



DUNCAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN - AUGUST 2026 UPDATE

This document was updated on August 20, 2026 and is Effective Immediately

Introduction

Duncan Christian School (DCS) is committed to providing safety and care for students, families, and staff while offering Christ-centred education. Communicable disease prevention focuses on reducing the risk of communicable diseases and includes ongoing measures such as hand hygiene and cleaning, as well as additional measures implemented as advised by public health and WorkSafeBC.

This plan aligns with current guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Vancouver Island Health Authority (Island Health), and WorkSafeBC. DCS will continue to collaborate with Indigenous partners, education partners, and regional health authorities to ensure practices reflect current public health direction.

Trauma-Informed and Supportive School Environments

DCS recognizes that communicable disease events can affect the emotional, social, and spiritual well-being of students, staff, and families. Trauma-informed practice is a compassionate lens of understanding that acknowledges that all behaviour and actions happen for a reason and that supportive relationships are central to creating opportunities for growth.

DCS strives to maintain a learning environment that prioritizes safety, predictability, and belonging. Personal health decisions, including mask use, are respected and supported without stigma.

Communicable Disease Prevention Framework

Public Health Partnership

- Island Health provides regional direction, case management, and outbreak response.
- DCS will consult Island Health when communicable disease activity increases or when additional measures are recommended.
- This plan will be updated whenever provincial or regional guidance changes.

Plan Review

- Reviewed annually or as required by updated public health guidance.
- Adjusted immediately when new provincial directives are issued.

Environmental Measures

Space Arrangement

Classrooms, learning environments, and staff spaces may be configured to best meet educational needs. Flexible arrangements are permitted and encouraged.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

DCS contracts for janitorial services for daily cleaning and disinfecting. Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to prevent the transmission of communicable diseases from contaminated objects and surfaces.

Definitions

- **Cleaning:** Physical removal of visible soiling.
- **Disinfection:** Killing of viruses and bacteria on surfaces.

Frequency

- General cleaning at least once every 24 hours
- Frequently touched surfaces cleaned daily
- Visibly soiled surfaces cleaned immediately
- Garbage emptied daily

Special Items

- Items contaminated with bodily fluids or mouthed by children are cleaned between users
- Dishwasher-safe items may be cleaned in a dishwasher with a hot rinse cycle

Ventilation and Air Quality

DCS maintains HVAC systems according to regulatory standards to ensure proper air exchange and comfort. Ventilation enhancements include:

- Maximizing outdoor air intake when feasible
- Using outdoor learning spaces when practical
- Opening windows when weather and system function permit
- Avoiding horizontal cross-breezes that blow air directly between individuals

Use fans and air conditioners to move air from higher to lower areas rather than directly between people.

Administrative Measures

Health Awareness

Everyone entering the school is expected to:

- Check for symptoms daily
- Stay home when sick or unable to participate fully in regular activities
- Follow public health guidance or advice from a healthcare provider

DCS supports health awareness through signage, communication, and reminders.

Illness at School

If a student or staff member becomes ill while at school:

- A supervised, comfortable waiting space will be provided
- Non-medical masks will be available
- Staff supervising younger children may choose to wear masks or gloves
- Surfaces contacted by bodily fluids will be cleaned and disinfected
- A full “terminal clean” of the room is not required unless directed by public health

Doctor’s notes are not required except for standard medical accommodation processes.

Visitor Access & Community Use

Visitors must follow DCS communicable disease expectations. Information will be posted at entrances, on the school website, and in communications to families.

Community use of facilities will align with current public health recommendations.

School Gatherings and Events

All gatherings and events may proceed without capacity limits. Planning should consider inclusivity and trauma-informed approaches. Visitor expectations apply to all guests.

Emergency & Evacuation Drills

Communicable disease measures may be suspended during actual emergencies to ensure a timely and safe response.

Personal Practices

Hand Hygiene

Students and staff should practice hand hygiene:

- Upon school entry
- Before/after eating
- After washroom use
- Before/after shared equipment use
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Respiratory Etiquette

- Cough or sneeze into elbow or tissue
- Dispose of tissues immediately
- Perform hand hygiene afterward

Masks and Face Coverings

Mask use is a personal choice for staff, students, and visitors. DCS will maintain a supply of non-medical masks for those who wish to wear one or who become ill while at school.

Programs, Curriculum, and Activities

Shared Equipment

- Cleaned according to cleaning guidelines
- Items that touch the mouth must not be shared unless cleaned between uses
- Hand hygiene encouraged before and after use

Field Trips

Staff must:

- Follow school policies and this plan
- Ensure volunteers follow health and safety expectations
- Follow transportation guidance
- Align with public health recommendations for travel and overnight stays

Food & Culinary Programs

- Follow standard food safety requirements
- Practice diligent hand hygiene
- Clean and disinfect equipment and surfaces
- Follow FOODSAFE Level 1 principles

Fundraisers

Food-related fundraisers must follow BC Food and Beverage Sales Guidelines.

Kindergarten Program

- Families receive communicable disease information before school starts
- Young children are gently reminded about personal space
- Toys, manipulatives, carpets, and fabrics may be used with hand hygiene before/after use

Libraries & Learning Commons

- Books and media are low-risk and do not require special cleaning
- Technology is cleaned according to cleaning guidelines

Trades, Training, and Work Experience

- Students follow workplace communicable disease plans.

Classes follow the more stringent plan between school and workplace.

Extracurricular Activities

Activities may proceed in accordance with BC School Sports and provincial guidelines.

Transportation

DCS contracts a busing company for daily busing.

Recommended practices include:

- Daily cleaning of buses
- Encouraging hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Optional mask use for drivers, staff, and students

Student Support & Inclusion

DCS continues to support students with disabilities and diverse abilities. Close physical proximity may be required and will follow Ministry and public health guidance. Inclusion remains central to all health and safety measures.

Contact Information

For questions regarding this plan or its implementation, contact:

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