

Covid 19 Guidelines

Environmental Measures

Outdoor Spaces and Ventilation

- Have children outside often, including for learning activities, snack time and play time.
- Activities should be organized in a thoughtful way, taking into consideration personal measures.
- Reassure children and parents that playgrounds are a safe environment, and encourage appropriate hand hygiene practices before, during, after outdoor play.
- Ensure adequate ventilation and open windows if possible.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Child Care settings should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document.

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the centre should occur at least **once a day**.
- Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least **twice a day**
 - These include door knobs, light switches, faucet handles, table counters, chairs, electronic devices, and toys.
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Use common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products. Follow the instructions on the label. See the BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings guidance for more information.
- Remove toys and other items that cannot be easily cleaned (e.g., avoid plush/stuffed toys).
- Empty garbage containers daily, at minimum.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Clean diapering stations after each use.
- There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution of books or paper based educational resources to children because of COVID-19.

Administrative Measures

General

- Child care providers:
 - Must establish a policy and clearly communicate with parents and caregivers to assess their children daily for symptoms before sending them for child care.
 - Must establish a policy and procedures for children and staff who become sick while at the facility (see Appendix C).
 - May ask parents and caregivers about illness at drop-off to confirm that the child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- There is no role for screening children or staff for specific symptoms, checking temperatures, or COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals.
- Signage to remind people not to enter the facility if they are sick is available here and may be posted at facility entrances.

Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

The physical space requirements for licensed child care settings set out in the Child Care Licensing Regulation mean that child care centres have sufficient space to support physical distancing (i.e., maintaining a distance of 2 metres between each other) between staff without reducing the number of children in care at any one time.

- Staff should minimize the frequency of direct physical contact with children and encourage children to minimize physical contact with each other.
- Staff should maintain physical distancing from one another.

It is reasonable to establish different expectations based on age and/or developmental readiness. For example:

- Younger children should be supported to have minimized direct contact with one another, while older children should be supported to maintain physical distance whenever possible.
- Children from the same household (e.g., siblings) do not need to maintain physical distance from each other.

The following physical distancing strategies should be implemented where possible in the child care setting:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes). Regularly remind children to keep “Hands to yourself”.
- Strive to minimize the number of different staff that interact with the same children throughout the day.

- Organize children into smaller groups and/or spread children out to minimize direct physical contact.
 - Use different room configurations (e.g., separating tables).
 - Set up small group environments to reduce the number of children in a group, for example, set up 2 or 3 areas for colouring or doing crafts.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children and staff.
 - Remove toys that encourage group play in close proximity or increase the likelihood of physical contact.

Keep toys that encourage individual play.

- Help younger children learn about physical distancing and less physical contact by creating games that include basic principles such as “two arm lengths apart”.
 - Consider using books, individual games, video and online programs as a part of learning so children can sit independently and distanced from each other.
 - Increase the distance between nap mats, if possible. If space is tight, place children head-to-toe or toe-to-toe.
 - Have a separate, supervised area available for children who have symptoms of illness rest until they can be picked up and ensure these areas are cleaned and disinfected after the child has left.
- Stagger snack or meal time to allow spacing between children during meals.
 - Minimize the number of additional adults entering the centre, unless that person is providing care and/or supporting inclusion of a child in care (e.g. supportive child care assistants, Early Childhood Education practicum students, speech language pathologists...etc.)

Pick-up and Drop-Off

- Pick-up and drop-off of children should occur outside the child care setting unless there is a need for the parent or caregiver to enter the setting (e.g., very young children). If a parent must enter the setting, they should maintain physical distance from staff and other children present and be reminded to practice diligent hand hygiene and maintain physical distance when they are in the facility.
- Parents and caregivers that are symptomatic must not enter the child care facility.
- If there are multiple entrances, pick-up and drop off can be split at separate entrances to avoid parents and caregivers gathering in large numbers.
- Daily check at drop-off may be conducted by asking parents and caregivers to confirm that their child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- Parents and caregivers should use their own pen and avoid touching the sign in/out sheet directly. Parents and caregivers should practice hand hygiene before and after touching the sign in/out sheet.

Personal Measures

Daily Checks for Respiratory Illness and Staying Home When Sick

- All parents, caregivers, children and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR were identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed case must stay home and self-isolate.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them for child care.
- Children who are ill, including children of essential service providers, should not be permitted to attend child care.
- Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to working and stay home if they are ill.
- **Child care providers:**
 - Must clearly communicate with parents and caregivers to assess their children daily for symptoms before sending them for child care.
 - Must establish procedures for children and staff who become sick while at the facility.
 - Should conduct daily checks for respiratory illness at drop-off by asking parents and caregivers to confirm that the child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- If a parent, caregiver or staff member is unsure if they or a child should self-isolate, they should be directed to use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool, contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit. They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases.

Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.

Children and staff can pick up germs easily from anything they touch, and can spread those germs to objects, surfaces, food and people. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene. Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices amongst children.

How to perform hand hygiene:

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing the “ABC’s” or “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”).
 - Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
- If sinks are not available (e.g., children and staff are outside), supervised use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be considered.

- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, see BCCDC's Hand Hygiene poster and signage for children.

Strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:

- Hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance, so that children can clean their hands when they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Keep hand sanitizer out of children's reach and supervise its use.
- Incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.
- Ensure the centre is well-stocked with hand washing supplies at all times including plain soap, clean towels, paper towels, waste bins, and where appropriate, hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Children regularly forget about proper hand washing. Staff and children should practice often and staff should model washing hands properly in a fun and relaxed way.
- Staff should assist young children with hand hygiene as needed.

Respiratory Etiquette

Children and staff should:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene ("Cover your coughs").
- Not touch their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands ("Hands below your shoulders").
- It is not recommended that children wear cloth or homemade masks.

Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices amongst children.

Other

Children and staff should not share food, drinks, soothers, bottles, sippy cups, toothbrushes, facecloths, and other personal items.

- Label personal items with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.
- If meals or snacks are provided, ensure each child has their own individual meal or snack. Reusable utensils must be cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- Children should not be allowed to prepare or serve food.
- Ask parents and caregivers to only bring personal comfort items (e.g., stuffies) if they are clean and can be laundered at the end of each day.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves are not needed in the child care setting, beyond those used by staff as part of regular precautions for the hazards normally encountered in their regular course of work. They should only be used when all other controls have been fully explored.

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine) and when diapering.

Remember to wash your hands before wearing, and after removing gloves.

- Cloth or non-medical homemade masks are not recommended. Wearing one is a personal choice. More information about COVID-related mask use is available here.
- In young children in particular, masks can be irritating and may lead to increased touching of the face and eyes.

There is no evidence to support the use of medical grade, cloth, or homemade masks in child care setting at this time.

Wearing one is a personal choice. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect. More information about COVID-related mask use is available here.

Supporting Child Care Communities

The BC Centre for Disease Control is the source of information about COVID-19. Resources available there can be used to support learning and to respond to questions you may receive from members of your child care community. More information is available here.

- Refer members of your child care community to the BCCDC website for up-to-date and accurate information regarding COVID-19.

The above information is taken from the COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings document. If you would like to see the original document in full you can find it this link below

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance_Child_Care.pdf

COVID-19 Preschool Policy and Procedure for Child or Staff

Children

Before arriving at Preschool, parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them for child care.

Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell
- Cough
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Stuffy/runny nose
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Vomiting/ diarrhea
- Loss of appetite

When dropping off your child at Preschool, teachers will ask you to confirm that you have done the health assessment before your child enters the Preschool.

Children who are ill, including children of essential service providers, will not be permitted to attend child care.

Children who live someone with a confirmed COVID-19 case will have been asked by public health officials to self-isolate at home, and cannot return to Preschool until approved by public health.

Children with seasonal allergies don't need to stay home. If the allergy symptoms are the same as they usually are during the time of year (e.g. itchy eyes, runny nose) and can be relieved with antihistamine or allergy medication, then no specific action is needed.

If you are unsure if your child's symptoms are related to allergies, they should stay at home and use the self-assessment tool at bc.thrive.health, call 8-1-1 to assess symptoms or be assessed by a health care provider to determine if testing is required.

Child with symptoms of COVID-19

IF A CHILD DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:

Parents or caregivers must keep their child home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, AND their symptoms have resolved.

IF A CHILD DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT PRESCHOOL:

Staff must take the following steps:

1. Identify a staff member to supervise the child.
2. Identified staff member should immediately separate the symptomatic child from others in a supervised area until they are picked up.
3. Contact the child's parent or caregiver to pick them up immediately.
4. Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 meters from the ill child. If this is not possible, staff may use a mask.
5. Provide child with tissues, and support as necessary.
6. Avoid touching the child's body fluids. If you do, thoroughly wash your hands.
7. Once the child is picked up, wash your hands.
8. Clean and disinfect the areas used by child (e.g., bathroom, common areas).

If concerned, local public health will be contacted to seek further advice.

Parents or caregivers must pick up their child promptly once notified that their child is ill.

Have a Plan of Action in place in case you are called that your child is sick.

Staff

Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to working and stay home if they are ill.

Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell
- Cough
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Stuffy/runny nose
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Vomiting/ diarrhea
- Loss of appetite

Staff with Symptoms of COVID-19

IF STAFF DEVELOP SYMPTOMS WHILE AT HOME:

Staff must stay home from work and self-isolate until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, AND their symptoms have resolved.

IF A STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS WHILE AT WORK:

Staff should go home right away where possible.

If unable to leave immediately, the symptomatic staff should:

1. Separate themselves into an area away from other.
2. Maintain a distance of 2 meters from others.
3. Use a mask while waiting for replacement staff.
4. Remaining staff must clean and disinfect the space where staff was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., common areas, bathroom, office).

If concerned, local public health will be contacted to seek further advice.

***All parents, caregivers, children and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR were identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed case must stay home and self-isolate.**

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted following the guidelines posted in the Covid-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings document. We will be using a product approved by Health Canada for Covid-19. Benefect Botanical Decon 30 is a natural product that will be used at least twice a day for disinfecting the entire classroom. It will be applied over surfaces by spraying using a portable pump sprayer. We will also use Lysol Multi-purpose Disinfectant spray and/or Lysol Disinfecting wipes on frequently touched and used surfaces (i.e. furniture, toys, door handles, bathroom taps, etc.) during the class time. Surfaces that are visibly dirty will be cleaned first and then disinfected. If it is not possible to clean some of these items during class time, they will be removed to be cleaned at the end of class.

Other examples of (but not limited to) when we will be cleaning and disinfecting during your child's time at Preschool include:

- after working on an activity at the table
- before and after snack
- after assisting your child (if needed) when bodily fluid or blood is present
- after the children are dismissed for the day

Hand Hygiene

Washing hands properly and often is the most effective way to prevent spreading germs. We will be modelling, teaching and practising proper hand washing on a regular basis. Our main form of hand hygiene will be to use plain soap and water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Singing a song such as "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" or "ABC's" can help children remember how long to wash as well as make it more fun and relaxed.

If it is not possible to wash with soap and water, hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol will be used. Hand sanitizer will be kept out of the reach of children and used with teacher supervision.

Children will wash hands:

- When they arrive at the preschool and before they go home.
- Before and after eating and drinking
- After a diaper change
- After using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Teachers and staff will wash hands:

- When they arrive at the preschool and before they go home
- Before and after handling food (raw, cooked or prepackaged)
- After changing diapers
- After assisting a child to use the toilet
- After using the toilet
- After contact with body fluids (ex. Runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
- After cleaning tasks
- After removing gloves
- After handling garbage
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Respiratory Etiquette

Along with hand hygiene it is important that good respiratory etiquette be followed so along with proper hand washing we will be modelling, teaching and practising

- “Covering Coughs” (coughing or sneezing into our elbow or tissue), throwing away used tissues in the garbage.
- Not touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands (“Hands below your shoulders”)

Parents can help teach and reinforce these practises at home as well.

Programming Adjustments

When weather is appropriate, more activities will be done outdoors:

- Circle time
- Arts and crafts
- Group games
- Snack

When indoors, play opportunities and activities will be set up and presented in a manner that children can interact and play together while minimizing physical contact and promoting physical distancing if possible.

- Play stations will be spread out and the number of children at each activity will be limited to what is appropriate for available space.
- Children will be divided into smaller groups for what would normally be a large group activity (ex. circle time, some art activities)

- Some play spaces that are currently situated close together will be eliminated and we will rotate them on a weekly basis rather than having them available at the same time. (ex. One week transportation area/Next week block area)
- More tables will be used during snack time to allow for more space between the children.
- Toys that are not easily cleaned and disinfected will be removed (ex. Stuffed animals, blankets and pillows, dress up clothes)
- Field trips (annual trip to Pumpkin Patch, skating) will be determined by Public Health regulations and whether the facilities are offering tours/bookings.

Other adjustments will be made on an ongoing basis as the need arises so that we are complying with all the Public Health guidelines.

Parent/Teacher Communication

It is very important to us that we are able to maintain communication with parents regarding their child/children's preschool experience. There may be times when either parents or teachers have questions, concerns or just need to pass on general information.

Due to our modified drop off and pickup procedures limiting our communication opportunities we want to outline the different methods of communication available.

- In Person: If possible, communication can be done at pickup time. Either the parent or teacher can indicate they want to chat. When dismissal is complete the parent can return to the preschool door to have a physically distanced chat.
- Email: We use email to communicate with families on a regular basis. Sending us an email to faithpreschoolbby@gmail.com is a great way for you to communicate as well. The email is checked on a regular basis and will be responded to as soon as possible. If it is something that would be better communicated over the phone let us know when a convenient time to call and we will call you (due to cleaning protocols we may not be available to speak when you call us).
- Virtual Zoom Meetings: If a more in depth face to face meeting is required, we can schedule a zoom meeting.

