

Love n' Learn Child Care Inc.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policies and Procedures

Date Policy and Procedures Established: July 8, 2020

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: October 18, 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that can cause illness ranging from the common cold to more serious respiratory infections and even death. Emerging information on COVID-19 suggests that children may have milder or asymptomatic infections; however, they may still be able to spread the virus to other people.

On June 12, 2020 the Provincial Government have announced that child care centres may re-open following strict health and safety protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure the safety of child care staff, children and their families. To manage the risk of spreading illness within the child care centre, the ***Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)*** along with the ***Ministry of Education*** and ***York Public Health Unit*** have provided directions on health and safety requirements such as cleaning/sanitation protocols and personal health care practices including frequent hand washing and requires daily active screening of all individuals arriving at the child care centre.

These instructions supersede ***Love n' Learn Child Care Inc*** policies that are already in place. COVID-19 Policies and Procedures will be reviewed with all Centre staff. All staff are required to follow all existing health and safety requirements and regulations, as well as adhere to all current infection prevention and control practices.

Staff will make themselves aware of the pandemic by:

- Participating in all required training to maintain current information on health and safety related to the pandemic. Supervisor must ensure that training is provided to all staff on the Health and Safety protocols (Policy and Procedures)
- Reading all memos posted; in particular; Health and Safety, York Region emails regarding COVID-19 information and Guidelines and Expectations set by York Region.
- Reading the communication logbook daily and initial both at the beginning of their shift if any updated information is available at the end of the day.

These enhanced measures will remain in place until such time that the Ministry of Education and York Region Public Health indicate it is safe to return to normal operating procedures or makes further changes to health and safety recommendations.

Guidance on Health and Safety Procedures

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting

Policy Statement:

Cleaning is the essential first step in minimizing the risk of spreading the virus. Routine hygiene practices and enhanced measures for cleaning and disinfection of toys, equipment and other frequently touched surfaces is important to reduce the spread of pathogens in the Centre. Childcare centers should be cleaned frequently. Focus should be on regular hand hygiene to reduce the risk of infection related to high touch surfaces. Cleaning plus disinfection twice daily is suggested at a minimum, however, more frequent cleaning and disinfection may be necessary, depending on the frequency of use and extent of soilage.

Procedures:

Daily Cleaning and Disinfecting Practices:

Cleaning and Disinfecting play an important role in stopping the chain of transmission. Some germs can live for hours, days or weeks on toys, counters, diapering table and other frequently touched surfaces. Without cleaning, dirt or organic matter can interfere with the disinfectant's ability to kill germs present on surfaces. If you are cleaning multiple surfaces, move from least to most soiled areas to reduce the risk of spreading contamination.

Cleaning with soap and water using friction removes dirt and grease that can hide and protect germs from disinfectants. Cleaning will substantially reduce the number of germs that may be on surfaces.

Disinfecting bleach solution after cleaning will kill most of the germs that were left behind. Cleaners and disinfectant products and methods already used by the childcare centre are effective against COVID-19. Disinfectants must have a drug identification number (DIN) if approved for use in Canada (common household bleach and isopropyl alcohol are the only exceptions). Always follow manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU) and check for expiry dates. Read labels for direction on dilution and mixing, personal protective equipment (PPE) needed (e.g., gloves, goggles), surfaces appropriate for use, contact time, efficacy on specific organisms, and rinsing requirements.

Staff are to follow proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures and wear their proper PPE (face mask, eye protection i.e. face shield/goggles) when cleaning and disinfecting.

Proper Cleaning Steps:

The 6 Steps for cleaning and disinfecting:

- Clean with soap and water
- Rinse with clean water
- Apply disinfectant (pre-mixed bleach and water solution)
- Allow the surface or object to soak in the disinfectant for the required contact time (10 minutes).

- Rinse with clean water if required (rinsing is not required if using household bleach and water)
- Let it air dry

Toys and Equipment:

Staff are to ensure that all toys and equipment are in good condition, sanitary and advise the supervisor of any concerns regarding toys and equipment. Supervisor must take immediate action regarding these concerns. All toys used at the centre are made of materials that are easily cleaned and disinfected (plush toys will be removed)

- Cleaning and Disinfecting logs are to be posted for every program area and must reflect a schedule for each cleaning area (i.e., after every use, twice daily, weekly and or monthly)
- Staff are to ensure cleaning and disinfecting logs are updated after each cleaning
- Staff will clean and disinfect **Toys** twice a day and at a minimum between cohorts
- **Mouthed Toys** will be placed in a bin labeled “soiled toys” which will be disinfected
- Designated toys and equipment are available for each program area or cohort. Shared toys and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being shared.
- Group water/sensory tables **must not be used**. Only individual sensory play is permitted. 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.
- **Playground structures and equipment** can only be used by one cohort at a time. If the outdoor play area is large enough to accommodate multiple groups, the supervisor may divide the space with physical markers to ensure cohorts remain separated at least by 2 meters. The supervisor is to ensure a schedule is made to designate a time for each small group/cohort to facilitate physical distancing. Cleaning and disinfecting must be done on all touch surfaces before and after each use by each cohort.
- Love n’ Learn Child Care Inc. will not use any community playground equipment
- Items such as books, puzzles, and cardboard that are not absorbent and cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected will be removed.
- The supervisor may approve community walks when outdoor space is challenging to secure. Staff must adhere to physical distancing practices when possible.
- Tables and chairs are to be cleaned and disinfected before and after use and as often as needed
- Should there be any child present with symptoms of COVID-19, all toys and equipment accessed by that child must be removed from the room, placed in a labeled bin and be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible.

Sleeping Equipment (cots and bedding):

- Cots will be assigned to each child and labeled with their names on all four corners. Cots will be placed ideally 2 meters/6.5 feet apart to support physical distancing. If spatial separation is not possible, place children in a head-toe position to eliminate face-face contact
- Sleeping equipment (e.g., cribs, cots, and mats) are cleaned and disinfected after each use. Bedding (e.g., sheets and blankets) used for sleeping is laundered at least weekly or when visibly soiled. Personal blankets must be sent home on Fridays to be laundered or when visibly soiled.
- Families are permitted to provide personal blankets labeled with the child’s name to prevent communicable disease transmission. Blankets provided by the families are to be laundered and placed in a bag with the child’s name before being brought to the centre.

Shared Spaces/objects

The risk associated with transmission with shared objects is low. Instead of regular cleaning of shared objects, the focus should be on regular hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette to reduce the risk of infection related to shared equipment. This is especially the case for young children where shared equipment is important for learning (for example, toys for imaginative play, manipulatives for math). Where an individual is suspected of having COVID-19 in the childcare setting:

- Love N Learn has a protocol to determine contaminated areas and carry out cleaning and disinfection. A separate cleaning log will be used to document cleaning including timing, when to return to use, methods of cleaning, PPE to be used while cleaning, and waste disposal.
 - A protocol to determine contaminated areas and all contaminated surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected immediately
 - A separate chart will be used to identify areas that may require cleaning plus disinfection (items used by the individual and all surfaces within 2 meters of the ill person) versus cleaning alone (such as a hallway or room where the individual has passed through).
 - Use disposable cleaning equipment, such as disposable wipes, where possible.
 - Remove all items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, etc.) and store them in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.
 - A focus on proper hand hygiene before and after using shared play structures is advised.

Additional Infection Prevention Protocols:

- Staff are responsible for mixing and preparing the disinfectant solution; staff will need to use corresponding test strips to verify that it contains the proper concentration. The correct concentration is important for safe and proper disinfection. Please follow proper guidance on mixing a different bleach and water solution for various needs; everyday disinfecting use, minor blood/bodily fluids, Outbreak and for major blood/bodily fluids. For additional guidance on environmental cleaning please refer to Proper [Cleaning and Disinfection Practices](#) poster; posted in the kitchen.
- Frequently touched surfaces including doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, electronic devices and table tops, are most likely to become contaminated and **must be disinfected at least twice a day**.
- Washrooms must be cleaned and disinfected frequently. If washrooms are shared, ensure only one cohort is using it at a time. Washroom break times must be scheduled between cohorts as well as cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Parents/guardians should provide sunscreen that must be labelled with the child's name. Staff are to ensure sunscreen are not shared and proper hand hygiene is performed (i.e., wash hands before and after application) when helping children to apply sunscreen.
- Personal belongings (backpacks, extra clothing, water bottles etc..) should be limited. Belongings brought into the centre should be labeled and kept in the child's cubby/designated area. Water bottles must be labeled and placed in the child's individual bin and will be sent home for sanitization daily.
- Reinforce "no sharing" practices for children which includes no sharing of food, water bottles, or personal belongings.
- When holding toddlers, use blankets or cloths over childcare providers clothing and change the blankets or cloths between children (Laundered after each use)
- Avoid getting close to faces of all children where possible

- Where an individual is suspected of having COVID-19 in the child-care setting:

Food Safety Requirements:

Licensees and home childcare providers should follow regular food preparation guidelines.

- Family style meals are permitted to operate provided that food handlers use adequate food handling and safety practices.
- Staff are to ensure proper hand hygiene is practiced when staff are preparing food and for all individuals before and after eating. Where possible, children should practice physical distancing while eating.

Hand Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette and PPE

The purpose of hand hygiene is to remove and kill pathogens (germs) on the hands. Handwashing with soap and water is the preferred method for cleaning soiled hands. Staff are to follow proper handwashing and incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.

- When there's no access to soap and water and if hands are not visibly soiled, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHR) containing a minimum of 60% alcohol can be used.
- Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies. Childcare staff, visitors and students on educational placement should be trained and able to assist children on appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), and reinforcing its use.
- Hand hygiene should be conducted by anyone entering the childcare setting and incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended (for example, before eating food, after using the washroom).
- Childcare staff, visitors, students on educational placement and children should be provided with targeted, age-appropriate education in proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Age-appropriate posters or signage are placed around the childcare setting.
 - Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.
 - ABHR can be used by children. It is most effective when hands are not visibly soiled.
 - For any dirt, blood, body fluids (urine/feces), it is preferred that hands be washed with soap and water.
 - Safe placement of the ABHR to avoid consumption is important, especially for young children.
 - Support or modifications should be provided to allow children with special needs to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.
 - Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets (for example, foot pedal-operated, hand sensor, open basket) are to be provided, where possible.
 - ABHR with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration must be available (60-90% recommended, including ideally at the entry point to each childcare room) and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks and paper towels in dispenser

Full PPE will be required to be worn:

- When screening staff, placement students, children, and essential visitors and when accompanying children into their classroom from the screening area (full PPE includes gloves, mask, face shield/goggles and gowns)

- When cleaning and disinfecting blood or bodily fluid spills if there is a risk of splashing
- When caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness

Disposable Glove Use

Staff will:

- Store disposable non-latex gloves in a cool, dry place
- Gloves are intended for single use per task
- Wash hands before/after glove use
- Use as recommended by the manufacturer
- Remove after use and dispose of in the regular garbage (never wash and reuse)
- Wash hands as indicated above after disposable non-latex gloves are removed.

Note: Remove gloves from wrist and peel inside out prior to disposal.

Note: Disposable non-latex gloves are to be used for infection control purposes; however, the use of disposable non-latex gloves does not replace the need for handwashing.

Disposable Surgical Face Masks/Face Shields

Starting September 1, 2020, Childcare Operators will be expected to ensure that all adults in a child-care setting (i.e., child care staff, students, essential visitors) are required to wear medical masks and face shields for eye protection while inside in the child care premises, including hallways and staff rooms (unless eating – but time with masks off should be limited and physical distance should be maintained). Staff, post-secondary students, and essential visitors are to abide by the new guidelines set out by the [Ontario Ministry of Education- Operational Guidelines during COVID-19 Outbreak](#).

Note: When wearing a mask, you should wash your hands before donning the mask and before/after removing the mask. Refer to [York Region Public Health Resources: PPE Poster](#) on how to properly wear and take off PPE

- The use of masking or eye protection is not required outdoors if two metres distance is possible to maintain. Physical distance is strongly encouraged between groups
- All younger children (grade 1 and below) are encouraged but not required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while inside a child-care setting, including in hallways. Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two. See information about the use of masks on the provincial COVID-19 website.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child(ren) with a nonmedical mask(s) or face covering each day and should be reminded that if children are wearing masks, they will require a way to store their mask when not in use.
- Masks should be replaced when they become damp or visibly soiled.
- Exceptions to wearing masks indoors could include circumstances where a physical distance of at least 2 metres can be maintained between individuals, situations where a child cannot tolerate wearing a mask, and reasonable exceptions for medical conditions, etc.
- Disposable face masks are to be disposed of after each use
- Face shields are to be washed and disinfected after use

Managing and Reporting Illness

Policy Statement:

To protect the health and well-being of children and staff within the Child Care Centre, all children should be monitored while in care for emerging signs and symptoms of any illness, including COVID-19. The Supervisor must initiate the centre's illness management policies, including the following measures related to outbreak management for COVID-19. A serious occurrence will be reported to the Ministry when a child or staff is suspected, or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, and York Region Public Health will be contacted. Details of reporting and managing illness can be found on: [Re-opening and Resuming Business during COVID-19 | York Region](#). All staff, parents/guardian and essential persons entering the Child Care Centre must follow Centre's procedures regarding screening for symptoms, attendance records and testing requirements. In the event of an outbreak or confirmed positive case, Love N' Learn Childcare will follow all directions given by York Region Public Health and the supervisor will notify parents/guardian by email.

Procedures:

Daily Active Screening for Symptoms

All individuals entering the childcare premises must self-screen every day before attending the program using the York Region screening tool for schools and childcare www.York.ca/safeatschool. All individuals must follow the monitoring and isolation advice outlined in the screening tool. Confirmation or proof of self-screening will be sent to monitoring@lovenlearn.ca before arriving at the centre. Love N Learn Childcare will continue to do the on-site screening and keep the records on file. If the child, child care staff, provider, placement student or visitor received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms as indicated in the updated COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, they may continue to attend the child care program if they are feeling well enough to do so.

NOTE: Your COVID-19 screening results, including contact information, collected by the childcare centre during the screening process, may be provided to Public Health to help manage contact tracing and reduce the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus in the childcare centre.

- All individuals must self-screen every day before arrival at the child-care setting. Families/staff/students will send a copy of their results via email before entering the building daily
- Staff will continue to log children's temperature upon arrival; readings will be documented in the classroom logbook
- Individuals who do not pass the screening are not permitted to attend the program and must stay home.
- The child, child care centre staff, provider or placement student must not attend child care if household members are experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms (this direction does not pertain to those who received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms) and/or are waiting for COVID-19 test results after experiencing symptoms.
- The Supervisor will ensure that any individual experiencing COVID-19 symptoms during the day must not remain at the Centre and **MUST** self-isolate in accordance with York Region Public health

and Ministry of Education Guidelines

- Child-care staff, providers, placement students, and children with any new or worsening symptom of COVID-19, as indicated in the [COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool](#), even those with only one symptom, must stay home until:
 - They receive a negative COVID-19 test result
 - They receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional, or
 - It has been 10 days since their symptom on-set and they are feeling better
- If any household members are experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or are waiting for COVID-19 test results after experiencing symptoms, the child, child-care Centre staff, provider or placement student must not attend child-care
- Love N Learn will conduct daily on-site confirmation of self-screening, for child-care Centre staff, visitors and placement students who are entering the child-care premises
 - Any child-care Centre staff, visitor or student that does not pass the on-site screening procedures will be asked to return home and self-isolate until they meet the criteria for return
- **Essential visitors will be required to meet all daily active screening requirements prior to entering the centre. They will be required to wear a mask, eye protection and clean hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer prior to entry.**

Contact/Non-Contact Thermometers

- Love n Learn child-care staff will use contactless thermometers to test the temperature of staff, children, parents/guardian, and essential visitors before entering the child-care Centre. Thermometers are to be disinfected after each use.

Screening Procedures:

- Daily active screening may be completed by in a designated screening area in the lobby of the childcare centre. Screeners should take appropriate precautions when screening and if escorting children to the program. If a 2-metre distance or physical distancing cannot be maintained, personal protective equipment (PPE) (i.e., medical mask and eye protection (i.e., face shield)) should be worn.
- All daily screening results must be maintained and kept on the premises
- Alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) containing at least 60% alcohol content must be available at the screening station for hand hygiene.
- Individuals re-entering the child-care Centre on the same day must be screened again **PRIOR** to re-entering the centre.
- Anyone who answers **YES** to any of the question will not be permitted to enter the facility.
- Parents and guardians will be reminded of this requirement when children are first registered for the program and through visible signage at the entrances and drop-off areas. All parents will receive a copy of our policies and procedures, screening questions along with other helpful resources from Public Health (self-assessment information, steps to take for lowering risks etc.) via email.

Attendance Records

Love n Learn Childcare Inc. will maintain a daily attendance record of anyone (such as staff, cleaners, people doing maintenance work, people providing supports for children with special needs, Ministry staff, Public officials etc..) entering the facility and approximate length of their stay.

- Information to be included in the daily records are:
 - Name of the person entering the facility
 - Contact information
 - Time of arrival/departure
 - Screening completion/result
 - Staff assigned cohort
- Records will be maintained and kept on the centre's premises
- These records will be used to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

Monitoring and Responding to Reports of COVID-19 Symptoms in a Child Care Setting

- All child-care and early years sector partners, together with Ministry of Health and Public Health will work closely to monitor and respond to reports of COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a household member received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms as indicated in the updated COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, they are not required to self-isolate (stay home). If the symptoms worsen, continue past 48 hours, or if the individual develops other symptoms, they should immediately self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.
- Persons who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance of their local public health unit and health care professional regarding direction for isolation and returning to a childcare setting. The individual cannot return until cleared by their public health unit. Note that individuals do not need to provide a medical note or proof of negative result to return to the program.
- If an individual becomes ill while in the child-care setting:
 - The ill individual must be immediately separated from others, in a separate room where possible (i.e., an isolation room). Parents/guardians must be contacted for pick-up of symptomatic children.
 - Symptomatic children who are separated from others must be supervised.
 - Anyone providing care to the ill individual should maintain as much physical distance as possible. If physical distancing is not possible (e.g., if a young child needs comfort) staff/providers should consider added PPE (i.e., gloves, gown).
 - The person caring for the individual should wear a medical mask and eye protection and be trained on proper use of PPE, including donning and doffing.
 - If tolerated, the ill individual should also wear a medical mask.
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the ill individual is waiting to be picked up.

- Cleaning of the area the separated individual was in and other areas of the child care setting where the ill individual was should be conducted as soon as reasonably possible after the ill individual leaves (see above in the Cleaning section).
- The ill individual and/or their parent or guardian be advised to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions which may include seeking medical advice or going for testing for COVID-19.
- Communication protocols to update and inform necessary stakeholders within the child care community while maintaining confidentiality of the ill individual should be initiated (e.g., contact the school, home child care agency, service system manager and/or ministry through a Serious Occurrence Report as applicable).
- Regular child-care operation can continue unless directed otherwise by the local public health unit.
- An ill individual who has a known alternative diagnosis provided by a health care professional may return to child care if they do not have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.
- If a child develops symptoms and their self-screening indicates they should stay home but their sibling(s) do not have symptoms, the siblings do not need to isolate until the other child tests positive for COVID-19. However, check your local public health unit's website or call to see if those without symptoms should go to school/child-care. Some public health units have different rules based on local risk.
- If a child is tested for COVID-19, follow the guidance of the local public health unit, health care provider and related direction for isolation and returning to the program. If there are other siblings or members of the household that attend school or child-care, the local public health unit will provide any further direction on returning to school/child-care.

Testing Requirements

Children and staff of Love n Learn should be referred for testing when demonstrating symptoms of illness. **Individuals who choose not to have COVID-19 testing must be excluded from the childcare setting for 14 days.**

- **Symptomatic** individuals who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program until 24 hours after symptom resolution.
- Those who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program for 14 days after the onset of symptoms and/or clearance has been received from [York Region Public Health](#).
- Child-care centre should notify [York Region Public Health](#) if there are two or more symptomatic individuals within 48 hours. A suspect respiratory outbreak will be declared by [York Region Public Health](#)
- Additional guidance can be obtained by calling [York Region Public Health](#) at 1-877-464-9575 ext. 73588
- **Asymptomatic** individuals should only be performed as per provincial testing guidance.
- Those who had contact with another individual of a confirmed case should seek out assessment and testing for COVID-19 at a COVID-19 Assessment Centre as soon as possible after identification of the case.

- If they test negative and the contact becomes symptomatic, they should be re-tested. If the test result is negative, asymptomatic contacts of a confirmed case must remain in self-isolation for 14 days from their last exposure to the case
- A list of symptoms, including atypical signs and symptoms, can be found in the COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms on the [Ministry of Health's COVID-19 website](#).
- Please see the protocols when a child or staff becomes sick for information on testing in the event of a suspected case.

Management of Staff/Children with Possible Illness/Symptoms (COVID-19)

In order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and contain outbreaks within the child care centre, staff, parents/guardians, and children must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

Guidelines for worker safety, if staff becomes ill while at the centre, it is recommended that:

- Staff must be sent home immediately
- Staff must be directed to seek assessment and testing at a COVID-19 Assessment Centre.
- If staff is suspected to have or diagnosed with COVID-19, the staff must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and clearance provided by their local health until to return to the child-care centre
- Self-monitoring signage will be posted in the staff room, washrooms, entrances and where available for staff to reference
- If the staff illness is determined to be work-related in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, an employer must provide a written notice within four days of infection, or if a claim has been made to the Workplace safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) by the or on behalf of the worker with respect to an occupational illness, including an occupational infect to the:
 - Ministry of Labour
 - Joint health and safety committee (or health and safety representative)
- Any instances of occupationally acquired infection shall be reported to WSIB within 72 hours of receiving notification of said illness.

Guidelines for when a child begins to experience symptoms of illness (COVID-19) while attending child care, it is recommended that:

- If a child develops symptoms after accepted into care, they will be isolated under the supervision of the Supervisor. The child's parent/guardian or emergency contact person will be contacted for immediate pick-up.
- The sick child should be kept at least 2-metres from others to prevent/limit virus transmission to those providing care as advised by the [York Region Public Health](#) unit.
- While contacting the public health unit, at minimum the child (over the age of 2) and childcare worker should wear a surgical/procedure mask (if tolerated).
- Hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the child is waiting to be picked up

- Tissues should be provided to the child for proper respiratory etiquette, with guidance on proper disposal of the tissues and proper hand hygiene steps.
- All items used by the symptomatic child/staff should be cleaned and disinfected immediately. All items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.
- Environmental cleaning of the space the child was separated should be conducted once the child has been picked-up.
- Supervisor/Designate should contact [York Region Public Health](#) to notify them of a potential case and seek input regarding the information that should be shared with other parents of children in the child care centre (1-877-464-9675 ext. 73588 between 8:00 am-8:00 pm, Monday-Sunday (after hours call: 905-953-6478)
- Children or staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 or symptomatic person(s), should be excluded from the childcare setting for 14 days.
- If the symptomatic child has been in close contact with a confirmed case COVID-19 case or has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days, siblings of the child are required to go home and self-isolate. If the symptomatic child has not been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 and has not recently travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days, siblings of the child can self-monitor and continue to attend care.

Serious Occurrence Reporting

Childcare licensees have a duty to report suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the medical officer of health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. A serious occurrence will be reported to the [Ministry](#) only where a child, staff, student, home child care provider, home child care visitor or a person who is ordinarily a resident /regularly present at a home child care premises has a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Licensees must:

- Report this as a serious occurrence to the ministry.
- Report to the local public health unit and provide any materials (e.g., daily attendance records) to public health officials to support case management and contact tracing and other activities in accordance with all applicable legislation, including the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Effective **November 9, 2020**, childcare licensees will only be required to report a serious occurrence for COVID-19 related matters for:

- **Confirmed COVID-19 cases; or**
- **Closures ordered by your local Public Health Unit** (i.e., where a closure is ordered for a Centre, program room/s or provider's home due to a **confirmed** or a **suspected** COVID-19 case(s).
- A Serious occurrence report is required for the following individuals with a **confirmed** case of COVID-19:
 - a **child who receives childcare** at a home childcare premises or childcare Centre,
 - a home childcare **provider**,
 - a person who is **ordinarily a resident of a home childcare premises** (e.g. the home provider's child, the home provider's spouse etc.; for complete definition please refer to the Home Child Care Licensing Manual)
 - a person who is **regularly at a home childcare premises** (e.g. the home provider's friend who visits the premises once a week etc.; for complete definition please refer to the Home Child Care Licensing Manual),
 - a **home childcare visitor**,
 - a **staff** member at a childcare Centre
 - a **student** at a home childcare premises or childcare Centre
- Public health officials will determine any additional steps required, including but not limited to how to monitor for other possible infected staff/providers and children and the declaration of an outbreak and closure of rooms and/or entire childcare settings.
 - If a closure is ordered by the local public health unit and the licensee has already submitted a serious occurrence for a confirmed case, the existing serious occurrence must be updated to reflect the closure.
- Should additional individuals at the childcare program develop a confirmed case, licensees must either:
 - Revise the open serious occurrence report to include the additional cases; or,
 - Submit a new serious occurrence report if the first has been closed already.
- While licensees are no longer required to report a serious occurrence for suspected cases; if the local public health unit determines that a full or partial closure is required (i.e., program room, home premises or entire child care Centre must remain closed for a period of time), a serious occurrence report must be submitted under the "Unplanned Disruption of Service" category. Please

also note there are requirements of employers to let workers know if they may have been exposed in the workplace.

Outbreak Management

- An outbreak may be declared by the local public health unit when:
 - within a 14-day period, there are two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in children, staff/providers or other visitors with an epidemiological link (e.g., cases in the same room, cases that are part of the same before/after school care cohort) where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection in the child care setting.
- The local public health unit will work with the licensee to determine whether epidemiological links exist between cases and whether transmission may have occurred in the childcare setting.
- If the local public health unit declares an outbreak, they will determine what happens next. This could include closing a particular childcare rooms or cohorts or an entire childcare setting.
- The public health unit will help determine which groups of children and/or staff/providers need to be sent home or if a partial or full closure of the childcare setting is required.
- If the public health unit determines that partial or full closure of the childcare setting is required, the licensee must revise their existing serious occurrence report for a confirmed COVID-19 case to include information about the closure.

Guidance on Physical Distancing/Cohorts/Space Set-up

Policy Statement:

As of September 1, 2020, child-care settings may return to maximum group sizes as set out under the CCEYA (i.e., licensed age groups prior to the COVID-19 outbreak). Physical distancing will be encouraged where possible between children within the same cohort.

Procedures:

Staff/Provider Training

- Updated training should be offered such that all child-care staff/providers receive training on current health and safety measures in place according to the Operational Guidance as well as those in place by the local Public Health Unit.
- This may include instruction on how to effectively use PPE, how to properly clean and disinfect the space and equipment, how to ensure daily screening is completed, how to keep daily attendance records, and what to do in the case that someone becomes sick, including how and when to report

Encouraging Physical Distancing

- When setting up indoor play space and using outdoor space, physical distancing of at least 2-metres must be maintained.
- In shared outdoor space, mixing between groups and any other individuals outside of the group is permitted, though physical distancing should be encouraged between groups as much as possible.
- Maintain at least 2-metres between cohorts and children within the same cohort, if possible. This can be achieved by:
 - Spreading children out into different areas at meal and dressing time
 - Chairs and tables will be re-arranged to ensure physical distancing when possible
 - Moving activities outside to allow for more space
- Increase distance between sleeping equipment (e.g., cots and mats) or placing children head to toe or toe to toe if space is limited.
- Singing is permitted indoors; masking is encouraged but not required for singing indoors if a minimum of two metres distance can be maintained between cohorts and as much distancing as possible maintained within a cohort.
- Ensure childcare staff is practicing physical distancing during breaks and lunches. Chairs and Tables will be re-arranged to ensure physical distancing in staff room.

Ventilation:

For best practices and measures to optimize Adequate ventilation will be provided by opening windows, moving activities outdoors when possible, and through mechanical ventilation including HVAC systems. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVACs) and their filters are designed to reduce airborne pollutants, including virus particles, when they circulate through the system

- Ensure HVAC systems are in good working condition.
- Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.
- Arrange furniture away from air vents and high airflow areas.
- Avoid re-circulating air. While ventilation is important, it must be used along with other public health measures. There is not one public health measure that can guarantee protection from COVID-19; multiple strategies are needed. Other measures include symptom screening and selfisolation for people with symptoms, practicing physical distancing, wearing a mask, and practicing good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

Interactions with Infants/Toddlers:

- Staff will supervise and hold bottles for infants not yet able to hold their own bottle to reduce the risk of choking.
- Staff will wear goggles as eye protection only in the infant program
- Infants will be placed in head-to-toe position in the cribs; cribs are secured with clear plexi as a separation between other cribs.
- Recognizing that physical distancing is difficult with small children and infants, suggestions to support physical distancing include:

- Planning activities for smaller groups when using shared toys or objects; and, when possible, moving activities outside to allow for more space.
- Children must not share food, feeding utensils, soothers, bottles, sippy cups, etc. Mouthed toys must be removed immediately for cleaning and disinfecting and must not be shared with other children. Label these items with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.

Cohorting and Staffing

To reduce spreading of communicable diseases and facilitate contact tracing for confirmed cases or outbreak of COVID-19, cohorting should be implemented in the childcare centre. A cohort is defined as a group of children and the staff members assigned to them, who stay together throughout the duration of the program for minimum 5 days.

- Classrooms can function at the maximum group size (i.e., licensed age groups prior to the COVID-19 outbreak).
- Efforts should be made to limit the use of shared equipment. Shared equipment should be disinfected regularly, and children and program staff should practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in physical activity and equipment use
- Cohort must stay together throughout the day and are not permitted to mix with other cohorts
- Part-time childcare attendees should be counted in the total number of children in the cohort, even on the days when they are not physically attending the program.
- Childcare staff must work at only **one location**.
- Movement of supervisors and/or designates, staff and students on educational placement between childcare locations and between licensed age groups is permitted. Reducing the movement of staff and placement students where possible is encouraged to minimize potential for transmission.
- Staff shifts will change based on the needs of the centre (i.e., low ratios)

Qualified Staff:

- Licensees are required to ensure each group has the required number of qualified staff as set out in the CCEYA. Licensees may submit requests for staff director approval (DAs) to the ministry.
- Staff DAs can be transferred from one childcare centre to another childcare centre that is operated by the same licensee.
- Licensees can also request a staff DA for multiple age groups.
- [Certification in Standard First Aid Training](#), including Infant and Child CPR o Staff that are included in ratios and all home childcare providers are required to have valid certification in first aid training including infant and child CPR, unless exempted under the CCEYA or the certification has been extended by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).
- The WSIB has indicated that all certifications that expire after March 1, 2020, are automatically temporarily extended until December 31, 2020.

- Licensees are encouraged to monitor the WSIB website for any updates on First Aid/CPR certificate extensions for any staff, home childcare providers or in-home service providers whose certification would have expired after March 1, 2020.
- [Vulnerable Sector Checks \(VSCs\)](#), licensees are required to obtain VSCs from staff and other persons who are interacting with children at the premises, including students. A licensee is not required to obtain a new VSC from staff or persons interacting with children where the fifth anniversary of the staff or person's most recent VSC falls within the emergency period, until 60 days after the emergency period ends.
- If an individual is unable to obtain a VSC in a reasonable amount of time due to significant backlogs, they must ensure the individual has applied for a VSC and put in place additional measures as set out in their reference check policy.

Rescheduling Group Events and In-person Meetings

Communication with parents:

- It is essential that parents are kept informed on the status of the Pandemic COVID-19. It is also important that they understand the policy surrounding exclusion and why ill children are not to be present in the childcare facility.
- A Pandemic COVID-19 Policy and Procedure will be provided to all Love n' Learn families.
- Updated Policies and Procedures will be shared with the families, for their information and to ensure they are aware of these expectations, including keeping children home when they are sick.
- Where possible, the use of in-person communication should be limited to email, phone or Sandbox. Group events have been suspended until further notice. Policies, resources and centre documents will be sent to parents via email.

Provision of Special Needs Resources (SNR) Services:

- The ministry recognizes that children with special needs and their families continue to require additional supports and services in child-care settings.
- The provision of in-person special needs services in child-care settings should continue where appropriate and licensees may use their discretion to determine whether the services being provided are essential and necessary at this time.
- Please work with special needs service providers to explore alternative modes of service delivery where in-person delivery is not possible.
- All SNR staff must screen before entering the childcare setting and must follow all health and safety measures that staff/providers follow, including having their attendance logged, practicing proper hand hygiene, wearing a medical mask and eye protection, and maintaining physical distancing as much as possible.
- Licensees and SNR service providers should work together to determine who will be responsible for ensuring SNR staff have appropriate PPE.

- Where SNR services are provided through external staff/service providers, licensees and home child-care providers should inform all families of this fact, and record attendance for contact tracing purposes.

Physical Activities:

- High contact physical activities should take place in outdoor settings only.
- Masking is not required outdoors for high contact physical activities.
- Low contact activities are permitted indoors.

Field Trips:

- Field trips are permitted as per the Reopening Ontario Act.
- Children should be cohorted throughout the duration of the trip
- Ratios must be maintained as set out in the CCEYA. Health and safety requirements set out in the guidelines and regulations (e.g. masking, eye protection) and of the place being visited would continue to apply
- Keeping daily accurate records of individuals attending field trips (name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, transportation, location visited) is required to facilitate contact tracing.

Parent Drop- off and Pick- up/Visitor Procedures

Policy Statement:

All visitors to the program, including parents, students completing educational placements, or others, are subject to the health and safety protocols outlined above and are granted entry for essential purposes only. The number of visitors indoors should be limited to the ability to maintain physical distancing of at least 2 metres. Please Note: All staff, children, parents, and placement students must self-screen using the screening tool provided online prior to entry www.York.ca/safeatschool.

Procedures:

Parent Drop-off and Pick-up:

- Families are to call the centre before arrival; before entering the facility, staff will inform families to wait if there are too many in the building. Only one parent at a time is permitted to enter per classroom.
- All entrances should have alcohol-based hand rub with a concentration of 60- 90% available with signage demonstrating appropriate use
- Alcohol based hand rub should not be accessible to children (i.e., within their reach) and children should be supervised when using the hand rub.
- Signage/markings on the ground to direct families through the entry steps are posted.
- Personal belongings should be labeled and kept in the child's cubby/designated area. (e.g., backpack, hats and mittens, etc.). While appropriate clothing for the weather (e.g., jackets, hats, sunscreen) should continue to come with the child, other personal belongings (e.g., toys) should be minimized.

Visitors:

- **Non- Essential visitors/volunteers are restricted from entering the premises**
- All visitors to the program, including parents, students completing educational placements, or essential visitors, are subject to the health and safety protocols outlined above.
- The number of visitors indoors will be limited to the ability to maintain physical distancing of at least 2 metres.
- Essential Visitors will be screened onsite before entering the premises.
- Use of video and telephone interviews will be used to interact with families where possible, rather than in person.
- Ministry staff and other public officials (e.g., fire marshal, public health inspectors) are permitted to enter and inspect a childcare centre, home childcare agency, and premises at any reasonable time. At the advice of the local public health unit, childcare licensees may be asked to restrict visitor access.

Mental Health

The ministry recognizes the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental health and well-being. The ministry's Building on How Does Learning Happen? supports the operation of early years and childcare programs in Ontario during the COVID-19 outbreak. It provides information on how early years settings can support the social and emotional health and wellbeing of children and families, in addition to safe and healthy environments. Early years and childcare program providers are also encouraged to collaborate with child and youth mental health agencies to support strong connections and make the best use of mental health resources and supports across the integrated system of care.

POLICY REVIEW

All staff members, parents/guardians will read, review and understand the **COVID-19 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** prior to beginning work and annually thereafter and prior to child's start date. The staff member, Child Care Director, Supervisor or designated person will sign a written record of the review.

DISCLAIMER: Our centre will be consistent with our process for the monitoring and breach of all Policies and Procedures.