RICHMOND
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.38

Richmond School District
7811 Granville Avenue, Richmond BC V6Y3E3
Phone: (604) 668-6000

Halloween Safety Hazards and Controls

Category	Hazard	Control Measures
Physical Hazards	Costumes that restrict vision, hearing, or movement	Require costumes to allow clear vision, hearing, and freedom of movement. Review costume expectations in advance and modify or remove unsafe costume components.
	Long capes, masks, and oversized costumes creating trip hazards	Ensure costumes are appropriately sized, capes are shortened, and masks do not extend below the feet or obstruct walking.
	Decorations, extension cords, and props obstructing walkways	Keep hallways, exits, and classrooms free of obstructions. Secure cords with approved covers or tape and position decorations away from travel paths.
	Reduced classroom visibility due to dimmed lighting	Maintain adequate lighting levels in classrooms, hallways, and exits. Avoid activities that require significant lighting reduction.
	Slips and falls from candy wrappers, spilled food, or decorations left on floors	Conduct regular housekeeping checks throughout the day and promptly clean spills and remove debris.
	Increased movement of students in hallways and common areas	Increase supervision during transitions, stagger movement where possible, and reinforce expectations for safe conduct.
Violence and Behavioral Risks	Elevated student excitement leading to horseplay, pushing, chasing, or rough play	Review behavioural expectations before activities, provide active supervision, and intervene early when unsafe behaviours occur.
	Use of costume accessories (toy weapons, wands, staffs) causing accidental injury	Prohibit toy weapons and potentially hazardous costume accessories or require them to remain at home.
	Increased frequency of student behavioural incidents or emotional dysregulation	Provide structured activities, maintain predictable routines where possible, and ensure support staff are available for students requiring assistance.

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	Potential bullying related to costumes, appearance, or participation	Reinforce respectful behaviour expectations, encourage inclusivity, and address bullying concerns immediately.
Allergies and Health Concerns	Exposure to food allergens from treats and classroom celebrations	Follow school allergy protocols, avoid sharing homemade food, review ingredient labels, and provide allergen-safe alternatives.
	Scent sensitivities triggered by costume makeup, fog machines, perfumes, or face paint	Promote a scent-aware environment and discourage or prohibit strongly scented products and fog-generating devices.
	Latex allergies from balloons or costume materials	Use latex-free balloons and decorations whenever possible and verify costume materials if concerns are identified.
	Exposure to infectious illnesses during shared food activities	Encourage hand hygiene, avoid communal food handling, and follow public health recommendations regarding illness prevention.
Ergonomic Hazards	Lifting and moving decorations, tables, pumpkins, or event equipment	Use proper lifting techniques, mechanical aids where available, and team lifting for heavy or awkward loads.
	Repetitive setup and cleanup activities before and after events	Rotate tasks among staff, schedule adequate breaks, and avoid prolonged repetitive movements.
	Standing for extended periods during assemblies and celebrations	Provide opportunities to sit, rotate supervision duties, and take movement breaks where operationally possible.
Fire and Electrical Hazards	Overloaded power bars used for lights and decorations	Limit electrical loads, use CSA-approved power bars, and avoid connecting multiple power bars together.
	Decorative lighting with damaged cords	Inspect all lighting before use and immediately remove damaged cords, plugs, or fixtures from service.

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	Candles or open flames (should not be used in schools)	Prohibit open flames and use battery-operated LED alternatives for decorative purposes.
	Decorations covering exits, fire extinguishers, alarms, or emergency signage	Maintain clear access to all emergency equipment and ensure decorations do not obstruct exits or safety signage.
Indoor Air Quality Hazards	Artificial fog or smoke effects causing respiratory irritation	Do not use fog or smoke machines in school environments.
	Aerosol sprays, face paints, and costume adhesives	Use low-odour, non-aerosol products in well-ventilated areas and follow manufacturer instructions.
	Strong odours from decorations or costumes	Minimize the use of scented decorations and remove items that generate complaints or respiratory symptoms.
Psychological Hazards	Increased workload from event planning and supervision	Share responsibilities among staff, plan activities in advance, and ensure workloads remain manageable.
	Stress from managing excited students	Provide adequate supervision, maintain clear expectations, and establish quiet spaces or calming activities if needed.
	Anxiety caused by frightening decorations or costumes for some staff and students	Establish age-appropriate costume and decoration guidelines and provide alternative participation options.
	Schedule disruptions affecting classroom management	Communicate schedules in advance, maintain as much routine as possible, and provide transition reminders throughout the day.

General Safety Reminder: All Halloween activities should be planned using a risk assessment approach, with consideration given to accessibility, inclusivity, emergency preparedness, and the specific needs of students and staff.