# J. Alfred Laird Elementary School

**Safety Procedures for School Reopening**



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| **PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE** |
| Dear parents, guardians, staff and students,  As we continue to work our way through the challenges that COVID 19 has presented all of us, please know that the Laird team is very excited to welcome students back to school full time this September. Our time apart in Spring 2020 reinforced for all of us that we are better together and highlighted the vital aspects that in-class instruction offers both our students and our entire community.    The Laird team and district staff have been working diligently to ensure that our return-to-school plan follows the BCCDC *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings*. (Please note that if you are exploring B.C. Ministry of Education documents, grade 4-7 schools are considered elementary schools within the health and safety guidelines, so J. Alfred Laird Elementary School will follow the recommendations specified for elementary schools).    Ensuring the success of our restart plan is a shared responsibility. Return-to-school 2020 will require everyone involved to work cooperatively and collaboratively, and to think differently about what school will look like. Each of us will need to do our part to follow the policies and procedures that have been put in place, so that all staff and students can feel safe and confident in returning to school. You can support this work by reviewing this plan with your child/children prior to the first day of school.  Our main focus in the first days of school will be to orient students and staff to the new guidelines and practices; support student health and wellbeing; help students adjust to the rhythms of the school day; and build strong relationships while looking to the future with confidence. We will be kind and supportive of each other as we all learn new ways to be together at school.    We hope that the following information will answer most questions regarding what our new school year will look like.  Please feel free to contact the school with any additional questions or concerns you may have. We care about our students and their families, and are working to put processes in place to ensure the safety of everyone, as well as to provide a rich and engaging school experience. As the school year proceeds, we will adjust our planning as needed in order to best meet the needs of staff and students and take into account new information that comes our way. Thank you all for your support.    Kind regards,  Terri Hayes  Principal, J Alfred Laird Elementary School |
| **DAILY SCREENING FOR ILLNESS** |
| Parents are asked to monitor their children daily for cold or flu symptoms and not to send students to school if they are sick. People who are sick will not be allowed at school. If a child has a fever, a new cough or has difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1. Please use the *Daily Health Checklist* attached to this document for a list of symptoms that should be checked daily, prior to leaving for school.    School staff will also assess themselves daily for cold and flu symptoms prior to entering the school.  Anyone experiencing symptoms of illness should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, and their symptoms have resolved. |
| **HYGIENE ROUTINES** |
| All staff and students will be expected to follow proper hand washing and respiratory etiquette.    All of our classrooms have sinks and soap available to students. Students will be asked to wash their hands frequently. Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is expected, especially after:   * blowing your nose; * coughing or sneezing; * before and after going to the washroom; * transitioning between classrooms; * entering and before exiting the school; * before eating or preparing food.   Washing hands with soap and water is the preferable method, wherever possible. Hand sanitizer will be available at entrances and in rooms that don’t have a sink. We are well-stocked.    Respiratory etiquette includes:   * coughing or sneezing into your elbow, or a tissue; * refraining from touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands; * refraining from sharing any food, drinks or unwashed utensils.   In order to minimize opportunities for virus transmission, students will not be able to use the office telephone. However, if they need to contact you, they are welcome to come to the school office and we will contact you on their behalf. Please remember that student cellphones are not permitted to be used on the school bus, within the school building or on school grounds.    Students may wear a non-medical mask when interacting with those outside of their cohort group, and when social distancing is not possible. School staff will be modeling this practice throughout the school. Staff and students may also choose to wear a mask, or a face shield within their classroom or learning group if that is their personal preference. Please refer to the “learning groups” section for more information on cohort structures and recommendations around masks in schools and on buses. |
| **SCHOOL ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE** |
| Prior to the first day of school, teachers will contact families to inform them of their child’s class and cohort.  This will allow students to go directly to their designated classroom and meet their teacher at the beginning of the day. Students are expected to enter and exit the school through their classroom door at all times.    In order to prevent unnecessary congestion and physical contact, we have 3 designated drop-off and pick-up zones for students being transported to school by parents. In order to avoid confusion, please ensure that you consistently use your child’s designated pick-up/drop-off zone. If you have more than one child attending J. Alfred Laird, please choose the pick-up zone applicable to your youngest child.     |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Classroom Teacher** | **Pick-up/Drop-off Zone** | | Daniele/Tomalty, Curry, LeBourdais | Mt. Nelson Athletic Park parking lot | | Armitage, Green, Sherk/Woodworth | Slope leading to J. A. Laird parking lot | | Wilson, Dainard, Pemberton | JALES crosswalk (Fence along 13th Ave.) |     Families are asked to ensure that their child arrives at school between 8:40 and 8:50 a.m. Students should go directly to their classroom entrance upon arrival. Students are encouraged to maintain physical distance and avoid physical contact while waiting to enter the school. Your child’s teacher or another staff member will greet him/her at the outside classroom door. Students will put away their personal belongings and then wash hands at their classroom sink. Staff will instruct children on proper handwashing procedures. After proper hand hygiene is complete, your child will move to his/her desk.    At the end of the day, all students will be dismissed through their classroom’s exterior door. You are encouraged to pick up your child promptly at 3:10 p.m. If you are delayed for any reason, please call the school, and we will arrange for your child to wait in the office until you arrive. Students who are walking home are encouraged to leave school grounds as soon as they are dismissed. Students waiting for the school bus will be asked to meet immediately at their designated bus waiting zone. After-school supervisors will remind bus students to maintain social distance, and avoid physical contact while waiting for the bus.    If you, or another adult, are accompanying your child to school, or picking up after school, we ask that you maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others outside your family. Please remain outside of the school building during drop-off and pick-up. If you would like to meet with a staff member, please call the school at 250-342-6232 to make an appointment. |
| **LEARNING GROUPS** |
| At J. Alfred Laird, there will be 5 cohorts, each composed of up to 60 people, (two classes) including students and staff.  This will reduce the number of interactions an individual has in a day, help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and assist with contact tracing should there be an outbreak.  **Interacting within Cohorts**    Within cohorts, minimal physical contact will be encouraged through maintaining the greatest possible distance within classes. This will be done through assigned seating and thoughtful instructional design.  Personal belongings will be stored in assigned spaces and whenever possible, learning tools, games, and supplies such as pencils, erasers, scissors, etc. will be stored in student desks. Students will be asked not to share learning supplies. Any shared items, including laptops, will be sanitized after each use.    There will be no sharing of food or drinks. **Please do not send snacks or party treats**. Our breakfast and healthy lunch programs are being reviewed to ensure that they comply with revised BC food safety guidelines.    Cohorts will remain intact during recess and lunch breaks. Students will eat at their desk in their classroom, and desks will be cleaned both before and after eating. Cohorts will be assigned designated areas to play each day. The school’s schedule has been adjusted to accommodate separate breaks for each cohort. Teachers will provide you with your child’s schedule.    Cohort composition may be changed at the start of a new term in the school year. Outside of that, composition will not change except where required to support optimal school functioning.    Students will be trained in, and provided with opportunities to use digital technologies early in the school year. This will ensure that, if they are unable to attend in-class instruction, they will know how to access virtual assignments and instruction.   Should a student or staff member become ill, continuity of learning for students will be supported in any number of ways. Teachers may post assignments and activities on their class websites, connect by phone or email, or use Microsoft Teams to provide group instruction/contact.    **Specialty Classes**    Music classes, physical education, and outdoor education will continue to occur with modifications to minimize physical contact.  The gymnasium will be used throughout the school day to integrate physical breaks and physical literacy within the limitations of the district plan. No more than one class in a learning group will occupy the gym space at the same time. No outside public performances or inter-school events will be held. Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected, and students will be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music and physical education classes.    The Hockey Skills Academy will be postponed, with an anticipated January start-up, in order to develop a comprehensive safety plan with BC Hockey and to ensure that the program can be offered safely in coordination with our community partners.    **Interacting with other Cohorts**    Anyone outside of a cohort must practice physical distancing when interacting with the cohort. For example, itinerant staff who work with multiple cohorts (ie: music, library, learning services, etc.) must maintain physical distance from students and other staff and use a mask when it is not possible to do so.    Use of non-medical facemasks is encouraged in high traffic areas of the school such as hallways where cohorts may mix.  Each staff member and student will be offered two non-medical facemasks that they may choose to wear within their classroom or cohort.    Directional signs will be used in hallways to control the flow of traffic. Our breaks (recess and lunch) will be staggered to minimize congestion in the hallways and washrooms.  Washrooms will be limited to one occupant at a time, with floor markings indicating where to stand while waiting for the washroom. Our three grade 6/7 classes will use the washrooms in their hallway, while other classes will use the main student washrooms.  There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper-based educational resources to students.    **School Gatherings**    Any necessary school gatherings will occur within the cohort.  Virtual alternatives will be used for larger gatherings and assemblies.    **Extra-Curricular Activities**    Extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs will not occur at this time.  This will be re-evaluated in mid-fall 2020.    Inter-school events including competitions, tournaments, and festivals, will not occur at this time. This will be re-evaluated in mid-fall 2020.    **Field Trip Activities**  Curricular field trips that involve busing will not run at this time.  We will re-evaluate this at the mid-fall 2020.  Walking curricular field trips may occur within cohorts. Parent volunteers, presenters, or guests will be required to follow safety procedures outlined by the principal. |
| **IF A STUDENT/STAFF MEMBER SHOWS SYMPTOMS** |
| If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school, they will exit the school via their classroom’s exterior door and be taken to an isolation room. We will be using the portable classroom and our empty classroom as potential isolation rooms. Students will be supervised until parents arrive to pick them up.  Parents or the designated alternate will be called by the school to make arrangements for pick up. The School Medical Health Officer and School District 6 Senior Administration will be advised. The isolation room will be sanitized prior to re-use.    School staff are not qualified to screen students or staff for symptoms, check temperatures, or conduct COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals. If your child has flu-like symptoms, please contact 8-1-1 or your family doctor and follow their advice. COVID-19 screening is available locally in Invermere. Sick students or staff should not return to school until they are symptom-free and have been cleared to do so by a public health official.    If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, we will follow all instructions and protocols provided by Interior Health. The school will be in contact with the School Medical Health Officer and our Rocky Mountain SD6 Health and Safety Officer in the event that there are multiple staff members and/or students presenting with flu-like symptoms. |
| **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL** |
| Parents, caregivers, health-care providers, volunteers and other non-staff adults (e.g. visitors) entering the school will be limited to those supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and well-being. The following protocols will be followed:     * All visitors must schedule an appointment with the school office (250-342-6232); * All visitors must enter through the front door and immediately report to the office upon arriving at the school; * All visitors are required to wear a non-medical mask at all times while in the school; * All visitors should confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering the school building; * Visitors are encouraged to use automatic door openers whenever possible (pressing the switch with your elbow); * All visitors will be required to wash or sanitize their hands upon entry; * All visitors will be escorted to their designated area and will be asked to refrain from moving around the school unnecessarily; * Schools will keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors who enter the school. |
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| **TRANSPORTATION** |
| **Student Transportation on Buses**   * All students must clean their hands before they leave home to take the bus, when they leave school prior to taking the bus, and when they get home. * Students in all grades may wear masks on the bus if they prefer; **masks are required** for students in grades 4 and up while riding the school bus. * Students will be assigned seats. Family members and school cohorts will be required to sit together whenever possible. Seating arrangements will be altered whenever necessary to support student health & safety. * Students will load the bus back to front and unload front to back whenever possible. * Guest riders will not be permitted to utilize school bus transportation services until further notice. Bus passes for guest riders will not be issued at schools for students wishing to use the bus intermittently. * Buses will be sanitized each time a school bus is used (regular bus routes and field trips). * Bus drivers will clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips. * Bus drivers are required to wear a re-usable non-medical mask when loading or unloading students or when physical distance cannot be maintained in the course of their duties. * Up-to-date student passenger lists will be maintained for each school bus. * All adults riding or entering a bus will be required to wear a face mask. Adults who do not have a mask will be provided with one. |
| **SCHOOL MAINTENANCE** |
| Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID- 19 from contaminated objects and surfaces.  Rocky Mountain School District No. 6 has implemented a rigourous cleaning and disinfection protocol which includes, but is not limited to:   * General cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted at least once daily when facilities are in operation; * Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected twice daily when facilities are in operation (once at mid-day and thoroughly at the end of the day); * Garbage cans will continue to be emptied daily; * The school district will only use approved disinfection products listed on Health Canada’s list of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus (COVID-19). * In addition to daily custodial services, all staff will be responsible for supporting the disinfecting of touchpoints in their workspace or in shared workplaces such as photocopy rooms. Disinfection products will be provided. |

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| **Daily Health Checklist** | | | |
| 1. Symptoms of  Illness | Does your child have any of the following symptoms? | CIRCLE ONE | |
|  | Fever | YES | NO |
| Chills | YES | NO |
| Cough or worsening of chronic cough | YES | NO |
| Shortness of breath | YES | NO |
| Sore throat | YES | NO |
| Runny nose | YES | NO |
| Loss of sense of smell or taste | YES | NO |
| Headache | YES | NO |
| Fatigue | YES | NO |
| Diarrhea | YES | NO |
| Loss of appetite | YES | NO |
| Nausea and vomiting | YES | NO |
| Muscle aches | YES | NO |
| Conjunctivitis (pinkeye) | YES | NO |
| Dizziness, confusion | YES | NO |
| Abdominal pain | YES | NO |
| Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes | YES | NO |
| 2. International  Travel | Have you or anyone in your household returned from  travel outside Canada in the last 14 days? | YES | NO |
| 3. Confirmed Contact | Are you or is anyone in your household confirmed  to have COVI0-19 ? | YES | NO |

If you answered "YES" to any of the questions and the symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies) your child should NOT come to school.

If they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, contact a health--care provider for further assessment. This includes 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner.

If you answered "YES" to questions 2 or 3, use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en) to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19.

