



COVID-19 Protocols

Our childcare/childminding programs re-opened on September 14th, 2020, with updated health and safety policies to address COVID-19 risks and meet the requirements set forth by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Waterloo Region Public Health and CMAS. St. Louis employees have received training in these new procedures and have created safe, caring, and positive environments where they can engage and learn alongside the children.

Our focus will be on developing and/or renewing relationships with children and ensuring everyone is safe and healthy. We will continue to deliver quality child-centred programming based on the age group and interests of the children.

Policies & Procedures

COVID-19 Screening

Screening stations:

- Each campus will have a screening station for the childcare(s)
- Screening stations will allow for physical distancing between staff and the person being screened and staff will be wearing PPE
- All children will be screened upon arrival. Parents are responsible screening themselves before coming to school. Staff will do daily online screening prior to arrival.
- The screening logs will be kept on site and available for public health to review
- Anyone who does not pass the screening test will not be permitted to enter the childcare. Any child that does not pass the on-site screening procedures will be asked to return home to self-isolate and/or follow the instructions on the Ontario School and Child Care Screening:
 - **Next step:** Children, staff, parents, and students are to complete, and follow the instructions given by the Ontario [COVID-19 school and child care screening](#)
- Employees and children will be monitored throughout the day for any onset of possible symptoms.

Daily Screening

- Child care staff, providers, placement students, and children with any new or worsening symptom(s) of COVID-19, as indicated in the screening, even those with only one symptom, must follow the instructions and next steps on the: [COVID-19 school and child care screening](#)

- Any child care centre staff, visitor or student that has not completed the self-screen will be required to do so prior to entry.
- Any child care centre staff, visitor or student that does not pass the onsite screening procedures will be asked to return home and self-isolate until they meet the criteria on the Ontario School and Child Care Screening Tool for return.

COVID-19 Infection Control:

Attendance Records

- Daily records are kept of essential visitors (e.g., people providing supports for children with special needs) entering the childcare including specific times of arrival and departure, whether screening was conducted and phone number. Records are to be kept on the premises for 1 year.
- Records (e.g., name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, screening completion/result, etc.) must be kept up-to-date and available.
- Daily attendance records of arrival/departure times are kept for each child in centre

Cleaning & Disinfection of Space, Toys and Equipment

- Frequently touched surfaces to be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day as they are most likely to become contaminated (for example, doorknobs, water fountain knobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, electronic devices, and tabletops).
- Laundry will be done as usual apart from items soiled with any bodily fluids which must be laundered separately

Hand washing

- Staff must wash their hands with soap and warm water in the following situations:
 - ✓ Before and after using gloves
 - ✓ Immediately following the disposal or laundering of any contaminated PPE.
 - ✓ Before and after touching theirs or someone else's face
 - ✓ Before entering and leaving a program room
 - ✓ After touching contaminated articles such toys that have been mouthed or personal care items such as toothbrushes.
- If staff cannot access soap and water, alcohol -based hand sanitizer containing a minimum of 60% alcohol can be used, only if the hands are not visibly soiled.
- Sufficient supplies of hand hygiene products are available in all rooms (hand soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR))

- Staff should provide supervision for hand hygiene practices and help where necessary. Children should wash their hands with warm soapy water:
 - ✓ Before handling food
 - ✓ Before and after eating
 - ✓ Before and after toileting, including after a diaper change
 - ✓ After putting their hands in their mouths

Physical Distancing:

Physical distancing will be encouraged, where possible, between children.

- Spreading children out into different areas, particularly at meal and dressing time
- Encourage activities with more space between children using visual cues to promote physical distancing
- Using visual or physical cues (eg., less chairs) to space out activity areas to limit the # of children at a table, etc.
- Re-arranging/ increasing spatial distance of chairs, tables, and furniture to encourage distance
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Toys and Materials

- If sensory materials (e.g., playdough, water, sand, etc.) are offered, emphasis should be placed on hand hygiene before and after the use of materials.
- All toys and equipment should be made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected easily (e.g., avoid plush toys).
- Mouthed toys should be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it
- Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of all toys
- Where toys and materials are shared, they should be cleaned and disinfected prior to being shared
- Staff may wear gloves when cleaning/disinfecting any toys, equipment, or furnishings

PPE

- Staff are trained in proper use of PPE and all policies regarding COVID-19 protocols
- All adults in a child care setting (i.e., child-care staff, essential visitors, and students) are required to wear medical masks and eye protection (i.e., face shield) while inside in the child care premises, including in hallways.
- Children younger than grade 1 are encouraged to wear a non-medical or cloth mask while inside a child care setting, including in hallways. Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two.

- All staff will use the PPE that is provided by the Ministry of Education or the Waterloo Catholic School Board to ensure safety standards are consistently being met
- Eye protection (face shield or goggles) is required both indoors and outdoors, as per occupational health and safety requirements for individuals working in close contact with unmasked individuals. Eye protection is not required for individuals working with children who wear masks.

Exemptions and Exceptions to PPE will be permitted for example, when staff are eating and drinking with a 2- metre distance maintained, and for medical exemptions.

Food Safety

- There will be no self-serve or sharing food at snack times
- “No outside food” and “no sharing” policies and procedures are to be reinforced
- No shared items at snack time (e.g., water jugs, serving spoons)

Visitor Restrictions:

- There will be volunteers and essential visitors allowed at the program.
- Parents must not be prohibited from entering the program, however some restrictions apply
- Students completing post-secondary educational placements will be permitted to enter childcare settings
- Students will also be subject to the same health and safety protocols as other staff members such as screening, and the use of PPE when on the childcare premises and must also review the health and safety protocols.
- The provision of special needs services may continue
- Use of video and telephone interviews could be used to interact with families where possible
- Ministry staff and other public officials (e.g., fire marshal, public health inspectors) are permitted to enter and inspect a childcare centre and premises at any reasonable time.
- There will be no group activities or gatherings at this time

Staffing:

- Shifts may slightly vary, in a rotation, to allow time for a mid-day cleaning of high touch and shared surfaces
- Staff will stay in their program rooms with as little interaction as possible with staff in other areas of premise

Parent Pick-up and Drop-off:

- After parent and child have completed and passed their screening, they will be given a pass to enter the childcare. The parent will go to the childcare door and follow visual cues on the floor

to wait for a staff to come into the hallway, receive the pass and do a visual health check on the child. The child will enter the childcare with the staff and the parent will proceed directly to their own classroom.

- Dismissal times for non-LINC adult classes may be staggered. As parents arrive to pick-up they will wait, using physical distancing cues on the floor. A staff member will come into the hallway with the child to transfer care.

COVID-19 Response Plan:

Symptoms

What is done if any person at the childcare is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 OR has been exposed to COVID-19

- <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>
- [Guidance for school and child care during Omicron surge](#)
- Symptoms related to a previously known and/or diagnosed condition that are not new, or worsening are permitted.
- Mild symptoms (e.g., cough) that persists following a completed isolation period are permitted, as long as they are not new or worsening symptoms.
- All household contacts of symptomatic individuals are required to follow directions given on the [COVID-19 school and child care screening](#)

Isolation

When a child or employee develops symptoms related to COVID-19, the individual must be isolated, until the parent can pick them up or in the case of staff, another adult can pick them up.

- The staff will phone the classroom and ask for the parent to come pick up the child immediately
- The child will be isolated from other children until parent arrives to pick up
- All items and areas used by the person who is symptomatic should be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly.
- If the person who is symptomatic is a child, a childcare staff should remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives. If tolerated and above the age of 2, the child should wear a medical mask. The childcare staff should also avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions.

- Isolation length follows [Ministry of Health Case and Contact Management Guidance](#) document and starts from the onset of symptoms or from the date of their test (whichever comes sooner).

Reporting

On December 30, 2021 the province made some significant changes to testing guidance and case management with the Omicron variant. The province has suspended reporting of COVID-19 cases in child care and there is no longer a requirement to report children or staff with symptoms or positive Rapid Antigen Tests or PCR results.

Child care setting operators are no longer required to report a child or staff person who become sick while attending the child care setting.

Any child or staff that has tested positive on a Rapid Antigen Test or PCR no longer needs to report this to public health and are advised to follow the guidance provided in the [case and contact website](#) for directions on isolation. If there is a symptomatic child or staff, please refer to the case and contact website for directions on isolation and/or symptom monitoring.

For more information:

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/coronavirus-resources-for-schools-and-child-care-centres.aspx>

Additional reporting from Spots for Tots ONLY

Updated Feb. 8, 2022

- **Confirmed cases are no longer reportable serious occurrences.**

Unplanned Disruption of Service Related to COVID-19 – Public Health Ordered Closures OR Voluntary Closures for closures of entire child care centre related to COVID-19

- Where public health orders a closure of the entire child care centre, submit a serious occurrence in CCLS under ‘Unplanned Disruption of Service’ with the subcategory of ‘Public Health Closure of Entire Centre or Home Premises Related to COVID-19’
- Where there is a voluntary closure of child care centre, submit a serious occurrence in CCLS under ‘Unplanned Disruption of Service’ with the subcategory of ‘Voluntary Closure of Entire Centre or Home Premises related to COVID-19’

Examples of voluntary closures of Child Care Centres related to COVID-19

- School board makes the decision to close the entire school therefore entire child care centre closes ****Where time-limited mandated closure of all schools is in effect, this is not a reportable serious occurrence e.g. Before and After School programs.**
- Licensee decides to close entire child care centre due to not having enough staff.

- Licensee decides to close entire child care centre due to cases of COVID-19
- First Nation community decides to close the entire community/child care centre/home child care agency due to COVID concerns
- Any time a licensee decides to close the entire program for any reason related to COVID

Please note that program room closures are not a reportable serious occurrence. Only Public Health Ordered and Voluntary Closures of the entire child care centre or of a home child care premises are a reportable serious occurrence.

More information:

- [Ministry of Health](#)
- [COVID19ImmunizationDisclosureWCDSB.pdf](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Region of Waterloo Public Health](#)
 - [Children/Teens and COVID-19](#)
 - [Adults and COVID-19](#)
- [Safe Voluntary Isolation Site](#)

Ontario's child welfare agencies continue to operate. Visit Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region for information on [how you can help during the pandemic](#).