



# Rockheights MIDDLE SCHOOL music

1250 Highrock Ave. Esquimalt, BC V9A 4V7 Ph: (250) 384-7124 [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com)

Re: Special notice to music families regarding the return to music classes.

Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Rockheights Music Family:

Happy new year! I hope you had a wonderful and restful break. You may be wondering about the protocols we have in place to keep students safe in music classes during this newest phase of the pandemic. We will be returning to some of the more-stringent protocols which we used in the 2020 -2021 school year, as well as implementing some new changes.

Here is a summary of the measures we will be taking, specifically in music classes:

### **Physical Distancing**

Each class will have a set seating plan which maximizes personal space. The floor will be marked to help students give each other space. Classes will be dismissed with enough time to avoid crowding at the door. Whenever practical, students will be dismissed directly to the outside.

### **Hand Hygiene**

Students will be reminded that they must either wash their hands with soap and water, or sanitize them, at the start and end of each class.

### **Masks**

Students and myself must wear masks at all times if we are singing, or playing a stringed or percussion instrument. Woodwind and brass players may remove their mask only when playing their instrument (that means they wear their mask during rehearsal whenever they are waiting to play.) Another option for wind and brass players is to wear a [musician's mask](#) that has an opening large enough to insert the mouthpiece. They are available to purchase at music stores. The music program will not be providing this type of mask to students.

### **Ventilation**

The large double-doors are always open. The door to the outside will be kept open for as long as we can before it gets too cold. The district has assured that HVAC systems are operating correctly. Please encourage your child to dress warmly.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Students will be asked to participate in cleaning and disinfecting these surfaces using a non-toxic disinfectant at the end of class. Students are responsible for cleaning their own instruments at the end of each class. Please ensure they have instrument cleaning cloths.



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## **Bell Covers and Transparent Barriers**

Bell covers are currently *strongly recommended* as a way to decrease aerosols, but not required. The music program will loan a bell cover to every student. Flutes will be seated behind a transparent barrier, since bell covers are not as effective for these instruments.

## **Water Keys**

Brass students will continue the practice of emptying water keys onto paper towel and disposing of the paper towel.

## **Field Trips**

At this time, daytime field trips are allowed to proceed as long as all of the current school and district-based protocols can be maintained, as well as any site-based protocols. Field trips are optional and students are not required to participate. Since it is impossible to maintain protocols overnight, there will be no overnight trips this Spring.

## **Pizza Sales**

Pizza sales will continue every Wednesday at lunch, however instead of a table in the hallway, we will be coming around to each class with a cart and cashbox to avoid crowding and eating in the hallways.

## **School Gatherings and Events**

Our next in-person concert is scheduled for May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Plans will take shape closer to that date.

These protocols are based on the latest information acquired from meetings with the school's Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and the documents [Guidance for Music Classes in BC: Covid-19 and Pandemic Recovery](#) and the [Provincial Covid-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with me at [rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca) or by calling the school at (250) 384-7125. Our website, [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com) has useful information as well.

Getting together to play music is one of the ways we can all support each other's mental well-being, sense of belonging and feeling of accomplishment. I'm really looking forward to seeing the students and getting back to music-making!

Warmly,

Risa McDonell, *Music Teacher, Rockheights Middle School*