

Guidance for Communicable Disease Management

January 2026

First Steps Preschool is licensed by the Fraser Health Authority. All health and safety guidelines are created to align with the rules, regulations, and recommendations from the BC Centre for Disease Control, Provincial Health Authority, and Fraser Health Authority. All licensed child care facilities in our province are provided the same guidelines and recommendations.

Up-to-date information can be found on the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) website regarding management for communicable disease for children.

Daily Health Check (Health Awareness)

Parents must regularly check to ensure their child is not experiencing any symptoms of illness **prior to attending preschool** to prevent spread of all communicable diseases. If your child is sick or feeling unwell, please keep them at home.

Should a child develop symptoms of illness and is unable to participate in regular activities while attending preschool, a parent/caregiver will be contacted and the child will be encouraged to go home until their symptoms have improved. Appropriate infection control precautions will be taken while the child is preparing to leave, including hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfecting of surfaces soiled with bodily fluids. A child may be given a mask if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms.

What to Do When Sick

Children who are exhibiting symptoms of illness should stay home until a minimum of 48-hours have passed since their last symptom has resolved.

If they are experiencing a fever, their fever must be **resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication** (e.g., acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil)). Children should be well enough to participate in normal activities before returning to preschool.

Children can attend preschool if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies). **If you have given your child any medication before they attend preschool, please let the teachers know.** Should a medical emergency occur while your child is under our care, it is important we know what medications a child has been administered.

If you are unsure or concerned about your child's symptoms, connect with your health care provider, call 8-1-1.

Non-medical Masks & Face Coverings (Masks)

Children may wear a non-medical mask or face covering based on personal or family choice. Please communicate your choice to our staff so we can support your child.

Hand Hygiene

All children will be taught proper hand hygiene at preschool. Hand washing will be done with liquid soap, for a minimum of 20 seconds, on all parts of the hands and fingers. Hands will be rinsed with water and dried with disposable paper towels.

Hand sanitizer will only be used when soap and water are not available and will be used under direct adult supervision. Hand sanitizer products will be stored safely away from children.

Children will wash hands upon arrival, before and after eating, and after using the toilet. We also ask children to wash hands after using a tissue, coughing, sneezing, and when hands are visibly dirty.

Respiratory Etiquette

Children will be taught and encouraged to sneeze or cough into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Tissues will be thrown away and the child will immediately wash their hands. We will use age-appropriate learning cues to reinforce this healthy habit such as “catch your cough/sneeze” or “use your cough/sneeze pocket.”

Ventilation & Air Exchange

Good indoor air quality is a priority for our classroom. Our facility is equipped with a rooftop HVAC system that is maintained regularly. When possible, our windows will be opened to allow fresh air to circulate.

Cleaning & Disinfection

Regular cleaning and disinfecting can help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Cleaning frequently touched surfaces will occur in line with our regular practices and when toys, surfaces, and high-touch areas are visibly dirty.

Due to the frequency of disinfecting and sanitizing, any items that enter the preschool may be at risk of damage (wear/tear/colour degradation), for which First Steps is not responsible.

Visitors

Parents, caregivers, health-care providers, volunteers, and other non-staff adults are welcome to enter the preschool by invitation of staff. **Please do not visit the preschool if you have symptom of illness.**

Communicable Disease Management

Most communicable diseases experienced by children and staff within child care settings may be managed by the individual/family and through routine preventive measures, such as staying home from child care until well enough to participate in regular activities.

Resources are available to support management of routine communicable diseases, including [HealthLinkBC](#) and the BC [Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases](#).

First Steps Preschool is not required to close unless directed to do so by public health. We may use our discretion to close if we have operational or business reasons. For instance, if First Steps is experiencing illness amongst staff and is unable to maintain staff-to-child ratios as required under the [Child Care Licensing Regulations](#) we may need to close for operational reasons. Any closure will be communicated to families by email and/or website posting.