



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

Updated Jan. 11, 2024

Introduction:

A communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted from one person to another. Examples of communicable disease that may circulate include COVID-19, norovirus, and seasonal influenza.

Preventing communicable disease involves taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk of communicable disease transmission. It also involves implementing additional measures when advised to do so by Public Health during periods of elevated risk. The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level, or within a certain location.

- Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care has involved frontline workers and supervisors in identifying the risks in our workplace.
- Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will continue to monitor and review communicable disease-related information issued by our regional medical health officer or the provincial health officer if it's related to our industry, region, or workplace. This includes orders, guidance, notices, and recommendations issued by a medical health officer or the provincial health officer.

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care has followed the updated guidance provided by the *Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools – September 13, 2023*. These Ministry of Education guidelines build on public health guidance to provide operational considerations and implementation guidance for schools and school districts.

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care has also followed the updated guidance provided by the *Public Health Guidance for Communicable Disease Management in Child Care Settings – September 13, 2023*. Child care programs are important for children's social, emotional, behavioral, and early learning development, and are vital for working parents. These guidelines aim to support child care service providers to reduce the impact of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19 and influenza, on their operations.

Health Awareness:

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will ensure that staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers, and students are aware that they should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities. Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will support this practice by communicating the importance of not attending school if sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities.

A health check means a person is regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent the spread of communicable diseases within the school/child care settings. As per guidelines, Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care does not need to monitor students or staff for symptoms of illness.

What to Do When Sick:

Staff, students, or other persons in the school/child care setting who are exhibiting symptoms of illness, such as respiratory illness, should stay home until they are well enough to participate in regular activities or otherwise advised by a healthcare provider. Those experiencing certain illnesses, such as gastrointestinal illness caused by norovirus, may be advised to stay home for longer. Staff, students, or other persons can attend school/child care if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved enough to return to regular activities or otherwise advised by a healthcare provider. If unsure or concerned about symptoms, parents and staff may be encouraged to connect with their health care provider or call 8-1-1.

If a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school/child care and is unable to participate in regular activities, they will be supported to go home until their symptoms have improved or otherwise advised by a healthcare provider. Appropriate infection control precautions will be taken while the person is preparing to leave the school/child care premises, including use of appropriate hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfection of surfaces soiled with bodily fluids. They may use a mask if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms.

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care does not require a health care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care requires families to sign a *Health Agreement (Appendix 1)*.

Hand Hygiene:

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water or using an effective hand sanitizer reduces the spread of illness. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene and Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will facilitate regular opportunities for students and staff to wash their hands. In the Child Care setting, children will be supervised or assisted in using hand sanitizer.

To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the *Remember to Wash Your Hands* poster, below.

REMEMBER TO **WASH YOUR HANDS**



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

1. Wet hands with warm water

2. Add soap



3. Scrub for 20 secs

Sing the ABCs. Rub palms, backs of hands, thumbs, between fingers and under nails to create a lather.

4. Rinse and dry

Respiratory Etiquette:

Students and staff should practice routine respiratory etiquette. Parents and staff can teach and reinforce good respiratory etiquette practices among students, including:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

Vaccines:

Vaccines are important tools to protect against serious outcomes of many communicable diseases, such as COVID-19 and influenza. Students and staff are encouraged to ensure they are up to date on all recommended vaccines for communicable diseases. Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will share evidence-based information and promote opportunities to be vaccinated in partnership with public health and the local medical health officer. For administrators and staff, more information on vaccination and communicable disease prevention in the workplace is available on the Work Safe B.C. website. Evidence-based immunization information and tools for B.C. residents are available from BCCDC and ImmunizeBC websites.

Non-Medical Masks & Face Coverings:

The decision to wear a mask beyond when it is recommended by public health is a personal one, based on individual preference. Some students and staff may choose to wear a non-medical mask or face covering throughout the day or for certain activities. The choice of staff, families, or students to choose whether they practice additional personal prevention measures will be respected. Information on non-medical masks is available from BCCDC.

PPE When Providing Student Support Services/Personal Care

Staff and those providing services to students with medical complexity, immune suppression, receiving direct or delegated care, or with disabilities and diverse abilities who are in close proximity to a child will follow routine infection control practices and care plans for the student, if applicable.

Ventilation and Air Exchange:

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will continue to ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort of workers (Part 4 of OHS Regulation), and students, and that they are working properly. Windows and doors may be opened when warm weather permits, provided it meets security protocols.

Cleaning and Disinfection:

Regular cleaning and disinfection can help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will occur in line with regular practices and when visibly dirty. Sensory activities (e.g. activities with water) and use of sensory objects (e.g. playdough) will continue. Sensory objects will be cleaned according to regular practices.

Food Safety:

Staff, students, or other persons in the school setting will follow routine food safety practices, including diligent hand hygiene. More information may be found on the BCCDC Food Safety webpage.

Gatherings & Events:

School and child care extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools), regardless of location, will occur in line with the guidance in this document.

Space Arrangement:

In learning environments, Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will use classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches.

Transportation:

On our school bus, Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will implement the prevention measures included in this guidance document, where applicable, including regular cleaning/disinfecting.

Visitors and Community Use of Schools:

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care will follow normal practices for welcoming visitors and the community into our school.

Communicable Disease Management:

Most communicable diseases experienced by students and staff within school and child care settings can be managed by the individual/family and through routine preventive measures, such as staying home from school until well enough to participate in regular activities. Information resources are available to support management of routine communicable diseases, including *HealthLinkBC*, the *BCCDC Guide to Common Childhood Diseases*, the *Sneezes and Diseases* website, and other school health resources hosted on health authority webpages (Vancouver Coastal Health; Fraser Health; Interior Health; Island Health; Northern Health).

Public health works closely with education partners to support the health and wellbeing of students and staff in school settings. Public health may become directly involved if certain reportable diseases, such as measles, are identified where there are effective interventions available to prevent further spread and protect against severe disease. Additional time-limited public health measures may also be implemented at the discretion of the Medical Health Officer or Provincial Health Officer in response to broader risk of communicable disease transmission in the community. School or district administrators can contact public health if they have concerns about communicable disease transmission within the school setting and require additional support.

APPENDIX 1:



Beachcombers Academy & Little Oysters Child Care

7375 Island Hwy, Fanny Bay, BC, V0R1W0

www.BeachcombersSchool.ca

HEALTH AGREEMENT

Beachcombers’ policy requires that children remain home from school when experiencing symptoms of illness. Please refer to the *Parent & Student Manual* for more information, posted on our website: [Parent Info \(beachcombersschool.ca\)](http://beachcombersschool.ca)

1. You will need to conduct a **Health Check with your child each morning**, prior to attending school.
2. **Students showing symptoms of illness AND not well enough to participate in regular school activities, or otherwise advised by a healthcare provider, are required to stay home.** The exceptions are *medically diagnosed* conditions such as asthma, allergies etc.
3. **If your child becomes ill while at the facility**, you will be called and will make arrangements for them to be **picked up right away.**

I have read and understood,

Child(ren)’s name(s): _____

Parent/GuardianSignature: _____

Date: _____