



Public Health Management COVID-19 in School Settings

With the emergence of the Omicron variant, there have been changes to the public health approach used in responding to school-based COVID-19 cases. The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) has developed a decision-making algorithm that will guide the Public Health approach to managing COVID-19 outbreaks moving forward. What we have learned about the nature of the Omicron variant supports this new approach in a way that keeps students in school with the least disruption to learning as possible.

The school outbreak decision-making algorithm is a Public Health tool to be used by healthcare professionals to determine next steps should student(s) and/or staff develop COVID-19 while in school. This has been shared with education leaders. The algorithm provides a flow chart that guides public health decision-making using different scenarios outlined below.

If COVID-19 is confined to one classroom with no transmission

- **All unaffected students and staff can remain in school.**
- All affected students and staff should self-monitor for symptoms for seven (7) full days; or five (5) days only if a test can be arranged from a healthcare/testing centre and test is negative).
- All affected students will be provided two (2) rapid at-home tests to take home. The tests should be used 24-48 hours apart if student starts to develop symptoms.
 - If test is positive, self-report by calling ProtectNWT at 811. You will be provided direction to isolation.

If COVID-19 transmission has occurred within a classroom

- **All unaffected students and staff can remain in school.**
- All affected students will be provided two (2) rapid at-home tests to take home. The tests should be used 24-48 hours apart if student starts to develop symptoms.
 - If test is positive self-report by calling ProtectNWT at 811. You will be provided direction to isolation.

Vaccinated	Unvaccinated
<i>Or partially vaccinated if more than 14 days or less than 8 weeks after receiving first dose</i>	<i>If individual had a COVID-19 infection after Dec. 22, 2021, they are treated as fully vaccinated for the purposes of a school outbreak.</i>
SELF-MONITOR for symptoms for seven (7) full days; or five (5) full days only if a test can be arranged from a healthcare/testing centre and test is negative.	ISOLATE for seven (7) full days; or five (5) days only if a test can be arranged from a healthcare/testing centre and test is negative.

If COVID-19 transmission has occurred within two or more classrooms

If less than 10 percent of the school population:

- All unaffected students and staff can remain in school.
- All affected students will be provided two (2) rapid at-home tests to take home. The tests should be used 24-48 hours apart if student starts to develop symptoms.
 - If test is positive self-report by calling ProtectNWT at 811. You will be provided direction to isolation.

Vaccinated	Unvaccinated
<i>Or partially vaccinated if more than 14 days or less than 8 weeks after receiving first dose</i>	<i>If individual had a COVID-19 infection after Dec. 22, 2021 they are treated as fully vaccinated for the purposes of a school outbreak.</i>
SELF-MONITOR for symptoms for seven (7) full days; or five (5) full days only if a test can be arranged from a healthcare/testing centre and test is negative.	ISOLATE for seven (7) full days; or five (5) days only if a test can be arranged from a healthcare/testing centre and test is negative.

If more than 10 percent of the school population:

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment will be contacted for next steps.