



Penticton
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Communicable Disease Prevention Plan (formerly COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan)

Update – effective April 16, 2022:

Note: This plan is based on the *Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings Updated April 8, 2022 and Effective April 16, 2022*. **This plan is subject to change. “Public health may issue temporary provincial or regional recommendations or orders, and/or the Ministry of Education may issue Addendums to this guidance of additional prevention measures during times of increased communicable disease risk.” (p. 1).**

The school will continue to embrace a **pandemic recovery focus**, paying special attention to the mental well-being of its students, families, staff members, and all other school community members.

Rationale:

1. To reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 at the school; and
2. To meet the requirement of having the *PCS Communicable Disease Prevention Plan* in place.

Objectives - to reduce the risk of exposure by addressing how:

1. The PCS learning and working environment is organized and arranged;
2. Some specific activities are carried out;
3. PCS cleans and sanitizes; and
4. Changes and precautions will be communicated to everyone at PCS.

This plan is to be shared widely with staff members and the entire school community as a

whole; involvement of staff members in the planning process is of utmost importance to both the scope and successful implementation of this plan. This plan must be posted at Penticton Christian School as well as on the school website, www.pentictonchristianschool.com. Adherence to the *PCS Communicable Disease Prevention Plan* is mandatory, to keep all staff members, students and their families safe.

Guiding Considerations:

1. Prevent crowding; pay particular attention to the start and end of the day, and stagger recess, lunch and transition times for students and staff whenever possible;
 2. Avoid close face-to-face contact whenever possible;
 3. For indoor gatherings, people are spread out within the available space;
 4. Ensure individual choices for personal practices (e.g. wearing a mask or face covering) are supported and treated with respect, recognizing varying personal comfort levels; and
 5. The school does not require a health-care provider note to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practices.
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1. **Assessment of Risk at PCS** – communicable disease such as COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, or from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face.
 2. **Measures to Reduce the Risk at PCS** – these are put in place to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus.
 - Implement and follow the orders, guidance, and notices issued by the Provincial Health Officer as they pertain to the BC education system (***Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings Updated April 8, 2022 Effective April 16, 2022***) as a whole and to Group 1 independent schools specifically;
 - Implement and follow the local (Interior Health) Medical Health Officer's recommendation as it pertains to Penticton Christian School requiring additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk;
 - Adhere to the standards, guidelines, and direction from WorkSafeBC;
 - Follow additional health and safety requirements as implemented by the BC Ministry of Education;

- Follow the suggestions of both SCSBC and FISA as they pertain to communicable disease related health and safety measures in member schools;
- Staff and students are encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks, unwashed utensils);
- Teach outside if and when possible, take breaks outside if and when possible, remind students to keep their hands to themselves when possible, and use educational tools to teach about respecting personal space;
- Consider *working alone* arrangements (as per school policy) only if necessary;
- Reduce the number of close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions;
- Implement consistent seating arrangements **(with spaces being arranged to best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches)**;
- Use visual cues for respecting personal space;
- Ongoing communication regarding this plan and any changes, if applicable, including via emails, memos, staff meetings, newsletters, signage, etc.;
- Signage that guides staff members', students', and other individuals' behaviours;
- The school will maintain a list of contact information for visitors, volunteers, and other professionals in the school, including a daily health check requirement (this also applies to parents/guardians of prospective students attending an information session such as RSL or meeting with school personnel during a school tour);
- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school;
- Parents and students are made aware of their responsibilities to complete a daily health check;
- Sick students must not enter the school building;
- Controlled and staggered entrance to/exit from the school building through the *main* entrance door (north side of the building) – K-12 staff members and students in grades K-5 – before/after school, at recess and lunch;
- Controlled and staggered entrance to/exit from the school building through the

playground entrance door (west side of the building) – students in grades 6-12 – before/after school, at recess and lunch;

- Staggered recess, lunch, and arrival/departure *times* for students in grades K-5 and grades 6-12;
- Normal access to water fountains - hand hygiene should be practiced before and after use;
- Staff and other adults complete an *active daily health check* and assess themselves for illness prior to entering the school;
- Staff and other adults must stay home if they are sick or are required to self-isolate;
- Any staff member or student who falls ill during the school day will be asked to remove himself/herself to an isolation area (supervised) until his/her departure from the school building;
- Note: Younger students must be supervised during this time;
- Sufficient hand washing and hand sanitizer facilities/stations are available – staff members and students wash or sanitize their hands when first arriving in the building, before and after recess and lunch breaks, before they go home, after using the washroom, after sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue, whenever hands are visibly dirty, when moving between different learning environments, after handling materials (such as cash, enrolment papers, garbage, etc.), and after removing gloves;
- Staff members and students are encouraged to use the hand sanitizer stations and disinfectant wipes frequently, to support good hygiene practices;
- Staff members are asked to assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed;
- Staff members model personal preventive measures like respecting personal space, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette;
- Staff members are expected to support student personal practices using positive and inclusive approaches – punitive measures or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma are to be avoided;
- The school's HVAC system is maintained for proper function and inspected at

regular intervals;

- Air purifiers have been added to each homeroom;
- The school's janitor cleans the entire school thoroughly at least once per day, usually after the regular school day is over (this includes the emptying of garbage containers on a daily basis);
- In addition, frequently used items/touched surfaces (such as all school door handles, cabinet handles, stair railings, water fountains, light switches, telephones, keyboards, remote controls, whiteboard markers, and washrooms, incl. faucet handles and toilet handles), will be cleaned at least once in a 24-hour period;
- The janitor also is required to clean tables, desks and chairs and other items (*shared equipment*, e.g. microwaves) that may come into contact with students, especially in between groups of students (at least once per day);
- In the case of *manipulatives* and *toys*, the homeroom teacher and/or special education assistant is required to clean and disinfect them – ensure students practice hand hygiene before and after use;
- Adequate cleaning training and materials are available at all times;
- Effective cleaning, sanitizing, and hygiene practices help reduce the risk of communicable disease exposure and transmission;
- Laundry – the school uses its regular laundering practices;
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine) and wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves;
- Masks are available for those who would like to wear one;
- Drills: The school continues to perform all required emergency and evacuation drills, as per the BC Fire Code, the school's fire safety plan (including the school's fire drill procedures), and the school's "Intruder Alert" procedure, taking the requirements of this plan into consideration (note: communicable disease prevention measures can be suspended to ensure for a timely, efficient and safe response, if necessary);
- Field trips: Field trip locations must provide supervisors with their communicable disease plan(s); the field trip supervisor should share the plan with parents and school administration; staff and volunteers to continue adhering to all health and

safety guidelines; follow the more stringent safety protocols in case of a conflict between the school's communicable disease prevention plan and the field trip's location's one; and

- The school can resume all types of gatherings and events, including staff only gatherings and events, and there are no longer specific capacity limits (apply an inclusive and trauma-informed lens when planning school gatherings and events).

3. PCS Policies – necessary to manage the PCS workplace during COVID-19#.

- Anyone under the direction of the Provincial Health Officer to self-isolate must follow those instructions;
- Any staff member or student who falls ill with any such symptoms during the school day will be asked to remove himself/herself to an isolation area until his/her departure from the school building;
- Note: Younger students must be supervised during this time;
- If necessary, the staff member or student may be picked up by the staff member's/student's emergency contact (e.g. spouse, parent);
- If the staff member or student is severely ill (such as difficulty breathing or chest pain), call 9-1-1;
- First aid attendants will continue to provide treatment to staff members and students as necessary;
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces that the ill staff member or student has come into contact with;
- Anyone who may have come into contact with the sick staff member or student must perform hand hygiene;
- "PCS Working Alone Policy" (dated April 16, 2020); and
- #The items listed under "3. PCS Policies – necessary to manage the PCS workplace during COVID-19." are deemed to be PCS policies approved by the Board of Directors of Penticton Christian School, by virtue of the same PCS Board approving the PCS Communicable Disease Prevention Plan (with the exception of the "PCS Working Alone Policy", which was approved previously).

4. Communication and Training – knowing how to stay safe at PCS during COVID-19.

- The principal will regularly communicate *PCS Communicable Disease Prevention Plan* protocol – via staff meetings, memos, emails, phone calls, etc.;
- Staff members (including newly hired staff), students, school families, and volunteers will (continue to) receive an orientation, training and information in the area of COVID-19 and other communicable disease related workplace and learning environment safety;
- Communicate frequently the need to stay home when sick;
- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school;
- Post signage;
- Establish a central location in the school where new information is posted relating to COVID-19 and other communicable disease;
- Keep records of all COVID-19 related meetings, including instruction, training, COVID-19 reports, etc.;
- The school principal will enforce this plan and support all staff members and students in adhering to this plan;
- Staff members will follow established work procedures and instructions as directed by the principal or the Board of Directors of PCS Society; and
- The school principal will continue to receive training in the area of COVID-19 and other communicable disease related workplace safety.

5. Workplace Monitoring and Plan Updating – staying up-to-date in COVID-19 and other communicable disease prevention.

- PCS will update this plan as new information, risks, and challenges are identified, involving staff members' input;
- Health and safety concerns are to be reported to the school principal and to the staff member/worker representative (Mrs. Crystal Molitowsky – Special Education Assistant; in the absence of Mrs. Molitowsky, please report to Mrs. Laurie Ladoux – School Secretary);

- These concerns will be resolved together; and
 - The school principal and worker representative will meet together prior to any transition between education restart stages.
- 6. Risks from Resuming Operations – staff returning, new staff, new roles and responsibilities.**
- PCS will train all returning and new staff with respect to this plan;
 - Staff returning from “working alone” arrangements may need a re-introduction to workplace health and safety at Penticton Christian School;
 - New role(s) may mean new responsibilities with regard to the *PCS Communicable Disease Prevention Plan*.

Note – Resolving Concerns about Unsafe Work; Questions and Concerns; Protecting Mental Health:

- a. Staff members have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an “undue hazard”. In the context of COVID-19, an “undue hazard” is defined as follows:

“For COVID-19, an “undue hazard” would be one where a staff member’s job role places him/her at increased risk of exposure and adequate controls are not in place to protect them from that exposure.” (“COVID-19 and returning to safe operation”, WorkSafeBC, 2020)

If the matter is not resolved, the staff member and the principal or Board of Directors of PCS Society must contact WorkSafeBC. Once that occurs, a prevention officer will consult with workplace parties to determine whether there is an undue hazard and issue orders if necessary.

- b. Staff members, administration, and the Board of Directors of PCS Society with questions or concerns about workplace exposure to the COVID-19 virus can contact WorkSafeBC at 1.888.621.SAFE.
- c. Mental health is as important as physical health; anxiety and uncertainty are realities created by COVID-19. PCS is committed to supporting the mental well-being of its staff members, students, families, and other members of the community.

Resources Consulted:

- WorkSafeBC – *Education (K-12): Protocols for returning to operation* (2020);
- WorkSafeBC – *COVID-19 and returning to safe operation* (2020);
- WorkSafeBC – *COVID-19 Safety Plan* (2020);
- WorkSafeBC – *COVID-19 health and safety Cleaning and disinfecting* (2020);
- WorkSafeBC – *OFAA protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic A guide for employers and occupational first aid attendants* (2020);
- WorkSafeBC – posters “Help prevent the spread of COVID-19” – *handwashing, cover coughs and sneezes, occupancy limit, workplace, visitor, how to use a mask*;
- WorkSafeBC – poster “Wash your hands Don’t take your work home with you.”
- WorkSafeBC – *COVID-19 health and safety Designing effective barriers* (2020);
- WorkSafeBC – *Preventing exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace A guide for employers* (2020);
- BC Centre for Disease Control/BC Ministry of Health – *COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings* (2020);
- BC Centre for Disease Control – *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings* (May 19, 2020) – see Appendices A, B, and C;
- BC Centre for Disease Control – *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings* (July 29, 2020);
- BC Centre for Disease Control – *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools* (Updated: February 4, 2021);
- BC Centre for Disease Control/BC Ministry of Health – *Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools* (Updated: August 24, 2021);
- BC Ministry of Education - *COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators Management of Illness and Confirmed Cases* (Updated September 11, 2020);
- BC Ministry of Education - *COVID-19 Protocols for School & District Administrators and Staff Management of Illness and Exposures at School* (Updated August 24, 2021);
- BC Ministry of Education – *Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings* (2020);
- *Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings* (Updated February 4, 2021);
- *Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings* (Updated February 23, 2021);
- *Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings* (Updated August 24, 2021);
- *Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings* (Updated October 1, 2021);
- **Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings (Updated April 8, 2022 Effective April 16, 2022);**

- BC Ministry of Education – *Supporting the K-12 Education Response to COVID-19 in B.C.: Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent School Authorities* (May 15, 2020);
- BC Ministry of Education – *Supporting the K-12 Education Response to COVID-19 in B.C.: Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent School Authorities* (August 17, 2020);
- FISA Update – February 18, 2022
- SCSBC – *School Readiness Essentials* (2020);
- PCS Daily Health Assessment (2020); and
- Dr. Marleen Wong, North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response – *Psychological First Aid (PFA) for Schools, Teachers, and Students During the World-Wide Pandemic* (April 2020).

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Revised: August 17 and 20, 2020;

Approved by the Board of Directors of PCS Society: August 27, 2020

Revised: February 5 through 23, 2021 - For immediate implementation;

Approved by the Board of Directors of PCS Society: March 4, 2021

Addendum: March 29, 2021 – For immediate implementation;

Revised: August 24, 2021 - For immediate implementation;

Approved by the Board of Directors of PCS Society: September 23, 2021

Addendum: October 1, 2021 – For immediate implementation.

Addendum: December 29, 2021 – For immediate implementation.

Updated: February 22, 2022 – For immediate implementation.

Updated: April 12, 2022 – Effective April 16, 2022

Feedback, questions, comments, or suggestions?

Please contact Mr. Karl Boehmer, Principal, at 250-493-5233 or kboehmer@pentictonchristianschool.ca.

Thank you!