

<b>Paradis International College</b>	<b>Doc. Ref. :</b>
	<b>Date of last review: 2024</b>
	<b>Date of the next review: 2026</b>
<b>COVID – 19 or PANDEMIC RESPONSE POLICY</b>	

**Disclaimer**

The information contained in this document has been prepared exclusively for the internal use of Paradis International College. Since this document is confidential and proprietary to Paradis International College, third parties are not entitled to rely on it in any way. The present document has been issued in English.

	<b>AUTHORS</b>	<b>APPROVED BY</b>
<b>Name</b>	DUMITRASCU GABRIELA ELENA	ALBU OANA
<b>Title</b>	School Doctor	Director of College

*Paradis International College recognizes the responsibility to develop, support and apply the necessary measures in the event of a declared health crisis at a local/national or global level ensuring that legislation and health safety are respected in order to continue the educational process*

## **I. FACTS ABOUT COVID-19**

### **What is COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2, linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold, 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease.

### **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

Children and adolescents will often have no, or only mild symptoms similar to a cold. The most common symptoms are fever, dry cough and/or fatigue. Other symptoms can include sore throat, runny nose, sneezing and/or muscle aches.

These symptoms are similar to seasonal flu (influenza), which is why it is important to confirm if someone has COVID-19 through testing.

### **Variants**

All viruses, including SARS-CoV-2, change over time. Most changes have little to no impact on the virus' properties.

### **How does COVID-19 spread?**

The virus spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with each other. The virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. Another person can then contract the virus when infectious particles that pass through the air are inhaled at short range (this is often called short-range aerosol or short-range airborne transmission) or if infectious particles come into direct contact with the eyes, nose, or mouth (droplet transmission).

The virus can also spread in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor settings. This is because aerosols can remain suspended in the air or travel farther than conversational distance (this is often called long-range aerosol or long-range airborne transmission).

People may also become infected when touching their eyes, nose or mouth after touching surfaces or objects that have been contaminated by the virus, although the risk of infection this way is considered very low.

### **Who is most at risk of severe illness and death?**

Older people, and people who are immunocompromised or have medical conditions such as diabetes, obesity and heart disease are more at risk of severe illness and death.

Children with certain risk factors including cancer, diabetes, certain disabilities, and obesity are at higher risk of severe illness and death, but this is rare in this age group.

### **How can the spread of COVID-19 be slowed down?**

As with other respiratory infections, public health measures are critical to prevent and slow the spread of infections. Public health measures are everyday preventive

actions that include:

- Staying home when feeling unwell or if you test positive for COVID-19;
- Covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing. Disposing of used tissue immediately in a closed bin;
- Wearing a mask when recommended;
- Washing hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitizer;
- Ensuring adequate ventilation (e.g. through opening windows and doors) and routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects;
- Keeping a distance where feasible;
- Keeping up-to-date on COVID-19 advisories from public health officials who may recommend additional or revised actions.

### **What is the prevention of severe forms and treatment for COVID-19?**

COVID-19 vaccines and medicines are being rolled-out globally to help prevent severe illness and death and many of the milder symptoms can be treated.

Vaccination of children, teachers and school staff should never be a prerequisite for in-person learning. Schools closure have led to devastating impacts on children and young peoples' learning, health and well-being.

## ***II. KEY MESSAGES & ACTIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND STAFF***

The following are key messages and actions which may not all be feasible in particular contexts. They should not be a barrier for children to receive in person learning.

### **Basic principles:**

The following basic principles can help keep students, teachers, and staff safer at school and help reduce the spread of COVID-19 as well as other diseases.

Recommendations for healthy schools are:

- Students, teachers and other staff with symptoms or feeling unwell should not come to school.
- Provide water, handwashing stations or alcohol-based hand run and follow standard cleaning procedures and encourage regular hand washing with clean water and soap, alcohol rub/hand sanitizer.
- Routinely cleaning school buildings including classrooms.
- Support adequate ventilation. (e.g. through opening of window/doors at regular intervals)
- Support and prioritize teachers and school personnel to receive COVID-19 vaccines once frontline health personnel and high-risk populations are vaccinated.

### **Know the latest facts**

Understand basic information about COVID-19 including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent or reduce transmission.

Stay informed through reputable sources. Children want and need factual information around COVID-19. Use child-friendly and age- appropriate resources available in your country/region to respond to children's questions about COVID-19 accurately and based on available scientific evidence.

**Children want and need factual information. We will use child-friendly and age- appropriate resources available in our country/region to respond to children's questions about COVID-19 or other Pandemic situation accurately and based on available scientific evidence.**

### **Masks**

Policies on the use of masks in schools should be guided by the latest evidence. Mask use in children should be considered in the context of broader adjustments of public health and social measures.

- No child should be denied access to education because of wearing a mask or the lack of a mask;
- The views of teachers and educators on the perceptions of risks and time burden required to ensure mask adherence by children should be considered, while ensuring that national policies are followed;
- Situations where wearing a mask can significantly interfere with the learning process and have a negative impact on critical school activities such as physical education, meal programmes, play time and sports, as well as learning, require special consideration;
- Specific instructions and supplies should be provided for the safe handling, storage and availability of masks;
- A sufficient supply of appropriate masks should be ensured for all school children; and
- Mask breaks should be implemented when children are expected to wear masks for a long duration [ideally outside or in a well-ventilated space]

### **Health education for preventing COVID-19 infection:**

Education on preventing COVID transmission through infection prevention and control such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, use of masks as part of daily activities and lessons and promote these practices in educational settings have to be integrated. All info will be provided in an honest, age-appropriate manner. A Mental Health/Psychosocial support will be provided.

Teachers' mental health and wellbeing will be supported, this includes access to professional development opportunities and regular informal communication with teachers.

### **CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND STAFF:**

1. Work with local authorities and health officials to ensure educational facilities are used in compliance with the law
2. Promote and demonstrate regular hand washing and positive hygiene behaviours and monitor their uptake.
  - Ensure soap and safe water is available at age-appropriate hand washing stations.
  - Encourage students and staff to clean hands.
  - Place hand sanitizers in toilets, classrooms, halls and near exits where possible.
3. Routinely clean school buildings, classrooms and water and sanitation facilities, particularly surfaces that are touched by many people.
4. Increase air flow and ventilation where climate allows (open windows, doors and use air conditioning where available ensuring the setting does not recycle air, etc.)
5. Post signs encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene practices
6. Follow guidance on mask use.

7. Establish a system for disposal of used disposable masks to reduce the risk of contaminated masks being disposed of in classrooms and playgrounds.
8. Ensure trash is removed daily and disposed of safely.
9. Get vaccinated when it is indicated.

### ***III. Key Messages and Actions PARENTS/CAREGIVERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS:***

#### **Know the latest facts**

Understand basic information about COVID-19, including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online. Recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. sore throat, blocked or runny nose, cough, fever, sneezing, muscle ache and fatigue, shortness of breath) in your child. Seek medical advice by first calling your health facility/provider and then take your child in, if advised. Remember that many children are asymptomatic and symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or fever can be similar to those of the flu, or the common cold. If your child is unwell, keep them home from school as advised by your health provider and in line with protocol and notify the school of your child's absence and symptoms. Where possible request reading and assignments so that students can continue learning while at home. Explain to your child what is happening in simple words and reassure them that they are safe.

#### **Keep children in school**

It's best to keep your child in school—unless a public health advisory or other relevant warning or official advice has been issued affecting your child or school. Help children cope with the stress. Children may respond to stress in different ways. Common responses include having difficulties sleeping, bedwetting, having pain in the stomach or head, and being anxious, withdrawn, angry, clingy or afraid to be left alone. Respond to children's reactions in a supportive way and explain to them that they are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Listen to their concerns and take time to comfort them and give them affection, reassure them they're safe and praise them frequently. If possible, create opportunities for children to play and relax. Keep regular routines and schedules as much as possible, especially before they go to sleep, or help create new ones in a new environment. Provide age-appropriate facts about what has happened, explain what is going on and give them clear examples on what they can do to help protect themselves and others from infection.

Share information about what could happen in a reassuring way. Be aware of your own stress levels and how they may impact on your children.

### **CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

Children rely on their parents to provide a sense of safety and security, particularly during difficult times. Check in with them about how they feel, be patient and understanding, support them with any transitions, and be attentive to changes in their behaviour and mood. Maintain communication with teachers to follow up on your child's wellbeing and learning.

1. Monitor your child's health and keep them home from school if they are unwell.
2. Teach and model good hygiene practices for your children.
  - o Wash your hands with soap and safe water frequently. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty.
  - o Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose.

3. Encourage your children to ask questions and express their feelings with you and their teachers. Remember that your child may have different reactions to stress; be patient and understanding.
4. Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding students to be considerate of one another.
5. Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts. (through parent-teacher committees, etc.)

#### ***IV. STUDENTS AND CHILDREN***

Children and young people should understand basic, age-appropriate information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including its symptoms, complications, how it is transmitted and how to prevent transmission. Stay informed about COVID-19 through reputable sources.

#### **CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS AND CHILDREN**

1. In a situation like this it is normal to feel sad, stressed, worried, confused, scared or angry. We are all adjusting to new ways of learning and interacting with others. Know that you are not alone, stay connected to loved ones. You can talk to someone you trust, like your parent or teacher, about your feelings. If things are getting out of control or are so overwhelming that you think you cannot deal with your daily routine, look for professional support. Take care of your physical and mental health and help others to do the same and talk to someone you trust, like your parent or teacher so that you can help keep yourself and your school safe and healthy.
  - o Ask questions, educate yourself and get information from reliable sources.
2. Protect yourself and others.
  - o Stay home if you have symptoms or are not feeling well. If you feel sick at school, tell a teacher. Tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver if you feel sick, and ask to stay home.
  - o If a face mask is required, follow the rules for wearing and disposing of masks.
  - o Wash your hands, always with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with hand sanitizer.
  - o Do not share cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others.
3. Be a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy.
  - o Share what you learn about preventing disease with your family and friends, especially with younger children
  - o Model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members
4. Treat everyone with kindness and respect; remember that the virus doesn't follow geographical boundaries, ethnicities, age or ability or gender.

A plan for safer school operations will include policies about:

- Establishing the modalities for carrying out teaching, training, evaluation activities
- Establishing procedures for wearing masks, protective equipment
- Establishing appropriate epidemiological circuits, entry-exit circuits
- Establishing the organization of classrooms/laboratories
- Establishing the organization of sanitary groups
- Establishing the organization of circuits in common spaces
- Establishing the organization/distribution of preschoolers/schoolchildren/teaching and non-teaching staff in the dining room
- Establishing the organization of the office
- Establishing the circuits in the sports halls/swimming pool
- Establishing the organization of activities in outdoor spaces/schoolyard
- Establishing the procedure for carrying out the epidemiological triage of preschoolers/schoolchildren in order to ensure/maintain epidemiological safety conditions in order to prevent/limit illnesses. The

methodology will also include the involvement of parents/guardians but also of the entire community at the school level.

- Establishing the procedure, methodology and responsibilities regarding cleaning, disinfection in the community as well as establishing the framework cleaning plan
- Establishing the procedure, methodology for isolating sick/contagious people in order to ensure safety conditions
- Establishing the procedure for monitoring school absences generated by illness/quarantine and the respective procedure for returning to the community in compliance with the legislation in force. Teacher will plan additional academic calendar changes, particularly in relation to breaks and exams.

Plan with local health authorities and school staff to update emergency contact lists (mental health professionals and child protection authorities)

**ANY PLAN WILL BE DEVELOPED AND UPDATED ACCORDING TO THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL CONTEXT THAT REQUIRES IT!**

---