

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

(effective at November 1, 2021)

OVERVIEW

We at Children's Hearing are committed to the health and safety of our children, families and staff. We want to ensure we meet the standards laid out by the Provincial Health Officer, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and WorkSafeBC. We will continue to monitor guidelines and updates provided by the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Health Officer.

PROTOCOLS

Vaccines:

Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools and communities. Children's Hearing and Speech Centre is both an educational and clinical centre that receives partial funding from the Ministry of Health. As such, Children's Hearing must adhere to the Provincial Health Order of October 21, 2021, stating that all staff must be vaccinated or have an exemption to work.

Building Capacity:

- Hallway
 - The hallway contains arrows to indicate that people will stay to the right
 - Washrooms
 - Children will use classroom washrooms
 - Staff will use staff washroom
 - Boys/Girls washrooms
 - One adult and one child at a time
 - Staff will use these washrooms only when the staff washroom is unavailable
- Library
 - No more than four adults at one time
 - Adults will wear non-medical masks and will practice social distancing
 - Will not be used by children (teachers will bring books to the classroom)
- Gym
 - Only one class at a time will be in the gym
 - Teachers will bring any equipment they wish to use with them and remove it when they are done
 - Morning Music will be suspended until further notice
- Playground
 - Teachers are encouraged to take children outside as much as possible
 - Teachers will make use of the other outside areas around the school
 - Masks are not required on the playground
- Entrance
 - Parents will drop off and pick up children at the outside door of their classroom
 - Toys and books will be removed from the waiting area
- Classrooms
 - Children in the primary class will have their own designated table/work area to encourage physical distancing
 - Classrooms will be set up to provide maximum opportunities for physical distancing during play, snack, lunch, and circle times

- Fire Drills
 - The meeting place will be at the west end of the parking lot
 - Classrooms will maintain a 2 metre distance from each other
 - The gathering area will be marked to ensure groups maintain a 2 metre distance during the drill

Tasks Where Workers are Close to Each Other or the Public:

- Parents will be asked to check their child's equipment before bringing them to school
- Teachers will share microphones only if they are properly disinfected before sharing
- The pass around mic can be used if:
 - One adult has control of the mic and will hold it for everyone in the group
 - The mic will be held at least 12 inches from the speaker's mouth
 - The mic will be cleaned after each session in which it is used
- The staff will take precautions when helping children with toileting
 - Wear disposable gloves
 - Dispose of gloves after use
 - Wash hands with soap after use
- Parents will be instructed to send snacks that children can open themselves
- Only one staff member will enter the art supplies room at a time
- Staff meetings
 - Centre-based meetings will be held in the gym
 - Physical distancing will be required
 - All staff will wear non-medical masks
 - All Staff, First Words, and Itinerant meetings will be held on Zoom

High Touch Areas:

- The Director of Education will wipe all door handles, and light switches in the main part of the building
 - After all children have entered the building
- Teachers will wipe door handles, light switches, table tops and chairs
 - On arrival before school
 - Before leaving after school
- The Audiologist and Speech Language Pathologists will disinfect all surfaces between sessions
 - Toys that cannot be easily disinfected will be removed until they can be properly cleaned
- The cleaner will be instructed to clean and disinfect all high touch areas in the building daily

RULES AND GUIDELINES

Masks:

- Adults, including all staff and visitors
 - Must wear a mask when indoors except when eating, drinking, or seated at their work station
- Children
 - Children in the primary class will wear masks while inside except when they are eating or drinking

Hand washing:

- Everyone will use hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the building
- Everyone will practice good hand hygiene by washing hands
 - After using the toilet
 - After touching their face
 - Before going outside
 - After coming in from outside
 - Before and after eating
 - When hands are visibly dirty
 - Before going home at the end of the day

Staff:

- Staff will be fully vaccinated against COVID-19
- Staff will maintain appropriate physical distancing at all times
- Only Staff who are fully vaccinated will consume their lunch in the staff room and the reception area
- Toys and other equipment will be removed from the classroom after use until they can be properly cleaned
- Staff will create play centres that are well spaced throughout the room
- Each primary student will have their own set of supplies
- Windows will be open as much as possible to ensure good ventilation
- Staff will maintain a one to two metre distance between themselves as much as possible
- Staff will maintain distance between themselves and the children when possible and as developmentally appropriate
- Audiologist:
 - Will wear a face mask as well as a face shield when seeing students or other clients
 - Will see non centred based clients for hearing tests on a limited basis
 - No new clients will be accepted without approval by the Director of Education
 - All First Words families will be seen on one day when centre based students are not being seen
 - Adults and Itinerant students will be seen on one day when First Words families and centre based students are not being seen
 - Clients must wear a mask at all times
 - The hallway door will be left open at all times unless the noise from the hall interferes with testing
- Speech Language Pathologists:
 - Will wear a face mask and a face shield or safety goggles
- First Word Therapists/Speech Language Program
 - Will provide sessions via Zoom
- Itinerant teachers
 - Will follow the safety plans of the schools they visit
 - Will wear face masks
 - Will wear appropriate PPE
 - Will disinfect the space they are working in before and after each visit
 - Will provide online support as necessary and appropriate

Parents:

- It is the parent's responsibility to screen their children for symptoms before bringing them to the centre
 - Parents will be given a health check list that will include symptoms and conditions requiring a child to stay home, seek medical advice, and/or have a COVID-19 test
 - Parents will be informed of any changes to the guidelines made by Public Health
- Staff will sign the children in on the parent's behalf
- Parents are expected to practice physical distancing and wear face masks when dropping off and picking up their children
- Children will be dropped off and picked up at the outer door to their classroom
- Parents will only enter the building with permission of the Director of Education
 - Meetings with teachers and therapists will be held by telephone or Zoom
 - Face to face meetings may be held if approved by the Director of Education
 - Parents will only attend audiology appointments with their children if considered necessary by the Audiologist in consultation with the Director of Education
 - Parents who do enter the building will wear a non-medical face mask at all times

Children:

- Children will bring their own snacks and lunch: food will not be shared
- Children will only bring stuffed animals for rest time if the toy can be taken home and laundered at the end of every day
- Preschool Children will bring bedding for rest time on Mondays in a sealed bag
- Bedding will be taken home and laundered on Fridays
- Sleep mats will be spaced according to Licensing guidelines
 - A minimum of one foot between mats
 - Placed head to toe if space doesn't allow for one foot between mats
- Children will be encouraged to open their own containers at snack and lunch time

ILLNESS

Policies for Staff and Children:

- Children and staff will stay home when they are ill
- Children and staff who are experiencing symptoms that are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition that are not unusual for that individual may return to school
- If a parent or staff member answers 'yes' to only one of the questions included under the 'Key Symptoms of Illness' (excluding fever or difficulty breathing)
 - Stay home for 24 hours from when the symptom started
 - If the symptom improves, they may return to school when feeling well enough
 - If the symptom persists or worsens, they should seek a health assessment
- If a parent or staff member answers 'yes' to two or more questions included under the 'Key Symptoms of Illness' or have a fever or difficulty breathing, they should seek a health assessment
 - Call 8-1-1
 - See a primary care provider (physician or nurse practitioner)
 - Go to a COVID-19 testing centre
- Children and staff who receive a negative result from a COVID-19 test may return to school once they are symptom free (without medication) for a period of 24 hours

- If a COVID-19 test is recommended, but not done, children and staff must stay home for a period of 10 days from the onset of illness and may return if the symptoms have resolved
- If a COVID-19 test is not recommended, children and staff may return when they are symptom free for a period of 24 hours
- Children and staff who have been instructed to self-isolate by Public Health will stay home
- Children and staff who have arrived from outside of Canada or who have been in contact with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 must follow the direction of public health
 - Staff who are fully vaccinated and have had a negative COVID-19 test may return to work
 - Children will quarantine for 14 days before returning to school
- If a child develops symptoms (including cold and flu symptoms) while at school
 - The parent will be called to pick their child up
 - Parents are expected to come to pick up their child immediately
 - If the parent does not arrive within an hour of being notified, their emergency contact will be called
 - The parent will follow the guidelines regarding illness and COVID-19 testing above
 - If the child has a negative test result, they can return to school once they are symptom free for a 24 hour period
 - If the child has a positive test result, they will follow public health protocols and stay home as directed by public health
- If a staff member develops symptoms while at work
 - The staff member will inform the principal
 - The staff member will wash their hands, put on a mask, and leave work immediately
 - In the case of severe illness, 911 will be called
 - Any surfaces touched by the staff member will be cleaned and disinfected
 - The staff member will follow the guidelines regarding illness and COVID-19 testing above
 - If the staff member has a negative test result, they can return to work once symptoms resolve
 - If the staff member has a positive test result, they will follow public health protocols and stay home as directed by public health

When to stay home—symptoms:

- Persistent sneezing
- Severe, consistent coughing throughout the day
- Green-coloured, mucus-like snot
- Too unwell/fatigued to participate in activities throughout the day
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Fever
- Any COVID-19 symptoms: see BC health handout

COVID-19 FLOWCHART

