



Queen Margaret's School

Return to School

Communicable Disease Plan

Teaching and Learning Edition 2021–2022



Updated: March 25, 2022

Effective: March 28, 2022



Return to School Plan 2021–2022

Evidence-Based Approach	<p>Queen Margaret’s School has experienced a safe and healthy return to the classroom since our return to instruction in September 2020. We know that school is essential for supporting the healthy development of the whole child. Additionally, we also believe that learning in a classroom environment supports peer to peer interaction, wellness and social-emotional development.</p> <p>The following plan outlines the health, safety and exposure control measures that have been put securely into place to reflect relevant best practice from the Provincial Health Authority, BC CDC and BC Ministry of Education for a return to in-class instruction in 2021–2022.</p> <p>QMS will continue to align its safety plan with best practice and will update it as necessary in accordance with Ministry and Provincial Health Authority guidance. The most recent update to this document reflects the Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings (March 10, 2022)</p>
Review and Reinforcement of In-Place Prevention Measures	<p>All independent school authorities are required to have communicable disease plans and adhere to the standards, guidelines and protocols from the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC</p> <p>QMS has a dedicated team who meets regularly to review our communicable disease prevention plan and measures. This ensures that our plan is in alignment with guidance from the Provincial Health Authority, British Columbia Ministry of Education and trusted evidence from the BC Centre for Disease Control.</p> <p>Research tells us that variants of COVID-19 spread the same way as the original COVID-19. The BC CDC and Provincial Health Authority assure us that the prevention measures <i>already</i> in place in schools continue to be effective at reducing the risk of COVID-19 spreading.</p> <p><i>We ask that our families support QMS in the following prevention measures, which include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone who is eligible getting fully vaccinated• Doing a daily health check• Staying home when sick• Cleaning hands regularly



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students and staff may choose to wear masks or other personal protective equipment. This decision will be supported and respected by all members of our school community. <p>QMS is committed to reinforcing personal prevention practices in our school environment through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular reminders to students, families, and staff about the importance of completing a daily health check, staying home when sick, and following public health recommendations.• Demonstrating and modelling how to practice personal prevention measures at school in the classroom and school environment.• Sharing evidence and information from the BC Centre for Disease Control. Please see the BCCDC for trusted information on COVID-19 vaccines. <p>Sources: Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings (March 10, 2022)</p>
Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures	<p>QMS is also committed to ensuring that our infection prevention and exposure control measures are in place to create a safe environment and reduce the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19.</p> <p>Control measures are more effective in settings such as schools where there is a consistent grouping of people and multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely implemented, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Illness policies for students and staff.• Reinforcement and adoption of effective personal practices (e.g. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette).• Environmental measures (e.g., enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, increased ventilation).• QMS will continue to have masks available at school for those who wish to wear one or become sick at school.
Supportive School Environments	<p>To maximize an inclusive approach to instruction for all of our students we are committed to the following measures.</p> <p>First and foremost, we are committed to the continued use of a trauma-informed approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trauma-informed practices recognize, and are responsive to, the potential emotional, psychological and physical stress and hardship resulting from events that may be traumatic for our students and staff. It calls on our community to be empathetic, compassionate and supportive within our school community as we navigate the



	<p>global and local impacts resulting from the pandemic. It puts understanding, and safety, at the center of our practice as educators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For more information on a trauma-based approach, please visit the BC Trauma-Informed Practice Resources portal and the BC Ministry of Education Trauma Informed Practices page. • Asking our staff to model caring, compassionate, understanding and supportive behaviours. • Sharing reliable information from the Provincial Health Authority and BC Centre for Disease Control. • Promoting safety through the use of visual aids and signage. • Using positive, inclusive and supportive approaches to engaging students in preventative practices, including the respect of each other’s space.
<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>QMS is equally committed to supporting mental health and well-being through school-wide mental health prevention and promotion programs.</p> <p>At the school and classroom level, this includes K–12 educational programs designed to support students to build resiliency, coping skills and knowledge that contribute to their overall wellbeing.</p> <p>QMS wellness programming will continue to be informed by The BC Mental Health in Schools Strategy throughout the 2021–2022 school year.</p>
<p>Vaccines</p>	<p>Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools and communities. Public health strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them. Please see the BCCDC for trusted information on COVID-19 Vaccines.</p> <p>COVID-19 vaccination is now authorized by Health Canada for children five and older. For more information on how to register and book vaccine appointments for children and young people ages five and older please visit the following site.</p>
<p>K-12 Personal Protective Equipment</p>	<p>Masking</p> <p>The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice or as required by specific health direction or government guidelines. This decision will be supported and respected by all members of the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QMS will continue to have masks available at school for those who wish to wear one or become sick at school.



K–12 Education Learning Spaces	<p>Learning Spaces</p> <p>Schools are permitted to return to a classroom learning environment model that best meets the needs of our learners and learning activities. QMS will continue to implement strategies to help create space between people and to support students and staff using a trauma-informed approach. This approach acknowledges current coping strategies and assists children, youth and adults through supportive relationships and creative opportunities (BC Ministry of Education, Trauma-Informed Practice)</p> <p><i>Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.</i></p> <p>However, there are a number of strategies that QMS will implement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education in the classroom will be reinforced to support students in respecting each other’s personal space.• Available space will be used to spread people out when needed. This includes staggered start/departure times, lunch times and maximizing the use of indoor and outdoor travel routes on our 30-acre campus during transition times.• Educators will continue to be encouraged to take students outside more often, where and when possible. <p>School Gatherings</p> <p>On March 10, 2022, the Provincial Health Officer announced the Gathering and Events Order requiring proof of vaccination for certain community-led gatherings and events would be lifted end of day on April 7, 2022.</p> <p>While that Order is in place, indoor school extracurricular and social gatherings and events that bring together members of the school community beyond staff, students and necessary volunteers (e.g., an arts club performance, community fair, etc.), or that occur between schools (e.g., a music festival, a sports game or tournament, etc.) should not exceed 50 people or 50% operating capacity (whichever is greater) and proof of vaccination requirements should not be implemented. When the Gatherings and Events Order requiring proof of vaccination for community-led gatherings and events is lifted, all school gatherings and events can return to 100% capacity. Source: Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings (March 10, 2022)</p> <p>Visitor & Teacher on Call Access</p> <p>Schools have been given permission to return to routine sign in/sign out practices for visitors. In the case of QMS, this includes signing in at one of our four administrative locations noted below.</p>
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	<p>The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice. This decision will be supported and respected by all members of the school community.</p> <p>Teachers on call (TOCs) are required to read and review the QMS COVID-19 Return to School Communicable Disease Prevention Plan prior to commencing a period of work at QMS. TOCs are asked to review the document to check for recent changes to policies and prevention measures if longer periods of time between scheduled coverage has passed.</p> <p>All visitors and TOCs are asked to sign in to one of four administrative areas located in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glide Hall Administrative Office• The Learning Centre (Junior School)• Rowantree and Spurgin Hall (Senior School)• Shirley Burr Equestrian Centre
Illness and Self-Assessment Protocols	<p>Daily Health Check</p> <p>Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school.</p> <p>Staff and other adults should complete a daily health check prior to entering the school.</p> <p>Parents/caregivers, students and staff can utilize the provincial K-12 Health Check app for daily assessment of symptoms or refer to the recently updated Daily Health Check checklist.</p> <p>If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they are asked not to enter the school.</p> <p>Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Illness</p> <p>Students, staff or other adults must stay home if they are required to self-isolate.</p> <p>Additional information on self-isolation requirements, self-isolation time lines and other support is available from the BC CDC.</p> <p>Students, staff or other adults are asked to stay at home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction and the spread of COVID-19 in schools.</p>





Personal Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school.• All students and staff will be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks, unwashed utensils, wind instruments).• Students can continue to use their lockers.
Student Transportation & Daily Drop Off	<p>For families that are dropping their children off at school, we will continue to employ the popular drop off, “Kiss and Go” drop off system. Information about drop off times will be shared with families at the onset of each school year.</p> <p>Buses</p> <p>QMS Buses used for transporting students will be cleaned and disinfected according to provincial guidance on cleaning and disinfecting including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once in a 24-hour period.• Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.• Empty garbage containers daily <p>The decision to wear a mask or face covering on the bus is a personal choice. This decision will be supported and respected by all members of the school community.</p> <p>Students should clean their hands before and after taking the bus. Windows will be open when possible and students will be spread out based on available space on board the bus.</p> <p>Ferries and Municipal Buses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hand hygiene should be practiced before and after trips.• Riders should follow any other safety guidance issued by the relevant transit authority.
Cleaning, Disinfecting & Ventilation	<p>Products and Procedures</p> <p>Water and disinfectant or common commercially available cleaning wipes can be used along with good physical cleaning practices to clean surfaces.</p> <p>The school will use commonly available disinfectants in accordance with recommended products listed by Health Canada.</p>



Curriculum, Program and Activities

Field Trips

Field trips are permitted according to existing policies and procedures. ***Though, according to current guidelines, QMS will avoid venue/locations that place additional requirements that could prevent a person from being able to participate.***

Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- Existing transportation bus, carpooling and public transportation guidance.
- Volunteers who are supporting school programming will be provided with safety training and will be required to follow QMS health and safety protocols.
- All trips will occur in alignment with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.
- Overnight trips will consider guidance from the [BCCDC](#) and [BC Camps Association](#).

Food and Culinary Programs

QMS can continue to include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. Teachers and students will continue to follow normal food safety measures and requirements.

This includes the implementation of cleaning and disinfecting measures and diligent hand hygiene.

Fundraisers

Schools can continue to offer fundraisers that can be implemented in line with the guidelines outlined in this document.

If the fundraisers involve the sale of food items, they should also align with the [Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools](#).

Kindergarten

QMS will include information about communicable disease prevention measures that will be in place as part of communications to students and their families prior to school start. Additionally:

- Parents/caregivers must follow guidelines for visitors.
- Provide opportunities for Kindergarten students to learn and practice respecting personal space, recognizing they are unlikely to be able to do this at all times.
- Gently remind students of the expectations throughout the day and encourage students to kindly support one another.
- Frequently-touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) or at all (e.g. sand, foam, playdough, etc.) **can be used**, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.
- Carpets and rugs (e.g. for circle time activities) can also be used.

Music Programs

- Students and staff may choose to wear masks, face shields or other personal protective equipment; this decision will be supported and respected by all members of our school community.
- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after music equipment use.
- Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses
- QMS will continue to follow the [Guidance for Music Classes in BC, COVID-19 and Pandemic Recovery \(September 1, 2021\)](#)

Physical Education and Outdoor Learning

Teachers will spread out students and staff within available space, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible. The following guidelines will also be followed:

- Staff are encouraged to move high-intensity physical activities outdoors whenever possible.

- Shared equipment can be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document.
- Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball), as well as proper respiratory etiquette.
- Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

School Sports

Inter and intra school sports can continue in alignment with the guidance within this document and the following:

- Capacity will follow that outlined within the School Gatherings and Events section.
- Sport activities should be held outside whenever possible.
- See the Visitor section for more information on protocols for spectators.
- See the [Return to School Sports Plan from BC School Sports](#) for additional information.

Playgrounds

There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments.

- This includes sand, water and other outdoor equipment. Playgrounds are a safe environment.
- QMS will Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play and recesses.

Theatre, Film and Dance

Students and staff will be spread out within available space, and outdoor activities and programs will be encouraged, as much as possible.

Additionally:

- Shared equipment such as set pieces, props, cameras etc. should be cleaned and disinfected and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene. For more guidance please visit the [Association of BC Drama Educators \(ABCDE\) website](#).



	<p>Work Experience</p> <p>Students can still engage in work placements in accordance with guidelines from the Provincial Health Office and WorkSafeBC guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For current and any new placements, standards in the ministry Work Experience Program Guide must be followed. • QMS will assess and determine if it is safe for their students to continue with work placements or to begin new placements, considering Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC guidance regarding COVID-19. <p>Co-Curricular Activities</p> <p>Co-curricular activities and special interest clubs can occur in alignment with the guidelines in this document.</p>
<p>International and Boarded Students</p>	<p>All international students arriving in, or returning to, QMS are required to follow the guidelines of the Federal and Provincial Governments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QMS has a Boarding Program plan in place to support the safe arrival of our international students. Please contact Ander Monro, Deputy Head of School at amonro@qms.bc.ca for additional information. <p>Students are required to complete the federal ArriveCAN application prior to arrival in Canada.</p>
<p>Continuity of Learning Plan</p>	<p>Queen Margaret’s School’s <i>Purpose</i> is to <i>Prepare young trailblazers...no two journeys are the same</i>. This includes gaining lifelong learning skills, competencies and experiences, both inside and outside of school.</p> <p>Even during times of disruption, it is important that our students continue to have an opportunity to engage in meaningful learning opportunities. While QMS does not offer a remote online learning program, we are prepared with a hybrid approach to learning that will allow for students to access learning material and classroom instruction from home, should we face a future disruption to in-class instruction.</p> <p>Instructional Continuity</p> <p>Taking a hybrid approach to learning is intended to ensure continuity of education and ensure that all students can meet their targeted learning outcomes to reach their full potential during times when we are unable to gather as a learning community at School.</p>



	<p>All classroom teachers, K–12, will ensure regular instructional practice using a digital programming model that blends online with in-class learning to prepare students for the possibility of future disruptions to learning.</p> <p>Digital Learning Management Platforms:</p> <p>Grades K–4: Seesaw</p> <p>Grades 5–7: Microsoft Teams</p> <p>Grades 8–12: Microsoft Teams</p> <p>When needed, Teachers will provide information to support continuity of learning to QMS families when students are unable to attend school in-person.</p> <p>If families would like more information about our learning management platforms, they are encouraged to reach out to their child(ren)’s Junior School Homeroom teacher or Senior School classroom teachers.</p> <p>Please note that Zoom may be used as a communication tool with students and their families in the event that an entire class is learning from the same modality. <i>Teachers are not currently able to teach their classes at school while providing livestreamed instruction to students at home simultaneously.</i></p> <p>Individual students who are unable to attend school in-person, will be provided with sufficient access to learning material to provide continuity of learning until a time when they can safely return school.</p>
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Resources:

[BC Ministry of Education \(March 10, 2022\) Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)

[BC CDC \(March 10, 2022\) Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)

[WorkSafeBC \(June, 2021\) Communicable Disease Prevention: A Guide for Employers](#)

Trauma-Informed Practices:

[BC Ministry of Education \(2019\) Compassionate Learning Communities Trauma-Informed Practice Framework](#)

[BC Ministry of Education \(2019\) Trauma-Informed Practice: Introduction and Framework](#)

[BC Government \(2017\) Trauma-Informed Practice Resources \(TIP\)](#)