



---

## Group ABA Children's Society Communicable Disease Planning



Table of Contents

<u>Introduction and Purpose</u>	<u>Page 3</u>
<u>Core Planning Team</u>	<u>Page 3</u>
<u>Stakeholder Advisory Team</u>	<u>Page 5</u>
<u>Health and Safety Team</u>	<u>Page 5</u>
<u>Privacy</u>	<u>Page 6</u>
<u>Communication</u>	<u>Page 6</u>
<u>Childcare</u>	<u>Page 8</u>
<u>Procedures for Online Services</u>	<u>Page 9</u>
<u>Procedures for Home or Community Services</u>	<u>Page 9</u>
<u>Procedures for Centre Based Services</u>	<u>Page 9</u>
<u>Training for Staff</u>	<u>Page 9</u>
<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Page 10</u>
<u>Field Trips</u>	<u>Page 10</u>
<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Page 10</u>
<u>HR</u>	<u>Page 10</u>
<u>Financials</u>	<u>Page 10</u>

## Introduction and Purpose

Planning for educational continuity is the prime purpose for the staff at Fawkes Academy and GABA. There are additional considerations around this emergency response, to be formally outlined here in addition to the planning for educational continuity.

Procedures for safe educational programs are embedded throughout this planning document. These plans are intended for School Initiated Activities. **All Parent Initiated Activities will be the parent's responsibility to ensure the safety of their child. Parent Initiated Activities should receive follow up from parents who may use these procedures** outlined here as a guide if they fit the context of the parent-initiated activity.

Group ABA Children's Society, the authority for both Fawkes and GABA, has dedicated itself to educational services and therapy for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders and other complex developmental disabilities/disorders. The methodology for providing these services to the students or clients enrolled in Group ABA Children's Society programs will be those that have been empirically proven, and those that are considered best practices from the professionals employed or contracted to the programs. Group ABA Children's Society closely follows the values of its founder, Dr Suzanne Jacobsen, as the guiding principles of the organization.

- Every child is unique, every child is valued, and every child can learn.
- Children who are unique learners should not be limited in the educational services they can access by their socio-economic status.
- Educational services should be individualized for unique learners and should be offered in multiple environments.

For the purposes of planning for any communicable disease response and educational continuity of students the guiding principles set forth by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The Ministry of Education and Child Care is committed to:

- Ensuring a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, and employees
- Providing services needed to support children of our essential workers
- Supporting vulnerable students who may need special assistance
- Providing continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

The services offered by Group ABA Children's Society programs will follow the directives of the public health officer. All planning and procedures put in place should be done through a trauma informed lens.

## Core Planning Team

The core planning team will be comprised of Fawkes Academy administration members in charge of collecting information, planning for responses and next steps, and creating a general framework for plans. The core planning team will be in touch daily to go over how the last 24 hours have transpired in any communicable disease response in the first two weeks of the event or until there has been a resolution to the exposure or outbreak. The core planning team will meet less often if an outbreak continues but will still communicate as events develop or once per week, whichever is more frequent. The core planning team will meet once per year to review the suggested changes to these guidelines

from the Health and Safety Committee and will review membership on the team. The core planning team and their responsibilities are as follows:

**Joseph Carpenter**, Managing Director of ABA Learning Centre

Joseph will be responsible for coordinating responses and planning between Group ABA Children's Society and ABA Learning Centre.

**John McGregor**, Executive Director of Group ABA Children's Society

John will be responsible for communication with the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Board of Group ABA Children's Society. John's role will be to ensure the financial resources available to Group ABA Children's Society are maximized and utilized in the most efficient way to provide continuity of education, staff retention, and staff wellness. John will be the final decision maker for Group ABA Children's Society in response to any communicable disease response where explicit direction has not come from the local health authority, Provincial Health Officer, Health and Safety Committee, or the Ministry of Education and Child Care, in coordination with Joseph Carpenter. John will attend all FISA information sessions his schedule allows for to ensure that Ministry of Education and Child Care directives are being followed within Fawkes Academy for more serious and far-reaching communicable disease situations.

**Leslie Van Dusen**, Principal of Fawkes Academy and Fawkes Academy DL

Leslie will be responsible for communication with staff working in Fawkes Academy programs and parents of students of Fawkes Academy programs. Leslie's role will be to ensure that continuity of learning is occurring for all students through any communicable disease event, and that students who are most vulnerable receive priority for in person learning or other resources. Leslie will attend all FISA information sessions her schedule allows for and continue to monitor the Ministry of Education and Child Care's DM Bulletins to ensure that the Ministry's directives are being followed within Fawkes Academy and that this plan is being updated with the most recent information.

**Dennis Tal**, Human Resources Manager and Health and Safety Committee Liaison

Dennis will be responsible for communication with the WCB of BC. Dennis will ensure that Health and Safety Committee meetings are occurring regularly, that all members of the committee are well informed about the latest information from WCB, the CDC, and the Ministries of Health, Education, and Children and Family Development, and that a fair procedure is followed in any decisions making process. Dennis will ensure that employee representation has a very strong voice in health and safety procedures. Dennis will ensure that staff training and orientation is developed so that all employees are aware of the protocols in place. Dennis will be responsible for ensuring the Health and Safety Committee creates visuals for the website, doors, and within buildings that comply with WCB, CDC, Public Health, and Ministry of Education and Child Care requirements and assist in reinforcing the policies in place should situations escalate to that level. Dennis will be responsible for developing staff surveys to obtain staff preferences. Dennis will be responsible for ensuring that the Health and Safety Committee has reviewed this document yearly to advise John and Leslie of any changes that should be made.

**Amanda Marsden**, Vice Principal of Fawkes Academy

Amanda will be responsible for hearing staff concerns and bringing them to administration. Amanda will be responsible for direct communication in person with staff, students, and parents if there is a communicable disease issue at one of the sites. Amanda will be the primary liaison with the PAC to ensure parent voices are being heard through any communicable disease response.

**Lynn Service**, Vice Principal of Fawkes Academy DL

Lynn will be responsible for hearing staff concerns and bringing them to administration. Lynn will be responsible for direct communication in person with staff, students, and parents if there is a communicable disease issue at the site.

**Stakeholder Advisory Team**

The responsibilities for the stakeholder advisory team are to review potential plans and provide input from their stakeholder groups. The stakeholder advisory team will be met with bi-weekly in the beginning of any severe communicable disease situation, any time there is a change in direction from the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Ministry of Health, Local Health Authority, or Provincial Health Officer that potentially impacts continuity of education for students, or when responses or changes are required in actions taken in response to a communicable disease, and monthly thereafter until the reduction in educational capacity has abated. The Stakeholder Advisory Team will only need to be met with if there is a potential reduction in learning opportunities as a result of a communicable disease.

The stakeholder advisory team consists of:

**Amanda Lockitch**, Chair of the Parent Advisory Committee, Parent Representative

**Lani Ng**, Board Chair, Board Representative

**Amanda Marsden**, Teacher Representative

**Joseph Carpenter**, Behaviour Consultant Representative

**Health and Safety Team**

The responsibilities for the health and safety team are to regularly review all health and safety issues including communicable disease plans, keep apprised of changes in guidelines from WCB, Ministry of Education and Child Care, or the BC CDC, and to develop company wide guidelines and policies to be reviewed by the Principal and Executive Director that can then be approved to go to the Board for final approval. All Health and Safety meeting notes will be uploaded to the secure server and placed in the Health and Safety binder at each location so that all staff have access to the notes. The members of the Health and Safety Team are:

**Anna DiFilippo**, Co-Chair Employee Representative

**Edil Issa**, Employee Representative

**Karl McLoughlin**, Co-Chair Employer Representative

**Raman Kainth**, Employee Representative

**Kimberly Sarmiento, Employee Representative**

### **Privacy**

Ensuring that privacy is upheld is of utmost importance to Group ABA Children's Society staff. Everyone involved in a Group ABA Children's Society program must follow the privacy policy already in force and abide by their confidentiality agreements. It is of utmost importance that medical information and other sensitive information regarding students and staff is kept confidential. In the event that communication needs to occur with the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Public Health Officers or Nurses, Social Workers, or Healthcare Professionals, the Personal Information Protection and Privacy policy will be followed.

All individuals using any online platform will sign a document stating that they are providing informed consent for use of the platform. If an individual is not able to give informed consent, their parent or guardian will be the person providing the informed consent. Fawkes Academy recognizes that without doing a full privacy impact assessment some information may be missing from the informed consent documentation created, but this will be a disclosure on all such documents.

Even though full privacy impact assessments may not be done for all platforms in extreme circumstances consideration will still be given to alternative platforms and privacy, namely the location of where data that is collected is kept and limiting such collection, will be an important part of this consideration process.

Currently the following technology platforms should be considered first prior to exploring other options as they have been vetted by either the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Focused Education, or the internal Privacy Officer at Fawkes Academy:

D2L Brightspace, Zoom (as long as recordings are turned off), Microsoft 365 Products, IXL, Foundations A-Z, RAZ-KIDS, BC Digital Classroom Collection, Open Parachute, Synced Tool, Seesaw and EDWIN.

### **Communications**

Communications in a communicable disease event need to be clear and concise, with an easy-to-understand division of labour for providing the communications, guidelines for communications, and pre planned responses to foreseeable possible events. All communications must be labeled as a for information or a "for action" communication. Communication responsibility as noted above.

There may be situations where the Provincial Health Officer, Local Health Authority, or Public Health make contact with school administration regarding a communicable disease event. Any directions given must be followed.

There may be situations where school administration become concerned about the level of communicable disease within the school. In such an event public health can be contacted for advice and further support.

There may be situations where staffing levels are not high enough due to communicable disease to keep a classroom or school open. In such an event at Fawkes Academy the administration will be first communicating to the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the local Medical Health Officer that

they are considering a **Functional Closure** and then will be following the protocols as advised by Ministry or Health Officer and communicating the functional closure to families, staff, and students.

The Public Health Officer may contact the school to initiate a **Public Health Closure** when concerned about excessive transmission of a communicable disease. The communications will be sent to families, staff and students as directed by Public Health.

The **Local Health Authority contacts** are:

For Students in **Richmond**: Chris Kwong, Public Health Nurse at 604-233-3165

For Students in **Burnaby**: Amrit Dhudwal, Public Health Nurse at [aamir.bharmal@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:aamir.bharmal@fraserhealth.ca)

For Students on **Vancouver Island**: Charlotte Brown, Public Health Nurse at 250-338-2200

If any students or staff in a community not indicated above have a very serious communicable disease staff will determine what the appropriate health authority is and contact the individual in that health authority, Richmond contact for Vancouver Coastal Health and Burnaby for Fraser Health.

**For General Inquiries** with a Public Health Officer or if the direct contacts can not be reached in the event of a Functional Closure use the following contact lines:

Island Health: 1-800-204-6166

Fraser Health: 604-918-7532

Northern Health: (250) 565-2000

Interior Health: (250) 469-7070 ext. 12791

Vancouver Costal Health: 604-527-4893

Communication related to day-to-day activities or classroom related situations will come from the classroom teacher of the student. Daily communications will come from the classroom teacher of the student in communicable disease events. Additionally, Communicable Disease Guidelines are in parent and staff handbooks.

Communication considerations should be in place if there are any Indigenous students or families enrolled in Fawkes Academy at the time of the communicable disease event. Any potential agreements in place with an Indigenous community, or if Fawkes Academy has multiple students from an Indigenous community in an area, the community leaders should play a key part in the core planning team. Student outcomes for Indigenous students should be the same as outcomes for the rest of the student population, this may require additional supports and resources put in place to ensure this equitable access to education.

The effectiveness of vaccinations as a public health measure will be communicated at every opportunity by Fawkes Academy teachers and administration.

Fawkes Academy programs have always put emphasis on the mental health and wellbeing of staff and students. Our Communicable Disease Management Plan includes access to counselling as needed.

In the event of extreme school disruptions due to communicable disease, learning should be individualized to the student and the specific circumstances of the communicable disease event that the school is facing. Teachers will have the freedom to use online learning tools that they think will best serve their students' needs so long as they follow the policies in force around Educational Resources, Personal Information Protection and Privacy, Reporting Student Progress, and Student Work Authentication. Furthermore, a robust review of the privacy impacts and educational opportunities an online learning tool provides will occur as new technologies are explored. Group ABA Children's Society programs are aiming for 100% of the platforms used to have privacy impact assessments and alignment with educational policies.

Behaviour Consultant and Speech and Language supports should be prioritized for students who are supported by a Behavioural Consultant as outlined in their Individual Education Plan.

Reporting of student progress will occur weekly from teachers to administration in very brief overviews. Fawkes Academy and Fawkes Academy DL will maintain three formal reporting periods through any communicable disease event. Teachers will continue to provide weekly updates on student progress to families through any communicable disease event.

Additional supports may need to be put in place for specific families through the communicable disease event. Staff are to recognize when additional supports may be needed and flag these situations for the core planning team. Technology or implementation issues may arise with a family that will require specific planning from the staff on the family's team and members of the core planning team.

Students with compromised immune systems should be given special consideration when developing supports. Students with compromised immune systems may be provided services or materials that are outside of what is being offered to the rest of the student population. Any decisions made by the core planning team about what is put in place for students with compromised immune systems must be in line with the Ministry of Education's commitments to stakeholders and Group ABA Children's Society's values and guiding principles. All students should have equitable access to educational programs.

All Group ABA Children's Society staff will be uploading all resources, tools, and communications to the secure server Synced Tool. This will allow resources to be more accessible to staff and will further bolster clear communication between individuals in the organization. These online resources will need to be organized in an easy to navigate fashion.

### Childcare

In the event of a serious communicable disease outbreak, childcare services for essential workers may be provided. These decisions will need to be made on an individual basis as some essential workers may be a priority for childcare services. The Ministry of Education and Child Care will provide specific direction on this if a more serious communicable disease event is being faced. Protocols for childcare will largely be the same as protocols for K-12 supports. Current directives from the Public Health Office and/or the Ministry of Education and Child Care should be reviewed by the core planning team if these supports are to be offered to ensure current practices are in alignment with directives set forth for these services.

### Procedures for Online Services

Online services will be a major part of educational programs for students in many of the more extreme communicable disease events. All meetings should be in an online setting, this includes intake meetings, meetings between team members, meetings between administration and teaching staff, IEP meetings, and any parent meetings if there are concerns about the current circulation of any communicable diseases. In most normal circumstances meetings can be done in person.

### Procedures for In Home or Community Services

Through any communicable disease event standard policies for home or community-based sessions will continue to be in place. Students should never be alone with a staff member in the home, and parents or guardians should always be in the home.

If any person shows symptoms of illness through the session that have not previously been cleared by public health or another healthcare professional the session will be immediately ended unless the symptoms are related to a known condition that is not communicable.

Staff will be provided PPE, if required based on the current situation, by Fawkes Academy. Staff, contractors, students, and parents or guardians should be aware that PPE is a personal choice, though highly recommended in some circumstances, unless the situation is more severe and there has been specific direction from the Ministry of Child Care and/or the Public Health Office. Contractors should provide their own first aid kits and PPE and should follow the same protocols as staff where appropriate. Students can choose to wear PPE if it makes them feel safer.

Staff have the right to refuse unsafe work. If there are safety concerns in with a specific program staff will contact Dennis Tal to speak about their concerns. The core planning team or Human Resources will do their best to respond to safety concerns.

Staff will ensure that all materials are sanitized between sessions.

### Procedures for Centre Based Services

Prior to entering the building all staff, contractors, students, and parents or guardians should ensure that they are not exhibiting symptoms of illness that are not part of a prior diagnosed health condition. Individuals who are exhibiting symptoms of illness should stay home. Once someone feels as though they have recovered enough to return to their normal daily activities, they can return to the Fawkes Academy building. If someone has tested positive for COVID-19 or any other more serious communicable disease they should follow direction from Public Health.

For recommendations in school settings, we follow BCCDC school guidance including ventilation and air exchange, cleaning and disinfection, food safety, gatherings and events, space arrangement, visitor and community use of schools.

### Training for Staff

Amanda Marsden, Lynn Service and Dennis Tal will be responsible for designing training and orientation programs for staff so that all staff in the school community are aware of the policies in place. Training

will be developed for professional development days to be held monthly so staff can further increase the depth and breadth of their knowledge relating to implementation of learning plans.

All staff will be provided resources from the Ministry of Education's Trauma Informed Practices website to ensure that all staff are providing a continuity of learning plan that aligns with mental health and wellbeing goals for our students.

Leslie Van Dusen will be a resource to train and guide teaching staff on how to administer online learning programs for students. This training will be continuous throughout the pandemic.

Dr Elizabeth Athens Klar will provide training to staff on best practices for telehealth sessions and will provide feedback for how these practices can be adapted to the educational setting.

### Transportation

Group ABA Children's Society does not offer transportation services to students or clients enrolled in their programs. There are no specific considerations that will need to be made around transportation services offered by Group ABA Children's Society in any stage of the restart plan due to this.

Staff should ensure that any individual who is required to return home due to illness is not using public transportation to limit exposure of the community. Staff will be required to provide three emergency contacts that can pick them up if they start to show symptoms of illness at work and are unable to drive themselves home.

### Field Trips

The field trip policy will continue to be followed. All field trips will require a formal request to be made by the teacher planning the field trip to the Principal for approval. Teachers should take additional measures to address transportation logistics in field trip planning when concerned about communicable diseases spreading in the community to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Walks outside or classes outside do not need to be considered field trips, but it is requested that such activities are communicated to the administration.

### Facilities

Access to facilities will be available to community with the prior approval process.

Supplies should be stocked well in advance of start of sessions after any break based on current inventory and use projections.

### HR

In the event of a serious communicable disease outbreak Human Resources will connect with stakeholders to support continuity of services and learning and review policy and procedures.

### Financials

Budgeting and budget to actual evaluation will be even more important through the course of any communicable disease event. Any time a change in operations occurs a new budget will need to be prepared based upon the information received from surveys of stakeholders and the planned

implementation of services. The purpose of budgeting will be threefold. Budgets should be ensuring that programs are not going into deficit, assuming that tuition collection may be limited through an interruption in in person supports. Budgets should ensure that students are receiving supports and services in their continuity of learning plans to justify the special education funding each student is provided. Budgets should ensure that cashflow is sufficient to meet all financial obligations entered by Group ABA Children's Society.