

Protocols for COVID-19

Before the day begins

Each staff member must assess themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 (see attached daily checklist). If they answer “yes” to any of the questions, they cannot go to work and must inform the office that a replacement staff member is needed.

Staff & Staff Entry

1. Each staff member, upon entering, will check or have someone check their temperature, and they will use hand sanitizer before entering their classroom.
2. If a staff member must go to another classroom to retrieve supplies, they must sanitize their hands before going to the other classroom and sanitize their hands before leaving the other classroom. Once class begins, the staff members are not allowed to enter another classroom as each classroom houses its own cohort.
3. Each classroom will have their own bottle of hand sanitizer to use for their own cohort. Each hand sanitizer has an alcohol base of 80%.

Classes Entering

1. As of August 31st, parents are now required to review the Alberta Health daily checklist at home to determine if their child can attend school. The checklist has been attached.
2. The teacher will be wearing her mask, will greet the children, check their temperatures, give them hand sanitizer, and escort them to their designated classroom. This cohort will stay together in their classroom. This process will be followed for multiple classes with start and end times being staggered to reduce the number of people in the building at one time.
3. Any office staff, support staff, therapists, etc., who will enter the space of more than one cohort must wear a mask any time they are in the presence other staff and/or children and they must wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when entering and exiting each room.
4. Occasionally, we have children in our programs that need extra parental support when our programs first begin. In the cases where a parent is required to be with their child, the parent must wear a mask, have their temperature checked, and be given hand sanitizer before entering the classroom. They must also fill out the COVID-19 questionnaire. Once the child has settled, the parent will sanitize their hands before leaving the classroom and building.

5. Once all cohorts have entered the building, we will lock our entrance doors. Any person needing to enter must call the classroom phone. A staff member will greet the person at the door, go through the COVID-19 checklist with them, and sanitize their hands before allowing them to enter the building.

Washroom

1. If a child/children need to go to the washroom, one of the staff members will escort them to the washroom. Before departing the class, they will be given hand sanitizer. The staff member will also use hand sanitizer. They will then proceed to the washroom. After using the facilities, the staff member will ensure they wash their hands thoroughly. The staff member will also give them and herself hand sanitizer before proceeding back to the classroom.
2. Washrooms will be labeled for the 3-year olds, the 4-year olds, and staff. All children must be accompanied by a staff member to the washroom.
3. If a staff member needs to use the washroom, they will sanitize their hands, go to the washroom, and sanitize their hands before returning to their class. The staff will use their designated washroom.
4. Early Discoveries staff will be responsible for disinfecting the washrooms after classes are over and the children have left the premises.

Class time

Each class or cohort will remain in their designated room for the duration of the class time, other than to use the washroom or gym. Designated room staff are assigned a cohort and must stay with that cohort and not interact with staff or children from any other cohort.

Gym

When a class goes to gym, the staff and students will sanitize their hands before leaving their class. A staff member will bring the hand sanitizer to the gym. Once gym is over, the class will line up at the entrance, be given hand sanitizer, and be escorted to their designated classroom.

Sick Children

1. Parents and children must not enter the preschool space if they have COVID symptoms.
2. If a child develops symptoms while at school, the child will be isolated in an area of the classroom and the parent will be notified to come and pick up the child immediately. The child will be kept separated from the rest of the cohort. Staff will continue to care for the child until the parent is able to pick up the child.
3. Staff should wash their hands before donning a mask and before and after removing the mask and before and after touching any items used by the child.
4. If a child develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (i.e. allergies), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the program.

5. A child who has tested negative for COVID-19 does not need to be retested unless new or different symptoms develop.
6. If 2 or more children are identified as having symptoms consistent with COVID-19, we will follow outbreak notification procedures as per routine zone protocols.
7. If we are connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, we are required to close for a minimum of 72 hours to allow contact tracing and we will adhere to recommendations from Alberta Health Services.

Staff

1. Use of masks by program staff is encouraged for prolonged close interactions with children.
2. If masks are worn, Alberta Health mask guidance must be followed and can be found at www.alberta.ca/masks
3. Once a mask has been removed, it must be taken home by the user and disposed of at home. Disposable masks are not to be disposed at the church. If it is a reusable mask, it can be placed in a sealed container to be laundered.
4. If a staff member becomes sick at school, she will contact our office for a replacement staff member, isolate herself the best she can while in her cohort, and wait until her replacement arrives.

Staff working one-on-one with children

In our programs, we can access government funding for speech services. Some of our children will be seen by speech pathologists. As well, some of these same children may be assigned an educational assistant to work with them in and out of the classroom/cohort. As such, the hallway will be used as an area where our therapists and our educational assistants to use when they need to work with children outside of the classroom.

The educational assistant will sanitize her hands and her child's hands before leaving the classroom/cohort. Both will proceed to the hallway for therapy services. Before leaving the hallway, the assistant will wipe down any tables, chairs and supplies that were used. The assistant and child will sanitize their hands and return to their cohort.

Therapists who come into the church will follow the same protocols. They must answer "No" to all questions on the COVID-19 questionnaire before entering the church. They will sanitize their hands upon entering. As the therapists work with a variety of children, they will be required to wear masks the entire time they are inside the building. The therapists will wipe down any tables, chairs, and supplies after every use by an individual child. Before leaving the building, the therapists will sanitize their hands.

As part of the government funding process, meetings regarding a child's progress are held throughout the school year. The meetings will take place in the hallway. All parties involved will be admitted to the building by a staff member, have their temperatures checked, be given hand sanitizer, and be escorted to the Youth Room. After the meeting is completed, each party will sanitize their hands and, if leaving, will be escorted out of the building. The tables and chairs will be sanitized in between meetings.

Hygiene

Staff and children will be frequently reminded to follow proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (wash hands frequently, sneeze/cough into their elbow, put used tissues in the garbage and wash hands immediately after using tissues).

We adhere to handwashing guidelines outlined in the AHS Healthy and Safety Child Care Guidelines. While alcohol-based hand sanitizer is not typically recommended for routine use in preschools, it has been proven effective for hand hygiene when soap and water is not readily available. Our staff will monitor children when using hand sanitizer as it can be poisonous if ingested.

Snacks

Children will be bringing their own snacks from home. The snacks will remain in their school bags until snack time occurs in the classroom. Before snack, children wash their hands. They will then get their snacks out of their school bags and bring them to the tables. There will be designated spots for a child to choose to sit to maintain some distancing while eating. Staff will also wash their hands as they may be asked to help a child with opening their snacks.

After children have finished their snacks, they will put their snack container in their school bag, wash their hands (or use hand sanitizer from a staff member) and proceed to the next activity.

Cleaning

1. The staff for each cohort must clean the room before the day begins. They must also clean the toys, supplies, and classroom after the children are dismissed. A cleaning log will be posted in each classroom for each cohort.
2. Frequent and thorough cleaning will be done between each cohort or class. Shared surface and toys will be cleaned.
3. Items that cannot be cleaned will not be in use, such as sand tables, water tables, sensory bins, and playdough.
4. Equipment needed by a specific child will be cleaned and disinfected at drop off and pick up and will not be used by anyone other than the intended child.
5. A cleaning log will be in each classroom to record the day and time of each cleaning.

Dismissal

1. At the end of each class, children will gather their school bags and be given hand sanitizer before being led outside to their parents.
2. All staff, after cleaning the classroom, will use hand sanitizer and will leave through the preschool entrance/exit.