



Comox Valley Schools StrongStart: September 2021

This is a living document and is subject to change.

“StrongStart BC programs provide rich learning environments designed for early learning development – language, physical, cognitive, social and emotional. Qualified early childhood educators lead learning activities where children find opportunities to make friends and interact with others of similar ages.” – BC Ministry of Education

We are aware that our StrongStart programs are an integral part of our school communities and provide valuable support to parents and our youngest learners. The Ministry of Education is encouraging school districts to continue this important programming as fully as possible. We are pleased to be able to welcome families in a more fulsome way into our schools this year. With new recommendations from the Ministry we are opening our StrongStarts to more families this year. Masks will continue to be required for all adults in the StrongStart centre, and in the school common areas (gym, hallways, etc.) and handwashing will remain an important Health and Safety measure throughout a family's visit to StrongStart. On-line registration for programs is encouraged to ensure adequate preparation is made for families and is available at: <https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/strongstart/>

In order to more easily facilitate contact tracing we recommend that families choose one program to attend. Programs will run roughly two hours and times may vary depending on site considerations. Fridays will be “Fresh Air Fridays” and no booking required. *See your StrongStart FaceBook page for details each week.*

According to the current public health guidelines for [K-12 schools and child care settings](#), Strong Start BC programs can be operated safely by following recommended preventative measures such as requiring participants and staff to stay home when sick, respecting personal space with distancing where possible, practicing hand hygiene and continuing with daily enhanced cleaning protocols. Our plan does this as the following measures will be in place:

No Drop-Ins – Pre-Registration will be required through **Microsoft Bookings**. A family will sign up for a maximum of 2 days per week, <https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/strongstart/>.

**Please note Traveling StrongStart has slightly different options. Please contact the facilitator to inquire about extra days (phylis.edgar@sd71.bc.ca)

Information for registration will be posted on the School District website, on the doors of the centres, as well as on each centre's Facebook page. Capacity per room will be determined by the site space and at the discretion of the principal and SS facilitator.

INDOOR PROCEDURES

1. Families will wait at clearly marked designated outside of the building. They will line up and wait for the SS facilitator to greet and guide them to the SS Centre. The lineup times will be staggered from the school's drop-off times to ensure physical distancing is possible. Adults will need to wear a "visitors" badge, available at the school upon entry.
2. For contact tracing, visiting families will sign in at the centre. SS Facilitators will ask participants if any symptoms, any travel or contact with people with Covid-19. They will reference the Health Check Form and confirm that they have completed the Daily Health Check.
3. The Health Check form will have been completed before entry to each session. This can be found on both the district and StrongStart websites. <https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/strongstart/>
4. With SS Centres with no direct exterior door, facilitators will lead the participants to the SS Room following the directional signage in the school. When walking through the school hallways, and while in the centre, adult or caregivers will be required to wear a mask. Masking for young children is left up to family preference.
5. Before entering the classroom there will be a handwashing/sanitizing station either in the hallway or entrance to the classroom. With most centres having a sink, families can walk directly to the sink to wash hands, waiting on designated spots.
6. An important feature of StrongStart is providing the opportunity for young children to eat with others. This year, snacks for children will be provided in individual portions at a designated table, and adults are expected to respect personal space when removing masks to drink beverages. These measures in combination with handwashing will make snack a safe and enjoyable experience at StrongStart.

You can find the school district re-entry plan for 2021-22 here: [SD71 COVID Protocol](#)

As COVID continues to evolve we will make necessary adjustments to these guidelines. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We look forward to welcoming you back to StrongStart.

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