



Communicable Disease Prevention Plan **Formerly Called the 'Health and Safety Plan'**

The Communicable Disease Prevention Plan (CDPP) has been created for Studio9 by Cadence Trites, Principal, and Patricia Rockwell, Executive Director. This document has been created in conjunction with information and guidelines from the B.C. Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings. *Policy in effect as of August, 2023*

Background

The B.C. Ministry of Education has deemed in-person learning an important opportunity in the acquisition of knowledge for Kindergarten to grade 12 students to engage with peers, which supports social and emotional development. Based upon guidance from the BCCDC, the B.C. Ministry of Education has made the decision that due to information showing schools are low-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission, Kindergarten to grade 12 students can participate in class full-time in accordance with public health guidelines for schools.

Thus, students will return to Studio9 for in-class learning for the 2023-2024 school year. Studio9 continues to follow the four foundational principles established by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, teachers and staff
- Provide the services needed to support the children of our essential workers (ESWs)
- Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
- Provide continuity of educational opportunity for all students

How will Studio9 be maintaining my child's safety this school year?

The Ministry of Education has mandated that all schools in B.C. must implement a Communicable Disease Prevention Plan of COVID-19 safety measures in order to protect staff and students alike. These include:

1. Continued use of student health screening measures, implemented by parents
2. Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols
3. Additional hand washing and sanitizing stations
4. The choice to wear masks, face shields, or other personal protective equipment
5. Strongly recommending that all staff and students six years and older are fully vaccinated (as per BCCDC recommendations) while sharing evidence-based information and promoting opportunities to be vaccinated
6. Reminders for students and staff to implement 'personal space' (defined as the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person) when interacting with one another
7. Ensuring prevention measures are in staff-only areas as well as the school at large

*Please note that the term 'mask' in this document means a non-medical mask or face covering. Medical-grade masks are not recommended within school settings for general use.

Will remote learning still be available for my child who attends Studio9?

At this time, Studio9 is only able to offer in-class instruction. Should your child be ill, away from the school for a small period of time, or asked to self-isolate by Interior Health, Studio9 will be able to support her/him with supplemental assignments to work on at home for up to two consecutive weeks. However, the nature of Studio9's program is conducive to regular attendance.

How will student mental health and well-being be attended to during this time?

During the 2023-24 school year, considerations will be made as to creating a mentally healthy environment with trauma-informed support for students who require this. Students may have experienced trauma during the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore it is important that staff and students feel supported in recognizing and reporting to signs of trauma. Studio9 is committed to utilizing trauma-informed practice when working with students/staff, which includes:

- Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments
- Understanding coping strategies
- Supporting independence
- Helping to minimize additional stress/trauma by addressing individual needs of students and staff

In responding to situations of trauma, Studio9 staff will be using the Ministry of Education and Child Care trauma-informed practice resources on the Erase website (<https://mytrainingbc.ca/traumainformedpractice/>).

Students will continue to receive the same level of care and compassion from Studio9 staff members as was prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students will be carefully monitored by teachers and teaching staff as to changes in their baseline mental health and behaviour, and any discrepancies will be reported to their parents/guardians immediately. Studio9 staff will continue to support student personal practices using positive and inclusive approaches. Studio9 will avoid punitive measures or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma.

Studio9 will continue to recommend that staff and parents utilize the following mental health resources in order to identifying the needs of students who may have experienced trauma:

- Ministry of Education Expect Respect and a Safe Education (ERASE); trauma-informed practice resources <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase/mental-health>
- Ministry of Children and Family Development: Healing Families, Helping Systems: A Trauma-Informed Practice Guide for Working with Children, Youth, and Families (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/child-teen-mental-health/trauma-informed_practice_guide.pdf)
- Linda O'Neill- Trauma Informed in the Classroom (<https://web.unbc.ca/~loneill/onesheet.pdf>)
- North American Centre for Threat Assessment & Trauma Response: Education as a Special Consideration (<https://nactatr.com/news/files/EducationSpecialConsideration.pdf>)

Studio9 will also practice methods to ensure a supportive school environment for communicable disease prevention. These methods include:

- Staff will model personal practices (I.e. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) and assist younger students as needed.
- We will share reliable information, including from the BC centre for Disease Control, Office of the Provincial Health Officer, and Interior Health to parents, families, and caregivers.
- Staff will promote personal practices in the school.
- We will ensure that individual choices for personal practices (i.e. choosing to wear a mask or face covering) are supported and treated with respect, recognizing varying personal comfort levels.

Communication

Studio9 will not be providing any public statements or communications to staff/families of students about potential activity signals or suspected/confirmed COVID-19 school exposures unless directed to do so by the Ministry of Education and/or Interior Health. In the case of a student or staff member who is affected by COVID-19, Studio9 will continue to seek out opportunities to foster compassion and empathy in the school community.

To protect personal privacy, Studio9 will not be releasing individual contact information for the purpose of an individual seeking to notify others of their test result, nor will Studio9 be notifying others on an individual's behalf.

In the case that Studio9 must temporarily close due to lack of staff to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, support, and/or custodial care to ensure the health and safety of students (a functional closure), the decision to do so will be made in conjunction with our Medical Health Officer and the Ministry of Education and Child Care. Parents/guardians will be provided with this information via email/text as soon as this decision is made, and details about the functional closure will be included.

Studio9 will continue to implement health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse needs. In the case of students who are severely immune compromised or have a medical complexity, we will work with a medical care provider and the family to determine alternate learning arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

Safety

In addition to all other measures detailed in this document, the following measures have been taken to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in our school community. Please note that the term "mask" in this document refers to a non-medical cloth or disposable mask that covers both the nose and mouth.

Access to Campus

Studio9 employees, contractors, and students will be allowed on campus. We are unable to allow siblings, friends, grandparents or other guests to enter the campus on a casual basis. Volunteers/essential visitors will must adhere to the information within this document.

Parents/guardians/visitors are able to come into the building if they have a previously established appointment or to quickly pick up/drop off items at the office. All visitors must practice health awareness, which includes checking regularly that they are not experiencing symptoms of illness prior to entering the school. Visitors must ensure that they are aware of the communicable disease protocols/requirements within this document.

All students, staff, volunteers, specialists, and visitors to the school will be provided with health and safety orientations (including updates to communicable disease plans) in order to ensure that all members of the Studio9 community are well informed of their responsibilities and resources available.

Parents/guardians who would like to book an appointment may do so by calling the school at (250) 868-8816.

Specialists who are contracted to work with specific children with special needs will sign in at the office.

Drop-off /Pick-up Times & Locations

For students in all grades, the drop-off/pick-up location is the front gates near Houghton Road. For students in Kindergarten to grade five, they must go to and remain on the playground between 8:10 and 8:30 am. The entrance/exit door for grades K-5 students and staff is the doors located closest to the front gates/Houghton Road.

For students in grades 6 to 12, students must remain grassy/paved area between the school and portables between 8:10 and 8:30 am. The entrance/exit door for grades 6-12 students and staff is the doors located closest to the office.

For all students, before class supervision will be available between 8:10 and 8:30 am. Students **will not be allowed entrance to the school prior to 8:30 am, so please ensure that your child has used the washroom before coming to school.** Students will be let in the building for bathroom emergencies, however. Students who do not wish to hold onto bags or other personal items prior to entering the school may place them at a designated outdoor location.

After-school supervision for all students will be available between 3:30 and 3:45 pm. Students are asked not to re-enter to the school after leaving the facilities at 3:30 pm, so teachers will encourage students to use the washroom prior to leaving for the day.

Parents, guardians, and others will not be able to enter the Studio9 grounds during drop-off/pick-up. Parents or other designates are asked to wait on the sidewalk outside of Studio9 or within the gated/fenced area of Studio9 for their child to be dismissed to them. Parents or other designates are kindly asked to ensure personal space and avoid crowding among each other and among students.

Should parents/guardians or designate not pick up their child within the designated after school supervision time frame, an emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. Please make sure to provide up-to-date emergency contact information to the office.

Screening

The first step in screening is the responsibility of parents/guardians to perform a health check with their children daily before sending them to school. Parents/guardians must check their child regularly for symptoms of illness including common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease. Staff are also required to perform a health check. **Students and staff must not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities.**

Staff and students who are exhibiting new symptoms of illness must stay at home and follow the BCCDC guidelines of:

- Using the When to Get Tested for COVID-19 resource (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing/when-to-get-a-covid-19-test>) or the B.C. Self-Assessment Tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) if exhibiting signs of COVID-19.
- If unsure or concerned about symptoms, connect with a health care provider or call 8-1-1.
- For those who test positive for COVID-19, following the guidance on the BCCDC website (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19>).
- Students/staff who test positive for COVID-19 may return to school when they no longer need to self-isolate as long as symptoms have improved and they are well enough to participate in regular activities.
- Students/staff who do not test positive for COVID-19 may attend school if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (i.e. seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved enough to where they feel well enough to return to regular activities and their fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g. ibuprofen, acetaminophen).

Please note that we do not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practices.

We will continue to follow Interior Health instruction for reporting student and staff absenteeism due to health concerns.

If a student or staff member develops symptoms of illness while at school, the following protocol will be adhered to:

- Provide the student/staff member with a space where they can wait comfortably and is separated from others; younger children must be supervised when separated and the supervising staff member(s) may choose to wear a mask, should avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible, and practice diligent hand hygiene.
- If the student/staff member is experiencing respiratory symptoms and would like to wear a mask, one will be provided for them if they do not have one with them.
- Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible; if the student's parent/guardian cannot be contacted the emergency contact will be called for pick-up.
- If the student/staff member cannot be picked up immediately, a space for the student/staff to wait comfortably and is separated from others will be provided; younger students will be supervised.

- After the student leaves, the areas used by the student/staff member where their bodily fluids may have been in contact with will be cleaned and disinfected; a 'terminal clean' where the entire room is cleaned and disinfected is not necessary.
- A request that the student/staff stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.

Hygiene

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water will take place for both students and employees:

- after entering and before departing the school buildings
- before and after snacks and meals
- before and after breaks/outdoor play
- after using the washroom
- after using a tissue
- after coughing or sneezing
- when hands are visibly dirty
- when moving between different learning environments

Additionally, teachers will wash their hands:

- before and after applying any First Aid or medication to students or self
- before and after handling food or assisting students with eating
- after contact with bodily fluids (runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
- after cleaning tasks
- after handling garbage
- after removing gloves

Students and staff must wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, doing so using their designated classroom sink or hand washing station.

Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol and have met Health Canada's requirements/ authorization for sale in Canada will be available at entrance/exit points and throughout the school. WorkSafeBC hand washing signage will be posted near all sinks to communicate good hand washing practices. Soap and paper towels will be well stocked at hand washing areas. Students and staff will be asked to use hand sanitizer upon immediate entry to the school, and it will be used when hand washing is not readily available.

Respiratory etiquette will be adhered to and taught to/reinforced amongst students. This includes:

- Coughing/sneezing into their elbow or tissue (tissues are to be thrown away immediately and hand hygiene practiced).
- Refraining from touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refraining from sharing any food, drinks, or unwashed utensils.

School Gatherings and Events

Assemblies and other in-school gatherings will no longer have a specific capacity limit; all staff and students are able to attend an assembly/gathering. All school gatherings and events will return to 100% capacity.

Emergency and Evacuation Drills

All emergency/evacuation planning and drill will consider communicable disease prevention plans. In the event of an actual emergency, communicable disease prevention measures may be suspended to ensure for a timely, efficient, and safe response.

Physical/Social Distancing

Physical/social distancing will not be enforced with students and staff during the 2022-2023 school year. However, students and staff will be reminded about respecting personal space. We will return to classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches.

Masks will no longer be required for grades Kindergarten to 12 students and staff when inside the school. The decision to wear a a mask or face covering is a personal choice, and we at Studio9 will support and respect this choice. Studio9 will have disposable masks available at the office for those who would have forgotten their mask and would like to wear one.

Cleaning/Disinfecting Standards & Routines

On a continuous basis, a thorough cleaning and disinfecting has been undertaken of every classroom, hallway, and all common spaces in all buildings. Signage has also been placed around the school reminding students and staff of enhanced cleaning and hygiene standards and how to follow them.

During the school day, teachers will manage the cleaning routines inside their classroom, in addition to the regular cleanings provided by our custodian. Cleaning will occur at least once per day and when visibly dirty. These include:

- Cleaning and disinfecting high-contact surfaces such as desks, tabletops, door handles, toilet handles, faucet handles, light switches, hand railings, lockers, desks/tables (if used by multiple students in a Learning Group), keyboards, appliances, shared equipment.
- Before and after snacks and lunch, tabletops will be sprayed with disinfectant and let sit for 30 seconds before touching.
- Reminding students and assisting them in regular cleaning of their personal supplies.
- Practicing hand hygiene before and after use of shared objects.

Enhanced cleaning standards will be undertaken by our custodian each day after dismissal. This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least once a day.
- Frequently-touched shared surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day (e.g. door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, and chairs.)
- Cleaning and disinfecting any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Garbage containers will be emptied daily.
- Disposable gloves will be worn when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine).
- Hands will be washed before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Washrooms will be cleaned at least once a day.
- Frequent cleaning of areas/equipment commonly used by staff members (photocopier, staff room fridge door handles, etc.)

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products, including glossy and laminated products. As such, Studio9 will not need to limit the distribution of books or paper based educational resources to students because of COVID-19. There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time, or for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.

Materials & Personal Belongings

Students and Staff:

Personal belongings may be brought to school, but students/staff are encouraged not to share items that come into contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks, unwashed utensils, and wind instruments). For students, please make sure to have supply items that teachers request via the school supply lists (see www.studio9.ca) with your child, as sharing of items such as pencils, pens, colouring pencils or markers, rulers, calculators, or other materials is not encouraged. Students will be allowed to use the water fountains and water refill stations.

Lockers and hangers for personal items will be in use. Upon entrance to the school, students will place their backpack, jacket, and other necessary items in their locker or at their hanger.

Lunch, Snacks, Daily Breaks

Hot lunch will be available this year for students and staff, with specific protocols in place. For students in grades K-5, snacks and lunches will be eaten in the classrooms. For students in grades 6-12, snacks will be eaten outside during recess time. At lunchtime, students in grades 6-12 will be eating in the gymnasium, and must wash hands before and immediately after eating. Microwaves will be available for student use in some classrooms.

Hot lunch will be prepared and served according to Food Safe rules and guidelines that are appropriate for the school setting. Students in grades K to 5 will have their hot lunch delivered on a trolley and placed outside of the classroom. Trolleys will be brought back to the cafeteria by homeroom teachers between 12:15 and 12:30 pm. Students in grades 6 to 12 will have their hot lunch dropped off at the gym just

prior to the start of lunch. Trolleys will be placed in the gym for dirty dishes and cutlery to be collected. Trolleys of dirty dishes/cutlery will be transported back to the cafeteria at the end of the lunch eating period.

Students will be encouraged not to share any food or beverages. Parents/guardians may drop off treats for their child's class, provided that they are individually packaged or are designed for one person only (i.e. no large packages of chips and cupcakes instead of cakes).

At lunchtime, students will be dismissed for outdoor recess by the teacher/teaching assistant after fifteen minutes of designated eating time. All students will clean/sanitize their eating area and must leave the classroom/gymnasium immediately. Students will be supervised outside in their specific grade-level area by a teaching assistant. Students will not be allowed to congregate in hallways or common areas. The use of the play structures and group games are now permitted. Some personal use sporting equipment may be provided and hand hygiene will be performed before and after use.

At the end of outdoor recess/lunch, students are to sanitize their hands and then go directly to their classroom to wash their hands.

Personal Protective Equipment

Employees are not required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including masks, but may choose to do so. In this case, employees will be asked to bring their own PPE.

Transportation/Field Trips

As Studio9 does not have bus transportation, no measures will be taken to enhance safety in this area. Field trip transportation may be on foot (within walking distance) or on public transportation (all protocols for using public transportation will be followed). The use of parent volunteers for driving groups will again occur, with the following preventative measures in place:

- Parent volunteers (both driving and supervising) must be trained in and strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines, including this document.
- Staff, students, and parent volunteers are in educated in/in alignment with applicable local, regional, and federal public health recommendations and Orders, and how this applies to the field trip location.
- Studio9 will make every effort to avoid a venue/location that places additional requirements that could prevent a staff member/student from being able to participate. If this is not possible, Studio will require participants to confirm that they are able to meet the additional requirements (i.e. able to provide proof of vaccination).

People Movement

Students will be reminded of maintaining personal space when moving throughout the building.

School Ventilation Systems

No new improvements to school ventilation systems are required at this time. We will be encouraging teachers to open windows during class time (weather permitted) and use outdoor space for learning opportunities.

In order to enhance school ventilation, Studio9 will:

- Ensuring that all mechanical heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications (OHS Regulation).
- Whenever possible, opening windows if weather permits.
- Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed will be avoided, except when necessary during high or excessive heat events.

In the case where our ventilation system is temporarily compromised (e.g. partial power outage, ventilation break down), classroom windows are required to be opened until the situation can be rectified.

Special Education Support

Studio9 will continue to offer students who have documented special needs with both an IEP and recommended supports that are available within the school setting. Parents/guardians of students with an IEP will be invited to IEP meetings via the Zoom platform, three times per year. Some students may be provided with outside supports, such as occupational therapy, counselling, and speech pathology. In this case, the individual who provides the outside supports (Occupational Therapist, Counsellor, Speech Pathologist) must maintain personal space, and practice sanitization/disinfecting protocols of Studio9. All visitors to the school must sign in at the office upon arrive, ensuring that they have completed a daily health check.

Regulations Regarding Specific Classes

Foods and Nutrition/Culinary Arts

As part of the learning program, when food is prepared and consumed by the same students, the following additional safety procedures apply (as well as Food Safe practices):

1. Cleaning and disinfecting protocols must be maintained.
2. Diligent hand washing for at least twenty seconds, including at the beginning and end of class, before and after handling food, before and after eating/drinking, and when hands are visibly dirty.
3. Sanitizers and disinfectants used are approved for use in a food service application and are appropriate for use against COVID-19.

Music/ Physical and Health Education/ Dance/ Drama/ Technology/ Visual Art Programs

As part of the learning program, the following additional safety procedures apply:

1. Cleaning and disinfecting protocols applied to shared equipment, including practicing hand hygiene before and after use.
2. Equipment that touches the mouth should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

