related public health guidance, recommendations, and orders

Water Fountains

- MMA will have access to the refillable water bottle stations that are found at different places throughout the school.
- Staff and students can utilise the drinking function on the stations in accordance with regular sanitary guidelines.

Personal Measures:

Daily Health Checks

- It is the Parent's / Caregiver's responsibility to complete a daily health check before sending them to school. If a student develops symptoms while at home, parents or caregivers must keep their child at home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other communicable diseases, and their symptoms have resolved. A reminder is included in the weekly newsletter with a link to the K-12 Health Check App
- It is each individual staff members responsibility to complete an informal daily health check prior to arrive at school

Stay Home When Sick/What to do When Sick

- Staff and students should stay home when they are sick
- Go to the BCCDC website to find information about what to do when sick with COVID 19 symptoms
- Students, staff, and parents/care givers can use the BC Self Assessment Tool app or call 811 to determine the next steps

Symptoms Develop at School

- If a student develops symptoms while at school staff will:
 - Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.
 - Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.
 - Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill student.
 - Provide the student with a mask and tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes.
 - Avoid touching the student's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva)
 - Notify workers responsible for facility cleaning to clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).
 - Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.
 - If a staff member develops symptoms while at school staff will go home immediately

Returning to School After Illness

- When a person can return to school after being sick depends on the type of illness they had
- If they had COVID-19 or another communicable disease, they can return according to guidance from public health
- If a person is unsure, they should call 811 for guidance
- Health care provider notes are not required to confirm the health status of any individual (beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice)

- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, so long as they have no symptoms themselves
- If a member of the household tests positive for a communicable disease (including COVID-19), public health will advise on next steps

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- At MMA we have always encouraged a diligent hand washing routine. This will be maintained and include the following times:
 - When they arrive at school
 - Before and after any breaks (recess/lunch)
 - Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept in cubby or at table)
 - Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple classes (ie gym, music, French room etc)
 - After sneezing or coughing into hands
 - Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Staff may assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- In addition to regular sink and soap, hand sanitizer will be available for use.
- There are hand cleaning facilities throughout the school and outdoors
- Students will be reminded to cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue. Tissue will be disposed of and hand hygiene will occur
- Students will be reminded to refrain from touching their eyes, nose, face, or mouth
- Students and staff should refrain from sharing food, drinks, unwashed utensils, or anything else that goes on their lips/mouth

Personal Protective Equipment

Non Medical Masks and Face Coverings

- MMA continues to be a Mask-friendly school.
- We recognize that many staff/students may wish to continue wearing masks, especially during flu season. This practice will be welcomed and supported.

Other Information

- Parents are permitted inside the building
- Classes will continue to work outside when practical
- Field trips will proceed with full understanding of the health and safety protocols in place for each destination
- While there are no restrictions in place regarding Staff room use, we will continue to provide alternate spaces and encourage ventilation and spacing.
- Maintain awareness of others' comfort as far as their definition of 'personal space'. Teachers will have this conversation with their students and regular reminders will be given.

Communication Strategies:

- Our community is reminded that all health and safety measures in place prior to the pandemic are still in place
- Regular updates to COVID-19 related safety protocols are discussed at staff meetings, cohort meetings, through email and overseen by the risk management committee
- Parents and caregivers will need to receive reminders to fully understand our policy that students must stay home if they are sick
- Parents and caregivers will continue to be given regular updates to COVID 19 related protocols during drop-off and pick up, by email, by newsletter or during regular online Town-hall meetings
- Due to the evolving nature of this crisis, updates will be made available to all parties at the earliest possible time
- If at any time, you have questions, concerns or suggestions, we welcome your feedback. This can be done through email or by organizing a meeting with the appropriate person. With so many unknowns, we welcome any opportunity to find common understanding.

Thank you for your attention to this plan. We are looking forward to another school year of wonder and growth. It is our hope and intention that through community adherence to practical safety practices, COVID 19 and its variants will not detract from your families enjoyment of a sensational school year.

The Admin team at Maria Montessori Academy.