Nelson Waldorf School

Communicable Disease Prevention Plan
2026

Effective Date: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027
Responsible Authority: Nelson Waldorf School
Plan Administrator: School Administrator / Principal
Applies To: Students, employees, volunteers, contractors, visitors, parents/guardians and other persons accessing the school

Purpose

The Nelson Waldorf School is committed to providing a safe, healthy, inclusive and supportive environment in which students can learn and staff can work.

The purpose of this Communicable Disease Prevention Plan is to establish practical measures that reduce the risk of transmission of communicable diseases within the school community while supporting regular in-person learning and the physical, social, emotional and developmental well-being of students and staff.

This plan is based on the **Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K–12 Settings** issued by the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care, together with applicable guidance from the B.C. Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), public health authorities and WorkSafeBC.

The provincial guidelines are designed to support public, independent and First Nations K–12 schools in reducing the risk of communicable disease transmission.

Guiding Principles

The Nelson Waldorf School will implement this plan according to the following principles:

1. **Prevention:** Use practical measures that reduce opportunities for communicable disease transmission.
2. **Health awareness:** Encourage students, employees and families to recognize symptoms of illness and make responsible decisions about attending school.
3. **Respect and inclusion:** Communicable disease prevention measures will be implemented in a respectful, non-stigmatizing and inclusive manner.
4. **Student well-being:** Physical health measures will be balanced with students' social, emotional and developmental needs.
5. **Evidence-informed practice:** The school will follow direction from the Ministry of Education and Child Care, BCCDC, the Provincial Health Officer, the local Medical Health Officer and WorkSafeBC, as applicable.
6. **Proportional response:** Additional measures may be introduced when there is an increased risk of communicable disease transmission.
7. **Communication:** Clear and timely information will be provided to staff, students and families when prevention measures or public health directions change.

The Ministry's guidelines emphasize an inclusive and trauma-informed approach alongside physical health and safety measures.

Scope

This plan applies to:

- Students;
- Teachers and other employees;
- Administrators;
- Volunteers;
- Parents and guardians while on school property;
- Contractors and service providers;
- Visitors;
- Community members using school facilities;
- School-sponsored activities and events; and
- Other persons accessing the Nelson Waldorf School facilities.

Everyone accessing the school is expected to support the prevention measures described in this plan.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Administration

The School Administrator/Principal is responsible for:

- Maintaining and implementing this plan;
- Ensuring staff are aware of applicable prevention practices;
- Monitoring relevant public health and Ministry guidance;
- Communicating significant changes to the school community;
- Ensuring appropriate supplies and facilities are available;
- Coordinating the school's response when a communicable disease concern arises;
- Consulting with the local Medical Health Officer/public health when required;
- Ensuring workplace health and safety requirements are addressed; and
- Reviewing this plan at least annually and whenever significant public health guidance changes.

Employees

Employees are expected to:

- Follow this plan and applicable health and safety procedures;
- Stay home when sick and unable to participate normally in school activities;
- Practise appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- Encourage age-appropriate health practices among students;
- Report health and safety concerns to administration;
- Follow cleaning and infection-prevention procedures appropriate to their duties; and
- Respect individual choices regarding masks and other personal protective measures.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Stay home when sick and unable to participate fully in normal activities;
- Practise appropriate hand hygiene;
- Practise respiratory etiquette;
- Avoid sharing personal food, beverages and items that contact the mouth;
- Respect the personal space and health choices of others; and
- Follow reasonable health and safety directions from school staff.

Parents and Guardians

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Monitor their child for symptoms of illness;
- Keep children home when they are sick and unable to participate normally in school activities;
- Arrange timely pickup when their child becomes ill at school;
- Inform the school of relevant health information when necessary for the student's safety;
- Follow public health advice regarding communicable diseases; and
- Support healthy habits at home and at school.

Health Awareness and Staying Home When Sick

Health awareness is a key component of communicable disease prevention. Students, staff and other adults should regularly assess whether they are experiencing symptoms of illness before

attending school. A person should remain at home when they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine school activities. In general, a person may return to school when:

- Their symptoms have improved;
- They feel well enough to participate in normal activities; and
- They are following any specific public health or health-care-provider instructions applicable to their illness.

BCCDC guidance similarly advises that children should generally not attend school when they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities. A person should not attend school when specifically directed to stay home or self-isolate by public health or a health-care provider.

The school will avoid unnecessary disclosure of a student's or employee's personal health information.

When a Student or Employee Becomes Ill at School

If a student or employee develops symptoms of illness while at school:

Students

1. The student will be moved to the Amethyst Room where they can wait safely.
2. The parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to arrange pickup as soon as reasonably possible.
3. The student will be provided with appropriate support while waiting.
4. The student may choose to wear a mask, particularly when experiencing respiratory symptoms.
5. Staff will maintain appropriate infection-prevention practices while supporting the student.
6. The area and surfaces used by the student will be cleaned as appropriate.

Employees

Employees who become ill during the school day should inform their supervisor and leave the workplace as soon as reasonably possible. The school will support employees in following appropriate public health or medical advice.

Return to School

Students and employees should return when they are well enough to participate in regular activities and when any specific public health instructions relating to their illness have been satisfied. Current B.C. guidance indicates that most people can return to school when their symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in regular activities.

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is one of the most important personal practices for reducing the spread of communicable diseases. The Nelson Waldorf School will provide reasonable access to:

- Soap and running water;
- Paper towels or appropriate hand-drying facilities; and
- Hand sanitizer where handwashing facilities are not readily available.

Students and staff will be encouraged to clean their hands:

- When entering the school;
- Before eating or drinking;
- After eating;
- After using the washroom;
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose;
- Before and after using shared equipment where appropriate;
- After contact with bodily fluids;
- When hands are visibly dirty; and
- At other appropriate times throughout the day.

Handwashing with soap and water should be used when hands are visibly dirty. Staff will provide age-appropriate instruction and reminders regarding effective hand hygiene.

Respiratory Etiquette

Students, employees and visitors will be encouraged to:

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or their elbow/sleeve;
- Dispose of used tissues appropriately;
- Clean their hands after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose; and
- Avoid unnecessarily touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unclean hands.

Respiratory etiquette will be reinforced through age-appropriate classroom instruction, signage and routine reminders.

Masks and Face Coverings

The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice unless a specific public health order or direction states otherwise. The Nelson Waldorf School will:

- Respect individuals who choose to wear a mask;
- Not stigmatize or discriminate against individuals who wear or do not wear a mask;
- Support students and employees who choose to wear masks;
- Allow individuals experiencing respiratory symptoms to choose to wear a mask while awaiting pickup or leaving the school; and
- Implement any mandatory masking requirement issued by the Provincial Health Officer, Medical Health Officer or other authorized authority.

Current B.C. school guidance recognizes mask wearing as a personal choice and states that this choice should be supported and treated with respect.

Immunization

Vaccination is an important tool for protecting individuals and communities from a number of serious communicable diseases.

The Nelson Waldorf School will:

- Encourage families and staff to remain informed about recommended immunizations;
- Share publicly available information about vaccination opportunities when appropriate;
- Support families in accessing reliable information from public health and health-care providers; and
- Follow any applicable provincial immunization requirements and public health directions.

The school will not provide individual medical advice and will direct families to public health or their health-care provider for questions about immunization.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Regular cleaning is an important component of communicable disease prevention. The Nelson Waldorf School will maintain regular cleaning practices throughout the school.

General Cleaning

School premises will be cleaned regularly, with attention to:

- Classrooms;
- Washrooms;

- Offices;
- Staff areas;
- Hallways;
- Common areas;
- Eating areas; and
- Other spaces used by students and staff.

Cleaning practices will be adjusted according to the use and condition of each space.

Frequently Touched Surfaces

During seasons of high transmission of diseases, frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected **at least once every 24 hours, Mon-Fri and when visibly dirty**, consistent with the provincial guidelines.

Examples include:

- Door handles;
- Light switches;
- Handrails;
- Washroom fixtures;
- Water fountain controls;
- Shared tables and desks;
- Computer keyboards and mice;
- Shared equipment;
- Frequently used tools;
- PE/sports equipment;
- Shared Music equipment;
- Appliances;
- Service counters; and
- Other high-touch surfaces identified through regular use.

Shared Materials

Waldorf educational materials, toys, manipulatives, fabrics, play materials and other classroom resources may be used. Materials that are difficult to clean are not automatically prohibited. Appropriate hand hygiene will be encouraged before and after their use.

Items that come into contact with a person's mouth or bodily fluids should not be shared unless they have been appropriately cleaned and disinfected between users.

Bodily Fluids

When cleaning blood or other bodily fluids:

- Appropriate disposable gloves will be used;
- Hands will be cleaned before putting on and after removing gloves;
- Appropriate cleaning and disinfection procedures will be followed;
- Any reusable equipment contaminated with bodily fluids will be appropriately cleaned and disinfected; and
- Staff will follow applicable occupational health and safety procedures.

Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality

Good indoor air quality is an important component of communicable disease prevention. The Nelson Waldorf School will ensure that heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems are:

- Properly operated;
- Regularly maintained;
- Kept in good working condition; and
- Operated in accordance with applicable Occupational Health and Safety and WorkSafeBC requirements.

The school will work with qualified personnel/service providers to address ventilation concerns. Where appropriate and weather permitting, windows may be opened to increase natural ventilation when air quality is good.

The provincial guidelines recommend considering ventilation guidance such as ASHRAE recommendations and note that schools with recirculated-air systems may consider finer filtration such as MERV 13 where feasible. Where classrooms or regularly occupied spaces have limited mechanical ventilation, the school will consider additional measures such as:

- Increased natural ventilation;
- Portable air-cleaning/HEPA filtration equipment;
- Appropriate maintenance of ventilation systems; and
- Moving activities outdoors when practical.

Any portable air-cleaning equipment will be selected, installed and operated according to manufacturer and facilities guidance.

Personal Space and Classroom Arrangements

The Nelson Waldorf School recognizes the importance of personal space and will encourage students and staff to respect the space of others. Classrooms and learning environments will

generally be arranged according to Waldorf educational principles and the needs of students. During periods of increased communicable disease risk, the school may consider additional strategies such as:

- Increasing space between individuals where practical;
- Reducing unnecessary crowding;
- Adjusting room configurations;
- Using outdoor learning spaces;
- Staggering activities or transitions where appropriate; and
- Increasing ventilation.

Any additional measures will be proportionate to the level of risk and consistent with current public health direction.

School Gatherings, Events and Activities

School gatherings, assemblies, performances, field trips, sports, festivals and other activities may proceed in accordance with current public health guidance. Activity-specific prevention practices will be considered, including:

- Hand hygiene;
- Respiratory etiquette;
- Ventilation;
- Cleaning of shared equipment;
- Avoiding sharing food or beverages;
- Staying home when sick; and
- Appropriate management of crowding.

For activities involving close physical contact, shared equipment or large numbers of participants, the school will assess whether additional measures are appropriate during periods of elevated communicable disease activity.

Food Programs and Eating Areas

Food and beverages will be handled in accordance with applicable food safety requirements. Students and staff should:

- Clean their hands before eating;

- Avoid sharing food, beverages, utensils or containers that have been in contact with another person's mouth;
- Keep personal water bottles and eating utensils separate; and
- Clean eating surfaces regularly.

Shared food practices may be modified when recommended by public health.

Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors

Visitors, volunteers and contractors are welcome when their participation supports the operation, educational mission or community life of the school. All visitors are expected to:

- Follow school health and safety procedures;
- Practise appropriate hand hygiene;
- Follow respiratory etiquette;
- Stay home when sick and unable to participate normally; and
- Follow any temporary public health measures in effect.

Visitors who become ill while at school should notify the appropriate school contact and leave the premises as soon as reasonably possible.

Community Use of School Facilities

Community groups and organizations using school facilities will be expected to follow applicable communicable disease prevention practices. Where appropriate, rental or facility-use agreements may include requirements concerning:

- Cleaning;
- Waste disposal;
- Food and beverage practices;
- Shared equipment;
- Illness;
- Ventilation; and
- Compliance with public health requirements.

Transportation

Where transportation is provided by or for the school, reasonable communicable disease prevention measures will be considered. These may include:

- Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces;
- Hand hygiene before boarding where practical;
- Appropriate respiratory etiquette;
- Adequate ventilation where possible; and
- Staying home when sick.

Any specific requirements established by a transportation provider or public health authority will be followed.

Enhanced Measures During Periods of Increased Risk

The school may implement additional measures when:

- Directed by the Provincial Health Officer;
- Directed by the local Medical Health Officer;
- Directed by the Ministry of Education and Child Care;
- Recommended by BCCDC/public health;
- There is an identified outbreak or increased risk within the school;
- There is significant communicable disease activity in the surrounding community; or
- The school's risk assessment indicates that additional measures are appropriate.

Additional measures may include:

- Increased cleaning and disinfection;
- Additional hand hygiene stations;
- Increased ventilation;
- Encouraging or providing masks;
- Changes to room arrangements;
- Reducing unnecessary crowding;
- Modifying gatherings or activities;
- Increased communication with families;
- Consultation with public health; and
- Other measures recommended by public health authorities.

Provincial or local Medical Health Officers may issue temporary additional recommendations or orders during periods of increased communicable disease risk.

Outbreaks and Public Health Consultation

If the Nelson Waldorf School becomes concerned about possible transmission of a communicable disease within the school, administration will seek guidance from the appropriate local public health authority. The school will cooperate with public health officials regarding:

- Risk assessment;
- Case and exposure management;
- Communication;
- Additional prevention measures;
- Cleaning and disinfection;
- Temporary modifications to activities; and
- Any other public health recommendations or requirements.

The school will not independently declare an outbreak or provide medical diagnoses. Public health authorities will determine when additional measures are required.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The Nelson Waldorf School will respect the privacy and confidentiality of students, employees and families. The school will:

- Avoid unnecessary disclosure of personal medical information;
- Share information only when required for legitimate health, safety or legal purposes;
- Use general rather than identifying information when communicating broad health information to the school community; and
- Follow applicable privacy legislation and school policies.

The identity of an individual who becomes ill will not ordinarily be disclosed to the wider school community.

Communication

Effective communication is an important part of communicable disease prevention. The Nelson Waldorf School will provide information through appropriate channels, which may include:

- School newsletters;
- Parent/guardian communications from teachers and staff;
- Staff meetings;

- School website;
- Notices and signage;
- Student education; and
- Direct communication when necessary.

Communications will be clear, factual, respectful and consistent with current public health guidance. The school will use authoritative sources whenever possible, including:

- B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care;
- B.C. Ministry of Health;
- BCCDC;
- Provincial Health Officer;
- Local Medical Health Officer;
- HealthLink BC; and
- WorkSafeBC.

Staff Training and Education

Staff will receive information appropriate to their responsibilities regarding:

- Communicable disease prevention;
- Hand hygiene;
- Respiratory etiquette;
- Cleaning and disinfection;
- Responding to illness;
- Bodily-fluid procedures;
- Ventilation;
- Personal protective equipment where required;
- Reporting health and safety concerns; and
- Changes to public health requirements.

New employees will be made aware of this plan as part of orientation.

Supplies and Facilities

The school will maintain reasonable supplies necessary to support this plan, including:

- Liquid soap;
- Paper towels or suitable hand-drying facilities;

- Hand sanitizer;
- Tissues;
- Cleaning and disinfecting products;
- Disposable gloves;
- Waste receptacles; and
- Masks when appropriate or requested.

Supplies will be monitored and replenished as necessary.

Risk Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Communicable disease prevention will be incorporated into the school's regular health and safety processes. Administration will consider:

- Current public health information;
- School activities;
- Building characteristics;
- Ventilation;
- Cleaning practices;
- Hand hygiene facilities;
- Student and staff needs;
- Feedback from the school community;
- WorkSafeBC requirements; and
- Any emerging communicable disease risks.

The plan will be updated when there are significant changes to provincial or local public health requirements.

Review of the Plan

This plan will be formally reviewed at least annually and sooner when:

- Provincial guidelines are updated;
- Public health requirements change;
- There is a significant communicable disease event;
- Building or operational changes affect prevention measures; or
- The school identifies an opportunity for improvement.

The review will consider input from school administration, staff, the school's health and safety representatives and, where appropriate, parents/guardians and other members of the school community.

Authority and Reference Documents

This plan is intended to be read together with the most current applicable requirements and guidance from:

1. **B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care — Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K–12 Settings**
2. **B.C. Centre for Disease Control — Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K–12 Schools**
3. **B.C. Ministry of Health**
4. **Provincial Health Officer**
5. **Local Medical Health Officer / Interior Health**
6. **WorkSafeBC**
7. Applicable provincial legislation and regulations.

The Ministry's current school guidance identifies health awareness, staying home when sick, hand hygiene, vaccination, ventilation, cleaning and disinfection as important components of communicable disease prevention.

Where a public health order or other legally binding requirement applies, the Nelson Waldorf School will comply with that requirement.

School-Specific Contacts

School: Nelson Waldorf School

Principal / School Administrator: Marcelo Porto Goncalves

Health & Safety Contact: Carter Fox

Custodial / Facilities Contact: Carter Fox

Local Public Health Authority: Interior Health

HealthLink BC: 8-1-1

Emergency: 9-1-1

Approval

This Communicable Disease Prevention Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Nelson Waldorf School.

Approved by: Administration Team

Date: September 16, 2026

Next Review Date: September 2027

Appendix A — Quick Reference for Staff

If you are sick

Stay home if you are too sick to participate normally in school activities.

If a student becomes sick

1. Provide a comfortable and supervised space.
2. Contact the parent/guardian.
3. Arrange pickup as soon as possible.
4. Support the student while waiting.
5. Clean affected areas as appropriate.

Remember

- Clean hands regularly.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Do not share food, drinks or mouth-contact items.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- Support good ventilation.
- Respect personal space.
- Respect individual mask choices.
- Follow current public health directions.

Appendix B — Quick Reference for Families

Please keep your child home when they are sick and unable to participate fully in normal school activities.

Families can help prevent the spread of illness by:

- Teaching children effective handwashing;
- Encouraging cough and sneeze etiquette;
- Keeping children home when sick;
- Keeping children up to date with recommended immunizations;
- Sending children with their own water bottle;
- Avoiding sharing food and beverages;
- Following public health advice; and
- Informing the school when there is information that the school needs to know for the student's safety.

For current information, families should consult BCCDC, HealthLink BC, their health-care provider or the appropriate public health authority.

Document status: School policy / operational plan
Review cycle: Annual and as required by changes to public health guidance