



**COVID- 19 Response Plan for Re-opening:
Health and Safety Protocols – Infection Prevention and Control Policies
(IPAC) August 2021**

This document is in response to the COVID- 19 pandemic. Part of the requirements which must be in place for re-opening is for every child care centre to create a reopening plan that meets the guidelines set out under both the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and Toronto Public Health (with enhanced health and safety measures).

Our operational practice adheres to the advice of Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, the experts at the COVID-19 Command Table, and the Toronto Medical Officer of Health to keep people safe. The provincial re-opening Guidance Document was also reviewed by physicians at Toronto’s SickKids Hospital.

The purpose of this protocol is to keep all persons entering the facility safe and to outline all required procedures to be strictly implemented and adhered to daily. The operational measures also outline what to do in the event that a child, parent, or staff member at our facility is exposed to COVID-19.

While infection prevention and control (IPAC) has always been an integral part of our child care culture, we have adapted and enhanced our policies and procedures in response to COVID-19 to mitigate the risk and ensure the health and safety of all.

Please note that every effort will be made to uphold the welcoming and caring environment on which St. Philips Pre-School prides itself.

SCREENING

All children, staff members, and essential visitors must be screened each day before entering the building, including daily temperature checks.

Only one parent/guardian is to be in the screening area with their child/children. It is recommended that you pre-screen your child at home using the online form.

Parents will be provided a more in-depth breakdown of the screening routine at the beginning of the school year. Visual markers will be in place to ensure those waiting to be screened are six feet, or two meters, apart at the drop off area.

The screener will wear personal protective equipment (PPE) while screening children, which will include a mask and face shield. The screener will be separated by a plexiglass barrier while conducting screening.

Alcohol based hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol content will be placed at the screening station. Dispensers will not be in reach of young children. Children must use it before entering the building from the screening area.

Daily screening record results will be kept on the premises. Screening questions will be recorded and stored electronically, or on paper.

Access will be denied to any individuals who are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

Symptoms that will be screened for include:

- Fever/feverish
- New onset of cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat, difficulty swallowing
- Decreased or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Headache
- Unexplained fatigue/malaise/ muscle aches
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Runny nose, or nasal congestion without other known causes

- Is there a child or sibling in your house hold that has one of more of the above symptoms and/or waiting for test results?
- Has the child travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?
- Has the child been notified as a close contact of someone with COVID 19?
- Has the child been told to stay home and self-isolate?

If an individual answers ‘YES’ to any of the screening questions, or refuses to answer, and/or has a fever at or above 37.8 degrees Celsius, they have failed the screening and cannot enter the building and will be asked to review the self-assessment tool on the Ministry of Health website or the Toronto Public Health website to determine if further care is required.

Any door handles, and any other surfaces the individual may have touched will be disinfected immediately. PPE, a mask, and gloves, must be worn for this, with hand hygiene performed before and after donning and removing the gloves and mask.

If any staff or child have been excluded from school they must not return until they have had a negative COVID test and after their symptoms have been resolved. TPH strongly recommends attending an assessment centre for testing.

Staff must escort children into the child care centre after screening. Parents must not go past the screening area or enter the child care centre unless there is a specific need to do so.

STAFF SCREENING

The first staff to arrive at the facility each day will answer the screening questions and then screen the next staff member to arrive. The second staff member will confirm the first staff member’s answers once their own screening is complete.

Staff must disinfect personal cell phone covers, containers, water bottles /travel mugs and containers upon entry of childcare. Staff are to change shoes and wash hands immediately.

Documentation

All information received during screening shall be recorded and documented and kept at the school.

Communication Log

The Director or designate is responsible for ensuring that this information is managed and recorded as required. If a child presents with COVID-19 symptoms at any time, this information must also be documented in the child's file.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees prior to re-opening the centre, and at any time where a change is made.

SANITIZATION OF THE SPACE, TOYS, AND EQUIPMENT

Enhanced Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Practices

Disinfectants commonly used in childcare setting are effective against COVID-19. As per Public Health Ontario's recommendations, frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day, or more often, as required. We use warm water and soap for cleaning toys followed by a bleach/water mixture for disinfection. The chlorine bleach and water mixture is changed daily and the expiry date of the bleach is checked by staff before use.

A cleaning and disinfecting log will be kept and maintained daily.

Frequently touched surfaces may include toys, learning materials, tablets, toilet and faucet handles, light switches, door knobs and furnishings, among other items. Sharing of items will be limited and items will be cleaned and disinfected every day.

Items that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected (will be removed from the room prior to opening)

Items and activities that will be removed include:

- Soft toys
- Carpets
- Items that require laundering, such as dress-up clothing

The use of media items such as tablets will be closely monitored by staff members to ensure items are maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and are not shared by children.

Enhanced cleaning will include the cubby area, washroom, office, and kitchen.

HOW TO REPORT ILLNESS

Protocols for When a Child or Staff Member Demonstrates Symptoms of Illness/Becomes Sick

If a child or staff member becomes ill with symptoms while in the program, they should be isolated and family members contacted for pick-up. TPH strongly recommends attending an assessment centre for testing.

The child or staff member will be placed in a separate room until pick-up occurs. The room must have a hand wash sink, tissues, and hand sanitizer (70%-90% alcohol concentration). If the sick person is a child, a staff member will remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives. If tolerated, the child will wear a mask. The staff member will also wear a mask and face shield at all times and not interact with others. The staff member will also avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions.

All items used by the sick person will be cleaned and disinfected. All items that cannot be cleaned will be removed and stored in a sealed container for 7 days. If the child/staff have a confirmed case Toronto Public Health will be notified, and their advice will be followed.

Other children, including siblings of the sick child, and child care staff members in the program who were present while the child or staff member was ill should be identified as a close contact until they can be picked up by parents/guardians to self-isolate at home. Toronto Public Health will provide further direction on testing and isolation of these close contacts.

The Director must inform parents/guardians of children who were exposed to the ill child, and advise that they should monitor their child for symptoms.

Staff and children exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 must be excluded from school for 14 days. These individuals must self-isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for the next 14 days.

Individuals who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 should get tested as soon as any symptoms develop.

If asymptomatic, individuals who have been exposed are also encouraged to get tested any time within 14 days of the potential exposure. They will need to continue to self-isolate for 14 days, even if the test is negative.

Staff and children who are being managed by Toronto Public Health (confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19, close contacts of cases) must follow TPH instructions to determine when to return to school.

Parent will need to complete a Return to Child Care Confirmation form to confirm that their child can return to school. Families must tell the school if anyone in the child's household has been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING

Childcare programs have a duty to report confirmed cases of COVID-19 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. The Director will contact Toronto Public Health if a child or staff present has tested positive for COVID-19. Toronto Public Health will provide specific advice on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected staff members and children.

Where a child or staff has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the Director will report this to the Ministry as a serious occurrence.

The Director will post the serious occurrence notification form as a required under the CCEYA, unless Toronto Public Health advises otherwise.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Drop off and Pick up:

- Children are to enter (be screened) and picked up through the main school doors
- Parents are not to go past the screening area in the morning or enter the school for pick up
- The staff will get the child prepared and escort them to meet the parent outside.
- Parents are encouraged to wear a face covering when picking up children and to physically distance themselves from other families

Classroom Space:

The school recognizes that physical distancing between children is difficult and encourages staff to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children. Physical distancing must not compromise the supervision of children.

We will try to achieve this by:

- Spreading children out into different areas, particularly at snack time
- Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children
- Using visual cues to promote physical distancing
- Providing individual sensory items and craft materials for single-use and discarding them at the end of the day
- Increasing space between seating and play areas
- Removing extra chairs, tables, and furniture to increase space in the area to allow children to spread out
- Encouraging children to greet each other using non-physicals gestures
- Reminding children to keep their “hands to yourself”
- Reinforcing ‘no sharing’ policies
- Ensuring children’s personal items kept on the premises are minimal and labeled to prevent items going to the wrong home
- Avoiding activities such as singing, shouting, or speaking loudly while indoors

Food Provisions

- No self-serve or sharing of food at meal and snack times
- Meals and snacks will be served in individual portions to the children
- No outside food under any circumstances
- Children will not prepare or provide food that will be shared with others
- Proper hand hygiene will be practiced when staff are preparing food for serving and for all individuals before and after eating
- Children will have more space between each other when sitting down in small groups for meals and snacks
- Utensils must be used to serve food

COHORTS

As of September 1, 2020 the school will be allowed to return to a ratio of 1 teacher per 8 children.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES AND SCHOOL

- During the recovery phase from the pandemic, where possible, the use of in person communication will be limited
- Staff and parents are encouraged to communicate through See-Saw or from a safe distance outside at pick-up with both the parent and staff member wearing face coverings
- Families can email or call the Director directly
- Use of telephone or video conferencing when possible for meetings between child care staff and with parents/guardians
- The Director will communicate updates on a regular basis to provide updates about policies and procedures and to align any gaps or concerns regarding IPAC practices
- Parents should use email or the phone to report their child as absent or absent due to illness
- Toronto Public Health will provide further advice about information that should be shared with other staff and parents in the event there is a case of outbreak of COVID-19 in the child care centre

ENHANCED ATTENDANCE REPORTING

We will maintain daily attendance records of all individuals entering the child care centre. This includes, but is not limited to, maintenance workers, cleaning staff and Government agency inspectors. Records will be kept on site at all times.

The Director will follow up with all individuals absent to determine the reason for any unplanned absences, and determine if the absence is due to illness to note any symptoms (e.g. fever, sore throat). The Director will monitor attendance records for patterns and trends.

HAND HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Staff must ensure that proper hand hygiene is practiced often and when necessary (e.g. before and after eating, after using the bathroom, after covering a cough or sneeze). This includes supervising and/or assisting children with hand hygiene. Children should wash their hands before and after eating and using any sensory materials, after using the bathroom, after covering a cough or sneeze

The Director and/or designate must monitor hand hygiene supplies to ensure adequate amounts of liquid soap, paper towel, hand sanitizer, tissues, and waste receptacles with plastic bags are available.

USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The child care centre will provide PPE for use by staff when necessary. Public health strongly recommends children over the age of two to wear a mask while indoors. Masks will not be provided by the school for children, however parents who wish to may send their child with a mask.

All staff must wear a surgical mask and protective eye wear at all times while in the school. If a staff member cannot wear the medical mask due to a medical condition, they may wear a cloth mask under the medical mask. Any exemptions to this policy will be documented.

Gloves must be worn when:

- It is anticipated that hands will come in contact with mucus membranes
- Broken skin, tissue, or blood is involved
- Bodily fluids, secretions, excretions are involved

- When diapering a child
- There are contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces

STAFF TRAINING

All staff will be trained to be aware of signs and symptoms associated with COVID-19 as well as the following:

- They will be aware of and can implement the revised IPAC policies and procedures
- Staff will be trained on the proper use of PPE
- Staff will be required to complete the online health and safety training modules providing through Toronto Children’s Services by Toronto Public Health
- Additional health and safety in the workplace resources will be made available and assessable to staff

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Ministry of Education: “Operational Guidance during COVID 19 Outbreak”

Toronto Public Health: “COVID 19 Guidance for Child Care Settings”

Ministry of Health: “COVID 19 Guidance document for Child Care”

Public Service Health and Safety Association: “Child Care Centre Employee Guidelines”

Public Health Ontario Resources