

## **Our Lady of the Assumption School, September 2020: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is in-class instruction resuming?**

Based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., the latest research, guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, and evidence that children are at a lower risk of developing and transmitting COVID-19, K-12 students are able to return to full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools. Having students in the classroom helps to minimize learning gaps and provide the academic, social and emotional supports essential for learning. The students will be organized into Learning Groups.

### **What is a Learning Group?**

A Learning Group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term or year, and who primarily interact with each other. For example, a single class will be organized into a classroom with the appropriate teacher(s) and support staff. This will be each student's primary environment.

### **Why Learning Groups?**

Learning Groups are recommended by the Provincial Health Officer as an effective way to limit the number of interactions between people in schools and subsequently reduce potential exposures to COVID-19.

Learning Groups provide a range of benefits for students:

- Learning – allow full-time attendance instead of on-line/remote
- Social – increase peer interaction, avoid isolation
- Emotional – increase peer support and connection
- Psychological – decrease mental health impacts.

### **What if my child interacts outside his/her Learning Group?**

Students interacting outside of their Learning Groups will be required to physical distance.

### **What will Physical Distancing look like at OLA School?**

Although physical distancing is not required within learning groups, many steps will be taken to decrease physical contact and ensure distancing between learning groups. Students will be regularly reminded to keep their hands to themselves using visual supports, signage, prompts, video modelling, etc. Close greetings will be avoided. There will be different

classroom and learning environment configurations to allow distance between students and adults (ie. desks/tables arranged so students are not facing each other; using consistent or assigned seating arrangements; storing excess equipment in order to open more space in schools; staggering pick-up and drop-off times to prevent crowding; staggering recess, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone; taking students outside more often, where and when possible).

### **Is there a distance learning option?**

As mentioned by the Superintendent of CISVA Schools, “All students will return to school on Thursday, September 10, 2020, for full-time instruction ... There will be no remote learning in Stage 2.”

### **How often will cleaning and disinfecting happen?**

General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least once in a 24-hour period. This includes items that only a single student uses, like an individual desk. In addition to the cleaning and disinfecting of the premises, cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces at least twice in 24 hours, including at least once during regular school hours. Frequently touched surfaces include doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, toilet handles, tables, desks and chairs used by multiple students; shared learning items and manipulatives; shared equipment (e.g. computer keyboards and tablets); and appliances. Garbage containers will be emptied daily. The same cleaning and disinfecting frequency guidelines outlined above apply when different learning groups use the same space.

For cleaning, water and detergent, or commercially available cleaning wipes, along with good physical cleaning practices will be used. For disinfection, common, commercially available disinfectants such as ready-to-use disinfecting wipes and pre-made solutions will be used. Health Canada’s list of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus (COVID-19) will be referenced. If shared equipment/items have to be used, they will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC’s Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document. Hands will always be washed before and after handling shared objects.

### **What to do when my child has symptoms and when do we self-isolate?**

Any student, staff or other person within the school who has symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR was identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate.

Any student, staff, or other person within the school who has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms should seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they await the results.

Those unsure if they or a student should self-isolate or be tested for COVID-19 should be directed to use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool. They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.

Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household has cold, influenza, or COVID19- like symptoms, provided the student/staff is asymptomatic. It is expected the symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a health-care provider.

Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

<i>If a Student Develops Symptoms of COVID-19</i>	<i>If a Staff Member Develops Symptoms of COVID-19</i>
<b>IF STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:</b>	<b>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:</b>
<p><b>Parents or caregivers must keep their child at home.</b></p> <p>The student must self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</p>	<p><b>Staff must be excluded from work and stay home.</b></p> <p>Staff must self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</p>
<b>IF STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL:</b>	<b>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT WORK:</b>
<p><b>Staff must take the following steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.</li> <li>2. Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.</li> <li>3. Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill student. If not possible, staff may wear a mask if available and tolerated, or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth.</li> <li>4. Provide the student with tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.</li> <li>5. Avoid touching the student's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene.</li> <li>6. Once the student is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene.</li> <li>7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).</li> <li>8. Contact 811 or the local public health unit to notify them of a potential case and seek further input.</li> </ol> <p><b>Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.</b></p>	<p><b>Staff should go home as soon as possible.</b></p> <p>If unable to leave immediately:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Symptomatic staff should separate themselves into an area away from others.</li> <li>2. Maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.</li> <li>3. Use a tissue or mask to cover their nose and mouth while they wait to be picked up.</li> <li>4. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the staff member was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).</li> <li>5. If concerned, contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.</li> </ol>
<p><b>If a student or staff member is assessed by their family physician or nurse practitioner and it is determined that they do NOT have COVID-19, they may return to school once symptoms resolve.</b></p>	

### **What if a student or staff member contracts COVID-19? Will we know?**

If a student or staff is confirmed to have COVID-19, public health will do an investigation to confirm if any staff or students have been in close contact with that person and need to self-isolate. Public health will inform the school and superintendent if there are close contacts of a confirmed case within a learning group or school.

### **Can I visit the school during school hours?**

Visitor access during school hours will be limited and prioritized to those supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being. Visitors must adhere to health and safety protocols and requirements and will have to complete a daily health check before entering. Visitors contact information will be recorded.

### **Will my child be required to wear a mask?**

No. Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff). However, wearing a mask is a personal choice and those who choose to wear masks will be treated with respect.

### **Can my child bring personal items to school?**

Yes. Your child can bring personal items to school, but they are encouraged to only bring items that are necessary (e.g. backpacks, clothing, school supplies, water bottles). Personal items need to be labeled with your child's name to avoid accidental sharing. Uniform items must also be labelled.

### **Will the catered lunch program be available for students?**

Yes. The food is prepared outside the school by people that follow WorkSafe BC protocols for consumption, and continue to adhere to normally implemented food safety measures and requirements (e.g. FOODSAFE trained staff, a food safety plan, etc.).

### **Can my child share treats with his/her class?**

No. Homemade food items are not available to other students at this time (e.g. birthday treats, bake sale items).

### **Will there be field trips?**

Staff will follow existing policies and procedures as well as the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines when planning field trips. Field trip locations must provide supervisors with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it does not conflict with the school's plan.

Field trips to outdoor locations are preferable. Field trip numbers must align with the PHO guidance on mass gatherings (ie. 50 people) and staff must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to physical distancing and other health and safety guidelines. Use of parent volunteers for driving groups of students is not permitted and no overnight field trips will occur.

### **Is the Parent Participation program going to happen during the 2020-21 school year?**

Yes. The Participation Program (PP) is an important dimension of the operation at Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) School. The purpose of the program is to promote a spirit of community and pride amongst our families and provide tangible economic benefits to the school. Parents play a vital role in the education of their child(ren), and can work together as a community to create a better school for all children. The PP program will continue during the 2020-2021 school year - although it will look slightly different than in years past.

### **Will my tuition rate increase to non-participating rate if the Parent Participation program does not work out?**

The PP program is an integral part of our school and will continue during the 2020-2021 school year - although it will look slightly different than in years past. Those families enrolled in the program (as of Annual Registration / Re-Registration Spring 2020) will continue to pay the parent participation tuition rate.

### **What if I/my family falls ill or is in quarantine, will I be charged?**

Our school relies on PP tasks being complete for the school to function smoothly. Families should try and find a replacement if they are not available. We understand that life with COVID-19 is an unprecedented time, and families will not be charged should they fall ill and cannot complete their scheduled PP task due to illness. Please contact the Participation

Coordinator BEFORE the scheduled shift you are not able to attend:  
[parentparticipation@assumptionschool.com](mailto:parentparticipation@assumptionschool.com).

**What if my category no longer exists because parents cannot enter the school during school hours?**

There are several tasks our school continues to require help with. Families in categories such as Noon Hour Supervision, Library and Bingo will be assigned to a NEW category. Currently, a list of tasks are being compiled and families will be made aware of areas they may be able to assist with. The PP Coordinator will be in contact with your family once the school year begins.

**What if my family no longer wishes to participate in the PP program?**

Sometimes circumstances change. Should you feel your family is unable to continue within the participation category, and you wish you to continue as a non-participation family, please let the PP Coordinator know as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made. These families will then be changed to the school Non-Participation tuition rate.