



COVID-19 Policy

Introduction

Sunflower is taking steps to ensure our policies are in keeping with current public health guidance from the BC Centre of Disease Control, BC Ministry of Health, and Vancouver Coastal Health Childcare Licensing, to minimize the transmission of COVID-19 and maintain safe and healthy environments for our children and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In developing this policy we have been guided by the following [BC's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#) which you can also follow for updates.

- Public Health notes that COVID-19 virus has a low infection rate in children. In B.C., less than 1% of children and youth that were tested have been COVID-19 positive. For more information, please refer to [BC's COVID-19 and Children resources](#).
- As per the most up to date Public Health Guidance, children are not the primary drivers of COVID-19 spread in childcare facilities, schools or in community settings. Adult to adult transmission is the major driver. Furthermore, evidence indicates transmission involving children is primarily limited to household settings, and from COVID-19 positive adults to children. For this reason, it is especially important that adults self-monitor for symptoms, as well as practice social distancing and wear a mask when at the school.
- Outdoor areas are a safe environment for play. The protective measures that teachers, parents, and children take inside sunflower will help ensure our indoor environments remain safe for all.

Symptoms

The following are symptoms that may arise due to COVID-19, and accordingly Public Health requires Parents/caregivers to assess themselves and their child daily for these, along with symptoms of the common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease before bringing their child to school:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Difficulty Breathing
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting



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Other symptoms can also include:

- Stuffy/runny nose
- Conjunctivitis
- Dizziness or confusion
- Abdominal pain
- Skin rashes/
discoloration of
fingers or toes
- Headache
- Muscle Aches

Symptoms Policy

When encountering symptoms in children or teachers, we will be following “[Appendix B. Protocol for child or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 in a childcare setting](#),” as published in BC’s COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings.

When new symptoms of illness develop such as the ones listed above, children and staff should stay home. For single symptoms without a fever, children and staff should stay home and monitor for 24 hours. If the child/staff member feels well enough and symptoms have improved, they can return to the facility without a doctor’s note.

- If the symptom is a fever (for children this means mouth or armpit temperature is 37.5°C/99.7°F or higher) or difficulty breathing, if there are multiple symptoms, or if symptoms last more than 24 hours or get worse, seek a health assessment by calling 8-1-1 or a primary care provider. If a COVID-19 test is recommended as a result of the health assessment, self-isolate whilst waiting for results.
- If a COVID-19 test is positive, self-isolate and follow the direction of public health.
- If a COVID-19 test is negative, return to the facility once well enough to participate.
- If a COVID-19 test is recommended but not taken, self-isolate for 10 days after the onset of symptoms and return when feeling well enough to participate.

If a teacher or volunteer falls ill while at school, they will be given a mask and sent home. If a child falls ill while at school, they will be isolated under supervision in a specified area, until they can be picked up. Teachers will ensure isolation areas are cleaned and disinfected after the child has left.

We will be contacting parents if **any** new symptoms of illness arise in their child whilst they are at school. On a case-by-case basis, this will either be to inform you of a new symptom and



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check in regarding your child's recent health and to assess whether or not the new symptom is a concern, or to come and collect them as soon as possible, in line with guidance from the CDC.

It is important that we protect the health of our school community, any breach of the policies in this document by a parent/caregiver, including knowingly attending drop off/pick-up while symptomatic or sending a symptomatic child to preschool, could result in suspension of services for that family.

School Closures

We will do everything we can to keep the school open, as safely as possible. The school could be required to close due to:

- An outbreak or cluster of COVID-19 occurs (*when there are two or more cases reported*)
- Any one case of COVID-19 identified in a staff member or child that has attended the school whilst contagious
- Unavailability of adequate staffing to meet licensing ratio requirements
- An ordered closure from a government agency

For closures of three days or longer, we will issue refunds proportionate to the length of the closure.

Class Arrival and Dismissal – General Information

- Drop off and pick up locations will be specific to each class or group and allow for more space and less people entering the building.
- On arrival, a teacher will sign in your child and ask simple symptom checking questions. If you answer 'yes' to any of the questions, your child will not be able to attend school and will be asked to self-isolate as per the above 'Symptoms Policy'.
- We will be thoroughly cleaning classrooms, furniture, all equipment, bathrooms, and high touch surfaces after every use, along with at the start, middle and end of every day.
- Whenever possible, please assign one or two adults to drop off and pick up your child, and do not bring your other children, friends, or family members with you to the school.



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- We require parents/caregivers to wear a mask or face covering during drop-off and pick-up indoors, and outdoors when it is not possible to remain socially distant from others. It is not necessary for your child to wear a mask. We have a stock of masks and gloves if you require, please ask a member of staff.
- We also require our teachers to wear masks at drop-off and pick-up times, and when it is not possible to socially distance (and gloves where necessary) and provide these for our team.
- Please call the school on (604) 985-9622 or email sarah@sunflowerschool.ca if your child will not be attending.
- To keep our indoor environment as safe as possible, parents/caregivers are asked not to enter the building unless completely necessary or your class is meeting in the gym or hallway. If you are entering the building for drop-off or pick up, we ask that we have no more than 4 visiting adults in the hallway at any time, where possible. We ask that Parents/caregivers do not use or enter the washrooms, and prefer that teachers take the children to the washroom, when necessary. To assist with this, please ensure your child goes to the washroom before coming to Sunflower.

Class Arrival and Dismissal - Preschool

Due to our small class numbers (a maximum of 15 children in preschool) we will be keeping each group of children together in their class, with the aim of maintaining the same 2-3 adults in the class each day.

We will be dropping off and picking up from the garden as much as possible. When drop off/pick up is from inside the school or the school entrance, please follow guidance from your class teacher each day, who will be there to greet you, and stay up to date with any changes by reading any emails that come from Sunflower staff.

Class Arrival and Dismissal – Out of School Care

We will be based in the gym, the art room and the garden. Our Out of School Care group will never exceed 24 children, and this enables us to operate with plenty of space between children and adults at all times both indoors and outdoors.



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Snacks & Water – General Information

We are currently a *nut aware* school, meaning that nuts are allowed in each class on a case-by-case basis. Your class teachers will inform you if we require snacks/lunch in your class to be nut-free. If your child has an existing allergy or develops one during the school year, please notify us so we can update all families and staff.

In relation to snacks, water and safe food handling, we will be following guidance from [Worksafe BC](#) including,

- We will not allow sharing of food or drink by staff or children.
- We will not use self-serve and family-style meal service and will provide snacks and meals directly to children in individual servings.
- Children will eat in both the kitchen and gym, allowing for at least 2 metres between each seat.
- We will not allow children to participate in food preparation.
- We have established a procedure for receiving and handling parent and caregiver provided food items and containers (e.g., lunch boxes and drink bottles) please see details for each program under the headings below.
- Reusable dishware, glasses, and utensils will be cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- We will not be allowing parents or staff to bring in homemade treats (cupcakes, birthday cake, etc.) or food items to share with the class.
- We are allowing a maximum of 3 staff in the kitchen at any one time, and require that they continue to wear masks and socially distance in this shared area.

Snacks & Water – Preschool

Children will bring their own filled water bottle and snack/lunch every day, being mindful of our allergy list, in containers clearly marked with their name.

Lunch boxes and water bottles will remain in each child's bag or cubby until it is snack time, children will get their lunch box and water bottle, and sit with distance between each other to eat their snack, they will then return their belongings to their original designated area.



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Snacks & Water – Out of School Care

We will be providing a healthy snack each afternoon and follow guidance from [Food Flair](#) for nutrition and snack ideas. Any existing snacks or water bottles will remain in the child's bag, unless they have an item they would like to finish.

Food preparation at Sunflower will be subject to extra health and safety precautions as guided by [Health Canada](#) as follows,

- Using common [cleaning and disinfection methods](#) to kill coronaviruses.
- Washing hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and food packaging.
- Wearing disposable gloves when preparing food.
- Washing fruits and vegetables under running water.
- Cooking food to recommended safe internal temperatures. *Coronaviruses are killed by normal cooking temperatures.*
- Avoiding cross-contamination of raw and ready-to-eat or cooked foods.
- Disinfecting any surfaces that will come in contact with food.

General Health & Safety Information

Below is a list of measures we are following daily at the school to prevent the spread of COVID-19, as per the guidelines from the BC Centre of Disease Control and BC Ministry of Health. Along with these measures, signage will be posted encouraging handwashing, limiting entry, and illustrating other specific control measures.

Health & Safety Measures

- We will have children outside as often as possible.
- When children are inside, we will have windows open as much as possible.
- Activities will be organized in a thoughtful way, taking into consideration personal measures.
- When cleaning and disinfecting and children are not present, we will be following guidelines in the [BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document, including cleaning and disinfecting of the preschool at least three times throughout the day, and frequently touched surfaces regularly.



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- We aim to only use natural cleaning ingredients when children are present in the room, and spray directly into a cloth and not on to the surface we are cleaning, to avoid inhalation.
- All materials used by students is put into a box and will be disinfected daily prior to/between classes.
- Toys and other items that cannot be easily cleaned have been removed.
- Garbage containers will be emptied daily, at minimum.
- One teacher has been assigned to do the school laundry each week.
- There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution of books or paper based educational resources to children because of COVID-19.

Organizational Measures

- Weekly staff updates and training on any new policies and procedures in line with our most up to date COVID-19 policies, procedures, and any other guidance we receive from the relevant organizations and bodies.
- Continual reassessment of our COVID-19 policies and procedures.
- We have signage in the school and at entrances to remind people not to enter the facility if they are sick and to socially distance from others.
- Teachers will encourage children to minimize physical contact with each other; however, in a preschool setting physical distancing between students and between teachers and students, will not always be possible.
- We will all avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes) and regularly remind children to keep “Hands to yourself.”
- We will minimize the number of different teachers/volunteers that interact with the same children throughout the day.
- We will incorporate more activities that encourage more space between children and teachers and offer toys that encourage individual play.
- As much as possible, any extensive communication with parents or meetings will be through email, Facetime, telephone or Zoom. Teachers will not be able to converse in depth with parents during school hours.



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Personal Measures – General Information

- All parents/caregivers, children and teachers who have symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR were identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed case are required to stay home and self-isolate.
- Teachers and volunteers will assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to working and stay home if they are ill.
- Children will be reminded regularly not to touch their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Children will be reminded to cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue, and immediately perform hand hygiene (“Cover your coughs”).

Personal Measures – Hand Hygiene

We are taking steps to ensure diligent hand hygiene before, during, and after class, including:

- Maintaining a hand hygiene station near to the entrance (inside and outside), so that children and adults can disinfect their hands using hand sanitizer when they arrive and leave the school.
- Ensuring the school is always well-stocked with hand washing supplies, including soap and paper towels, while incorporating additional hand hygiene opportunities into our daily schedule.

As per “[Appendix C: When to perform hand hygiene](#),” published in BC’s COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings:

Children will perform hand hygiene:

- When they arrive at the childcare centre and before they go home
- Before and after eating and drinking
- After using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After handling pets and animals
- After sneezing or coughing



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- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Teachers will perform hand hygiene:

- When they arrive at the childcare centre and before they go home
- Before and after helping children with food and setting out water bottles
- Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child or self
- After assisting a child to use the toilet or changing diapers
- After using the toilet
- After contact with body fluids (e.g., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
- After cleaning tasks
- After removing gloves
- After handling garbage
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty