



Little Scholars Child Care's Operational Guidelines for Coronavirus/COVID-19

******Please note that this document will be modified as applicable when these restrictions can be lifted and/or amended to reflect new advice at that time and a revised version will be provided.***

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Intent

All parents and employees must review this document as it provides pertinent information about operational guidelines that Little Scholars is putting into place to reduce the potential risk of exposure to COVID-19, thus protecting our children, employees and their families. Once reviewed, a signature is required to demonstrate accountability in following all procedures. It will be beneficial to keep this handbook accessible for reference when needed.

Maximum Cohort Size and Ratio

Definition: A cohort is defined as a group of children and the employees assigned to them, who stay together throughout the duration of the program for a minimum of 7 days.

The maximum cohort size for each room in our center will consist of no more than ten (10) individuals. This includes both employees and children. Furthermore, each cohort will stay together throughout the entire day and are not permitted to mix with other cohorts.

We will maintain ratios set out under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) and will increase employee to child ratios in some programs while ensuring that each cohort does not exceed the maximum of ten (10) individuals.

The Director, Cook, and Floater will limit their movement between rooms, doing so when absolutely necessary. When doing so, they will wear all appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), maintain physical distance and limit contact and interaction with the cohort.

Hours of Operation

Until further notice, our hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 7:00am-5:30pm. Employees will ensure that a deep clean of each room is completed between 5:30-6:00pm. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause but know that this extra measure will help keep our children, employees and their families safe. Please note that the \$1 per minute late charge will apply after 5:30pm.

Drop Off and Pick Up Routines

Both drop off and pick-up will happen outside unless it is determined absolutely necessary for a parent to enter the building. If a parent must enter, they will be required to wear gloves and a face mask.

Drop Off

Prior to your first day, you will be required to select a designated daily drop off time via our Google Drop off Schedule. Drop offs will be scheduled every five (5) minutes, however please ensure you have for extra time in the mornings in case there are delays.

Please note that drop offs can only happen between 7:00-9:30am.

Once you arrive;

- Park in the designated location and stay in your vehicle. If you are walking, please wait at the other designated location by the front door

- If no one is outside to immediately greet you, please patiently wait at the marked location(s)
- Our designated employee will approach and begin our daily screening. Parents must comply with the screening process and cannot leave their child(ren) until approved. (More information about screening can be found under Daily Screening)

Pick Up

Parents must call into the center before picking up to inform us of their approximate arrival time so that we can help your child(ren) collect their belongings and wash their hands.

Once you arrive;

- You may approach the front door and stand by the marked location. If another parent is waiting in the designated location, please make sure to stay 2 meters (6 feet) away from all individuals. Your child(ren) will be brought out to you.

*Please note that pick up can happen anytime between 3:30-5:30. If you are in need of an earlier pick up, you must provide notice to the Director.

Parents and Escorts

It is ideal that the same parent or designated person drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings should be limited. If brought, they must be clearly labeled and stored in a backpack or sealed bag. Please know that we will not accept any loose items, outside food or drink and home toys. Personal comfort items can be brought to the center and will only be used during sleep time and then placed back into the child's cubby.

Morning Routine at Home

Please take your child's temperature each morning to screen for a fever (According to the Region of Waterloo Public Health [ROWPH], 37.8C or higher is a fever) and keep your child home if they are not feeling well. Also please wash your hands before leaving the house as part of your morning routine.

Daily Screening

All individuals including children, employees, parents and visitors will be screened each day before entering, including daily temperature checks. We are requesting parents to, along with their own health, monitor their children's health while away from the center in order to answer the daily screening questionnaire with knowledge and honesty.

The questionnaire is available online to support our contactless check-in as well as to provide a more efficient and timely drop off routine. The questionnaire *must* be filled out *every* morning prior to arrival.

Once you arrive, our designated daily screener will approach while still remaining at least 2 meters (6 feet) away and will;

- Observe all individuals to see if they appear unwell and are displaying any signs and symptoms of COVID-19

- Confirm that your questionnaire has been received. If the online questionnaire is not received before you arrive, you will be provided with a paper copy that must be filled out and signed before moving forward with the check-in process.
- Take and document the temperature of all individuals using an infrared no-contact thermometer.

If the individual answers *NO* to all questions and does not have a fever, they have passed the screening and can enter the building. If the individual answers *YES* to any of the screening questions, refuses to answer, or has a fever, then they have not met the screening requirements and cannot enter the building.

Upon passing daily screening, parents are then able to take their child out of the car and the designated screener will receive the child. If close contact for child transfer is required, gloves and the supplied blanket will be used as a barrier to pick the child up. Once inside, the child will remove their outdoor clothing (i.e., jacket), shoes and backpack and then be escorted to their cubby in their classroom. All items from home will be disinfected. Immediately after and prior to touching anything in the classroom, the child will be escorted to the washroom to wash their hands.

Upon passing daily screening, employees may enter the building, immediately, remove their shoes, place all belonging in their classroom storage and disinfect any personal items. Immediately after and prior to touching anything else in the classroom, they will wash their hands.

If an individual fails the daily screening, they should be sent for testing and they are to self-isolate and be excluded from the program pending test results and can return once known to be COVID 19 negative and symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours.

Mid-Day Screening

In addition to our arrival screening and our general health checks throughout the day, each child will be carefully screened again mid-day to ensure they have not become symptomatic throughout the day. An employee in every cohort will be required to screen every child by;

- Looking for any symptoms of COVID-19
- Taking the child's temperature using an infrared no-contact thermometer while using discretion on the child's activity level. (i.e., sleeping, running)
- Recording all information on their mid-day screening report once the screening is complete

If a child fails the mid-day screening criteria, or if their condition changes at anytime throughout the day, parents will be notified to arrange for pick up and the child will be isolated until the parents arrive. (More information about isolation can be found under Individuals with a Suspected or Confirmed Case of COVID-19 – Response Plan).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All employees have been trained on the proper use of all PPE including the proper way to don and doff all equipment.

Masks

All employees will be strongly encouraged to wear masks while providing care as the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommends cloth facial coverings in settings where physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as child care.

Masks will be *required* when;

- Completing daily screening of all individuals
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness
- Unable to maintain physical distance
- Feeling ill

The CDC states that children under two (2) years old must not wear cloth facial coverings. Taking all recommendations and restrictions into account, *all children in attendance, regardless of age, will not be required to wear a face mask while at Little Scholars.*

Gloves

Gloves must be worn in the following circumstances and disposed after use:

- Administering first aid or medication
- While serving food
- Cleaning up blood and/or bodily fluid
- During diapering and toileting routines
- During the cleaning and disinfecting of toys, equipment and furnishings

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is difficult and almost impossible with young children in our efforts to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children. Nevertheless, strong efforts will be made to maintain physical distancing between staff to staff and staff to children. At least 2 metres (6 feet) will be maintained between different cohorts at all times and we will encourage physical distancing where possible, between children in the same cohort via these reasonable strategies;

- Offering increased outdoor play to allow for more space
- Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children and do not involve shared objects or toys
- Spreading children out into different areas, particularly at meal time and sleep time
- Re-arranging and increasing the distance of furniture and equipment in each room

Social/Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Little Scholars recognizes the importance of comforting crying, sad, and/or anxious children and understand that they often need to be held. As physical distancing is not possible when holding or comforting a child, employees will take precautions for both the child and themselves before, during and after their interactions by;

- Wearing a mask
- Washing their hands before interaction
- Wearing the provided blanket as a “barrier”
- Wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or another updo
- Avoiding getting close to the faces of children whenever possible
- Changing the child’s clothes if secretions are on them and washing the child’s hands after the interaction
- Removing their “barrier” and washing their hands, neck and anywhere touched by the child’s secretions after the interaction
- Placing all contaminated “barriers” and clothes in a plastic bag to be washed

Enhanced Sanitary Practices

*Definitions: **High-traffic surfaces:** Any surface that has frequent contact with hands (i.e., light switches, shelving, containers, hand rails, door knobs, sinks, toilets etc.). **Low-traffic surfaces:** Any surfaces that have minimal contact with hands (i.e., Window ledges, doors, sides of furnishings)*

Employees have been trained on the proper steps of cleaning and disinfecting both high and low-traffic surfaces. To enhance our sanitary practices, there will be an increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting as high-traffic surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day (more often if visibly soiled) and low-traffic surfaces will be cleaned at least once each day. All cleaning and disinfecting measures will be recorded daily.

Hand Hygiene

Employees have received training on proper hand hygiene and will adhere to all hand washing steps set out by the ROWPH. In addition to our standard hand washing practices listed, further hand washing will be required throughout the day such as;

Children will be required to wash their hands:

- Upon arrival
- Before and after eating
- Before and after toileting, including after a diaper change
- After putting their hands in their mouths, wiping their nose or eyes, etc.
- After sneezing or coughing
- After playing outside
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Before leaving the program at the end of the day

AND

Employees will be required to wash their hands:

- Upon arrival
- Before and after handling food, drinks/preparing bottles or medication
- Before and after eating
- Before and after diapering and toileting
- Before and after using gloves
- Before and after touching theirs or someone else's face
- After contact with bodily fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood, etc)
- After the disposal of laundering or any contaminated PPE
- After blowing their nose, rubbing their eyes, sneezing or coughing
- After touching contaminated articles such as mouthed toys or personal care items
- After handling garbage
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Before entering and leaving a classroom
- Before leaving at the end of the day

Employees will also assist children with hand washing by turning on the tap, providing them with a pump of soap and turning off the tap to avoid cross contamination. After assisting each child with hand washing, the employee will wash their hands again.

Sanitizer

Hand sanitizers are not intended to replace hand washing but if soap and water are inaccessible at any point during the day, hand sanitizer, containing a minimum of 60% alcohol, will be acceptable only if hands are not visibly soiled.

Program Changes

Toys and Play Items

Toys and equipment which are made of materials that can be easily cleaned and disinfected will be available but toys and equipment that are porous, absorbent or not easily cleaned will be removed from the room such as plush toys, pillows, dramatic play clothing, etc. The number of toys in each room has also been decreased to allow for more frequent cleaning and disinfecting. All toys will be disinfected after each use and before sharing and all mouthed toys will be disinfected immediately after use. In terms of creative arts and crafts, each child will have their own individual bin of crayons, scissors, paint brush, glue, etc., to use throughout the week.

Sensory Play

Group sensory play will be prohibited but children will have access to single use materials such as playdough, water and sand that will only be available to that child and labelled with their name. The product will be disposed of weekly and immediately upon contamination.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will be more frequent and scheduled by cohort in order to facilitate physical distancing. Where toys and equipment are to be used by more than one cohort, they will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being shared.

Mealtime

Tables and high chairs will be set at least 2 meters (6 feet) apart and chairs will be as far apart as possible at each table. Meals will no longer be served family style (self serving), instead, each child will receive a pre-portioned plastic wrapped plate including individual utensils. If the children finish their plate, a gloved employee will provide them with seconds from bowls out of reach.

Bottles, Water Bottles and Sippy Cups

All bottles, water bottles and sippy cups will be labelled and kept out of reach from children to avoid sharing. At frequent intervals of the day, employees will offer each child a drink and once they are done, it will be put back out of reach.

Pacifiers

Pacifiers must be labelled and stored separately when not in use to avoid sharing. The pacifier will be washed in soap and water upon arrival at the centre and before being stored after use.

Cribs and Cots

Cribs and cots will be placed to support physical distancing practices. If 2 meter (6 feet) separation is not possible, children will be placed head-to-toe or toe-to toe. Cribs and cots will continue to be sanitized weekly and bedding will continue to be laundered once a week or more frequently as needed.

Individuals with a Suspected or Confirmed Case of COVID-19 – Response Plan

Little Scholars has a duty to report suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and will contact the ROWPH to report any suspected individual that may have COVID-19.

Definition: A suspected case is defined as any person exhibiting any of the symptoms of ill health as listed in the most recent version of the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx#symptoms

Individuals must not attend if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold. However, discretion will be used based on each individual's health history and severity of symptoms. If the individual is presenting with ONLY a runny nose/sneezing or congestion, consideration *may* be given to other underlying reasons for these symptoms such as seasonal allergies.

Suspected COVID-19 while in childcare

If a child begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19;

- Parents will be contacted immediately to pick-up up their child. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be contacted to pick up the child
- Symptomatic children are immediately separated from others in a supervised area until they are picked up to go for testing.
- An employee from the same cohort must remain in the room for the duration of the isolation period. In addition, where possible, the employee should maintain a distance of 2 metres (6 feet) and wear full PPE
- The child should be closely monitored and comforted as needed, and provided with limited assistance with proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. If tolerated and above the age of two (2), the child will be asked to wear a mask
- Once the child is picked up, they are to go for COVID-19 testing and advised to remain home until they are known to be COVID-19 negative and 24 hours symptoms free. Any of the symptomatic child's siblings will also be excluded until this time
- As soon as the child has left, the employee will post signage indicating that the room is closed until a thorough cleaning can be done. Then the employee will remove and dispose of all PPE before returning to normal duties

If an employee begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19 they must;

- If not already, don a mask
- Inform the Director
- Remove themselves from program as soon as possible
- Go for COVID-19 testing

Suspected COVID-19 while not in childcare (including parents or anyone in your household)

All individuals must continually self-monitor and monitor their children. All individuals must immediately report experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 to the Director regardless of when the onset of symptoms or signs occur (i.e., evenings or weekends).

Cleaning Post-Symptomatic Individual

The classroom where the symptomatic child/employee has been will undergo a thorough cleaning and disinfection before being opened again. This will include the disinfection of all toys and hard surfaces

including tables, chairs, toilets, sinks, shelves, etc. Items that are unable to be disinfected will either be disposed of or quarantined in a storage area for a minimum of seven (7) days.

Administrative Steps

- The Director will contact the ROWPH to notify them of the symptomatic individual
- The ROWPH will provide direction for self-monitoring or self-isolation as determined by the exposure and inform any childcare wide measures
- The Director will follow the regular Serious Occurrence (SO) reporting requirements which include submitting a SO report within 24 hours of being notified of the SO and posting the SO notification form

Follow up

The parents of the symptomatic child and/or the employee are responsible to contact the Director on a *daily* basis and report any changes to their health and/or provide verification of their test results. Additional information made to the Director will be reported to the ROWPH.

Test Results

Re-entry may only be approved with the following considerations:

- The individual must provide a copy of the negative test result and be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours
- If the individual's test is negative but they are still displaying symptoms, they will still be excluded until they are 24 hours symptoms free as they may have some other infectious disease
- If the individual doesn't get tested, they will be excluded for 14 days from the onset of symptoms and must also be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours
- If the individual's test is positive, they must be excluded for at least 14 days from the onset of symptoms and receive clearance from the ROWPH before they are able to return

Confirmed Case of COVID-19

The ROWPH will notify Little Scholars of any confirmed positive cases and will follow up with any close contacts to the confirmed case. An individual risk assessment of the employees and other children would be considered based on the duration and the nature of the exposure, the individual's symptoms and whether PPE was used. The Director must follow explicit direction from the ROWPH.

One confirmed COVID-19 case is considered a COVID outbreak. The ROWPH will provide direction regarding the length/duration of the outbreak depending on laboratory finding, evidence of continued spread and resolution of illness. In addition, they will offer ongoing support and direction on operations and outbreak management.

Spaces, Fees and Closures

Spaces

The Ministry of Education states that more information on holding spots will become available in September. I.e., How long will your spot be held if you chose not to return when a spot becomes available? Will there come a time where you have to pay for your spot whether your child is in attendance or not, etc.

Fees

Fees are still required to be paid on the first day of each month for that entire month, including any statutory holidays, vacation days and sick days. In addition, the Ministry of Education has confirmed that parent fees will continue to be charged for COVID-19 related absences (i.e., isolation period due to a suspected or confirmed case/illness).

Closures

If Little Scholars is required to close again either through an order by the ROWPH due to a COVID-19 outbreak or another Provincial shut down order, we will provide further instruction at that time based on Ministry of Education and/or ROWPH recommendations and requirements.

Visitors

Effective immediately non-essential visitors will not be permitted entry to Little Scholars including volunteers and students. Consequently all tours/visits, special guests, group gatherings/events, in-person meetings will be delayed until further notice.

Essential visitors such as Ministry of Education personnel and other public officials (i.e., fire marshal, public health inspectors) are the only individuals permitted to enter. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education recognizes that children with special needs and their families continue to require additional supports and services and thus, the provision of in-person special needs services will continue where appropriate. Please note that maximum cohort capacity rules do not apply to Special Needs Resource (SNR) on site and that all SNR personnel must pass our screening criteria prior to entry.

Little Scholars will maintain daily records of anyone entering the facility and the approximate length of their stay and all records will be kept up-to-date and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

Little Scholars Child Care's Operational Guidelines for Coronavirus/COVID-19 Sign Off

We, _____, have thoroughly read
Print Both Parent's Names

and fully understand Little Scholars Child Care's Operational Guidelines for Corona Virus/

COVID-19 and will abide by all the policies and procedures.

Signature _____

Signature _____

Date _____