



James Thomson Elementary School Staff and Student Safety Guidelines Updated-February 2021

In reference to the BC Ministry of Education's [COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for the K-12 Setting](#), along with [the updated SD47 Health Guidelines and Safety Plan](#), we have established the following set of School Safety Protocols to ensure the health and safety of staff and students while at school.

Illness and Self-Assessment

1. All staff and other adults (e.g. parents, caregivers, visitors) entering the school must have a responsibility to:
 - Assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering the school.
 - Stay home and self-isolate if they have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days, OR were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak.
 - Seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they await the results if they have cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms.
2. All staff will assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school. School and district administrators are required to verify that staff & other adult health checks have been completed before they enter the school.
3. Parents must assess their child's health and check daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to sending their children to school.
4. If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school.
5. Any student, staff who has a cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms, should seek assessment by a health-care provider and must self-isolate while they await their results.
6. Any student, parent or staff member who is unsure if they should self-isolate or be tested for COVID-19 should be directed to use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool.
 - If concerned, they can be advised to contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.
 - They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.

7. Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household has a 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.
8. 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.

If a Student or Staff Develop Symptoms of Illness at School

9. Any students who show symptoms of illness while at school will be:

- Provided a non-medical mask if they don't have one (exceptions will be made for those who cannot wear one for medical and/or disability reasons).
- Be placed under supervision in the medical room. The classroom(s) the child had contact with will be emptied and cleaned.
- Parents or caregivers will be contacted to pick-up the student immediately.
- Parents or caregivers will be requested to have the student assessed by a health-care provider.

It will be requested that the student stays home until COVID-19 has been excluded and symptoms have improved.

10. Any staff who show symptoms of illness while at school will be:

- Be placed in the medical room or separated from others if for some reason they are unable to leave the building right away. The classroom(s) the staff had contact with will be emptied and cleaned.
- The staff member will be encouraged to be assessed by a health-care provider
- Request the staff member stay home until COVID-19 has been excluded and symptoms have improved.

In the Event of a Confirmed Case at school

11. If a student, staff or other individual who has been in a school is confirmed to have COVID-19, the local health authority will work with the school administrator to understand who may have been exposed, and to determine what actions should be taken, including identifying if other students or staff are sick (case finding) or have been exposed and should monitor for symptoms or self-isolate.
 - To learn more about contact tracing, visit the [BCCDC website](#).
 - Students and staff are only required to self-isolate if directed to do so by the health authority staff-this includes members of the learning group of the confirmed case.
 - If it is determined that there was no potential exposure at the school (I.e. the confirmed case did not attend school when they may have been potentially infectious), the health authority will not notify the school administrator.

Learning Cohorts and Transportation

12. A learning cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school year at the Elementary level. This group will primarily interact with each other during morning and afternoon recesses, and potentially at school entrances and exits. Any group activity such as a presentation, will take place in this cohort if it extends outside a classroom environments.
Students will remain in their class grouping for the majority of the day.
13. DRAFT Learning COHORTS for James Thomson are as follows:
- COHORT A – Division 12 (K/1-Fr) and Division 10 (Gr. 1/2- Fr)
 - COHORT B - Division 11 (K/1-En) and Division 8 (Gr. 2/3-En)
 - COHORT C - Division 9 (Gr.2/3-Fr) and Division 7 (Gr. 3/4-Fr)
 - COHORT D - Division 6 (Gr. 4-En) and Division 5 (Gr.5/6-En)
 - COHORT E – Division 4 (Gr. 4/5-Fr) and Division 3 (Gr. 5/6-Fr)
 - COHORT F – Division 1 (Gr. 6/7-En) and Division 2 (Gr. 7-Fr)
14. At James Thomson, we will minimize the number of staff who will interact with learning cohorts who they are not part of as much as possible. When necessary, teachers must practice physical distancing (2m) and avoid close face to face interactions as much as possible.
15. James Thomson Elementary will establish playground zones and limit cohorts to one area per week. Three playground zones will be created to distance cohorts while on the playground:
- Zone 1** = Swings, sand area, spider web, front playground area adjacent to Sutherland Ave.
 - Zone 2** = Jungle gym, wigloo, inner courtyard.
 - Zone 3** = Hockey court, basketball court, school forest area.
16. Recess times will be staggered to ensure that each playground zone will have one cohort per recess time. Recess times are:
- Morning recess 1 = 10:15 am to 10:30 am – Cohorts A, D, and F
 - Morning recess 2 = 10:30 am to 10:45 am – Cohorts B, C, and E
 - Lunch recess 1 = 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm – Cohorts A, D, and F
 - Lunch recess 2 = 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm – Cohorts B, C, and E
17. Playground zones and schedules will be created so multiple cohorts can safely be outside at the same time.

18. All students riding a school bus in Grades 5 through 7 must wear a mask prior to boarding and for the duration of the ride. Students will be given an assigned seat on their bus, and will be grouped with siblings or with others in their learning cohort where possible.

Entering and Exiting School, Physical Distancing

19. Upon arrival to school, students must go directly to their designated class line-up. Students are expected to arrive no more than 5 minutes (8:50 am) prior to the warning bell at the start of the day. Students will remain in their line-ups after school as necessary.
20. All students and staff will enter the school using their designated learning cohort entrance. All staff and students will sanitize their hands upon entry to the school buildings and wash their hands in their classroom where possible.
21. All parents and guardians wanting to enter the school will make an appointment to do so, unless an emergency is required for them to enter. We are attempting to limit the number of contacts for staff and students while school is in session. All visitors must sanitize their hands upon entry.
22. Students will be reminded by staff to keep their hands to themselves at all times, and respect the physical distancing measures whenever possible.
23. Student desks and tables will be spaced within each classroom to reduce contact between other students and staff members. Classroom movement will be limited as a result.
24. Students are asked to bring a snack, lunch, and water bottle with them to school. Food is not to be shared with other students. We will have individually wrapped food items for students needing a snack or lunch. The water fountains will be used to refill water bottles only.

Environmental Measures

25. General cleaning of the school will occur daily in the evening, while frequently touched surfaces will also be disinfected again during the school day. Frequently touched surfaces include: door knobs, light switches, faucet handles, toilet handles, photocopiers, appliances, or tables, technological devices and classroom materials that are shared amongst people.
26. All student supplies will be used on an individual basis. Student supplies are not to be shared between students.
27. Some gym equipment may be treated as a frequently touched surface, and use may be limited as a result.
28. Items in classrooms will be minimized and students are encouraged not to bring toys from home.
29. Difficult to clean items such as classroom carpets and fabric-based furniture will be removed from classrooms.

30. Classrooms will have access to cleaning supplies so that other staff may clean as deemed necessary during the school day.
31. Re-usable masks will be available for all staff and students. Staff are required to wear a mask at all times, except when sitting or standing at their seat or desk/workstation; there is a barrier in place; they are eating or drinking or they are outdoors. Students should be prepared to see some staff wearing masks and face shields while at school.

Washroom availability and Common Area Movements

32. Each class will have a one-in, one-out rule for students needing to use the washroom and students will be asked to wash their hands upon their return to class.
33. Posters and other signage will assist to remind students and staff of the various physical distancing and other health measures. Giving students and staff space between each other will be promoted through increased outdoor activities, and reducing the amount of shared space.
34. Shared and multipurpose rooms will follow special exit and entry protocols:
Library: students will enter using the south end door, hand sanitizer will be used by all students at the door. Students will exit using the north door and wash hands upon returning to their classroom.
Music Room: students will enter one at a time and hand sanitizer will be used by all students at the door. Students will sanitize hands upon returning to their classroom. Staff will wear masks when singing indoors.
35. **Gym:** Classes will enter using main gym doors, hand sanitizer will be used by all students upon entry. Classes will exit using outdoor access doors and wash hands upon returning to their classroom. Staff will wear a mask when PHE classes are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m) and a barrier is not present.

Hand Hygiene

36. Students and staff will practice diligent hand hygiene throughout the day. It is expected that hand hygiene will occur during the following times: arrival at school; before and after recess breaks; before and after consuming food; before and after use of a common indoor learning space (e.g. gym, library, music room, First Nations room); after using the toilet; and whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Office and Staff Area Protocols

37. Students needing anything from the office will access Ms. McDonald through the glass window from the hallway. Students are not permitted in Ms. McDonald's office.
38. Only one staff member is allowed to use the photocopier and the teacher prep room at a time.

39. A maximum of 5 staff members will be allowed in the staff room at a time and physical distancing measures must be followed. All staff will wear a mask in transit in the staff room.

40. Students are not permitted to enter the photocopy room.

41. The medical room is to only be used for medical situations or if a student or staff member needs to self-isolate.

42. Staff Meetings will occur virtually only until further notice.