

Oak and Orca Communicable Disease Plan

Please note that this plan is subject to change at any time as guidance from governing bodies changes and new evidence is shared.

Oak and Orca's Communicable Disease Prevention Plan is built upon experiences and advice of public health experts with a view to reducing the risk of transmission of all communicable diseases, including COVID-19. This document outlines specific strategies Oak and Orca is using that are most relevant to immediate needs of staff and students. We adhere to all of the applicable current guidelines given by the BC Government in the following documents:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (August 25, 2022)
- [BC CDC Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) (August 25, 2022)
- [BC CDC Supporting Child Wellness: Public Health Guidance for Communicable Disease \(including COVID-19\) Management in Child Care Settings](#) (August 25, 2022)
- [BC Daily Health Check](#) (January, 2022)

Staff, students, parents, and school visitors are to review this document and follow these guidelines at Oak and Orca. In doing so we can all do our part to ensure as much normalcy as possible while protecting ourselves and others against communicable disease transmission to the best of our ability.

Recovery

Oak and Orca's philosophies include practices to support recovery from difficult situations of all kinds. Our individualized and relationship-based approach is naturally inclusive and supportive of trauma, neurodiversity, and mental health challenges. Our [website](#) discusses our core values and philosophies in detail.

School Operations

Modelling

Staff will be modelling and teaching behaviours that reduce risk of transmission including but not limited to:

- possibly wearing masks and face shields
- frequently washing hands
- keeping as much distance as possible
- using the elbow to cover the mouth when sneezing/coughing
- not touching the face

Learning Indoors

When indoors, efforts will be made to keep some distance between students. Sometimes physical barriers (desk dividers) between student workspaces will be available. Students and staff are welcome and

encouraged to wear masks, and no judgement will be made if students choose to do or not do so. Face shields to provide a barrier between students can be provided (students/staff must bring in their own ball cap with a solid brim to which the face shield is attached). Seating may be assigned to encourage distancing. Some supplies will be shared, some will be individualized

Learning Outdoors

Oak and Orca students spend significant time outdoors (having weather appropriate and extra clothing is important). Continued efforts will be made to keep some distance and to minimize contact between students.

Hand Hygiene

Hand-washing remains our preferred method of cleaning and students and staff will be washing hands frequently. Students must wash their hands when requested to do so by a member of staff. We will have reasonable, age-appropriately monitored access to hand sanitizer to supplement hand washing as needed.

We will continue to use reusable individual towels for hand-drying. These are laundered regularly, as needed. Students should let a staff member know if they cannot find their towel. Paper towels are at-hand should a need arise.

Food

Oak and Orca students will continue to eat outside (unless weather is severe). Our policy continues to be that students do not share food.

Cleaning Routines

Cleaning supplies are available for washing and disinfecting surfaces. Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected regularly. Cleaning and disinfecting will be done for other surfaces as needed.

Ventilation/Masks

Air filters will be operated regularly in rooms with lower outdoor air flow

The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for everyone. People can choose to continue to wear a mask throughout the day or during specific activities. This choice will be supported and treated with respect. As there will be people with and without face coverings and some people have strong attachment to their choice, please support your children in remembering that part of being in our community is respecting diversity and honouring the different choices people make. We will continue to provide masks or face shields for those students who forget theirs and want them.

Visitors (including parents)

Visitors (including parents) are not to come into the school without a pre-arranged appointment or invitation from a member of staff. This includes visiting the office at the school and when picking up/dropping off

students. If an appointment is made to enter the school, visitors must adhere to instructions of where they are allowed to go in the building (determined on a case by case basis depending on time of day, visitation needs, learning group needs, etc). Visitors must do a health check (see [Daily Health Screening](#)) before entering the school and must not enter if they are feeling unwell.

Student and Staff Health

Stay Home When Sick

Nobody should come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities.

Everyone should follow public health guidance, BCCDC guidance, and/or the recommendation of their health care provider when they are sick. Anyone who is exhibiting new symptoms of illness (including symptoms of COVID-19 or gastrointestinal illness) should stay home and use the following BCCDC guidance:

- If the person is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:
 - [When to get a COVID-19 test](#)
- If the person is experiencing other symptoms, isn't recommended to take a COVID-19 test (most people) or tests negative for COVID-19:
 - "Staff, children, or other persons can 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)."

Everyone should stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.

Health Check

A health check means a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, within school settings.

Symptoms at School

If a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school and is unable to participate in regular activities, protocols are in place to minimize risk.

- The person may be given a non-medical mask.
- If the person is a student, their parent or guardian will be contacted to discuss next steps.
- With appropriate support, the person will be separated from the learning group.
- If needed, staff will clean and disinfect soiled surfaces

Leadership Responsibilities

We make every effort to ensure that everyone is aware and routinely reminded of their responsibility to practice health awareness, including that they should not come to school if they are sick.

Oak and Orca will endeavour to provide learning support to students who are required to stay home and self-isolate. In the case of long-term illness or absence from school, our online learning program may be an option for supporting our students.