



Learning through play and exploration

Muppets Cooperative Preschool

Health and Cleaning

Policies and Procedures

Parent and Families Handbook

Including COVID-19 Recovery Procedures

Updated: February 2024

Document located and shared from Google Drive

Introduction

This document provides information regarding our operations and outlines health and safety procedures. These policies and procedures are developed in accordance with Public Health and Ministry of Education recommendations.

The health and safety of our staff and students in school is our top priority. At the same time, we strive to continue offering children a nurturing, inviting and engaging environment - one suited to the children's needs and development.

All policies and procedures will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and parents/guardians prior to opening. As updates and changes happen parents and staff will be notified of these changes.

Please refer to the Parent Handbook "Red Book" (on website)

<http://www.muppetspreschool.ca/registration.php> for all other school policies not related to health and cleaning.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Arrival

- Hand washing or sanitizing is required upon entry into the school.
- **Muppets will be using the Ontario School and Child Care screening tool.** <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>. The screening process is optional, but highly recommended, for every child entering the school. Proof is not required for the completion of the screening. **Please note:** the screening questions still apply on days the child does not attend school (i.e. on a weekend your child has a fever they will still need to follow Public Health rules)
- Parents and guardians need to pass all the screening questions (proof is not required) to enter the Church for child drop-off.

Staff, Duty People, Volunteer, and Guest Screening and Vaccination Policy

Staff, duty people, volunteers and guests should use the screening tool prior to entry into the school. All adults will hand wash or use hand sanitizer upon arrival. All staff members, duty people and volunteers are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19. It is strongly recommended for all people entering the school to have all their vaccines up to date, their COVID-19 vaccination.

Children's Screening and Vaccination Policy

Please use the screening tool for the most up to date information regarding when to keep a child home from school when ill. If a child fails the screening tool please notify the school. Please read the tool carefully as it will indicate when the child is allowed to return to school. It is strongly encouraged for all children to receive their COVID-19 vaccination.

Dismissal

- Dismissal will occur from the gym or classroom at the teacher's discretion.
- Parents and guardians are asked to keep the doors until a teacher is ready for dismissal.
- Parents and guardians need to pass all the screening questions (proof is not required) to enter the Church for child pick-up.

Enhanced Attendance Reporting Practice *(For children, staff and all other individuals entering the school)*

- Maintain daily attendance records of all individuals entering the school. Records will include the following information: name, contact information (unless already on file), date and time.
- The communication log will be used to record typical visitors (ie: Public Health, Ministry of Education) and the guest book will be used for other visitors. Duty people and volunteers are recorded on the monthly schedules.
- Records will be updated when a child or staff member is absent.
- Muppets will follow up with individuals to determine the reason for unplanned absences and this information will be recorded and kept on file.
- Monitor attendance records for patterns and trends.
- Attendance records will always be available on-site.

Daily Life at School

Muppets aim is to create an environment that is joyful, nurturing and engaging and that allows for freedom whenever possible. Muppets follow the direction of Halton Public Health and will update and heighten restrictions as needed.

Activities & Materials

The main aspects of our play-based approach remain: Muppets fosters opportunities for children to explore, think creatively, problem solve and make decisions. All materials are available for use at this time. During times of heightened precautions, Muppets will limit or eliminate use of items that are difficult to disinfect or sanitize.

Snack Time

All our meals are prepared in our on-site kitchen. Snack tables will be disinfected before and after use. Children will wash hands prior to serving themselves and eating snack. Children are encouraged to help themselves by using utensils and child sized water jugs. Children will not be sharing food or drinks with others. If necessary (during times of heightened illness or children are contaminating communal utensils), staff will serve individual portions to each child. Families are not allowed to bring in outside food.

Staff

Training

Our staff are all trained to respond during emergencies with CPR-C and First Aid training along with policies in place in the event of fire, power outage, etc.

Additional training for all staff - administration, teachers, assistant, and screening staff:

- In-house training to review enhanced COVID-19 related health and safety policies and procedures.

These additional training sessions covered the following topics:

- Proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including the proper use of face masks/eye protection and gloves as well as the appropriate times at which to use them
- Self-monitoring
- Screening procedures
- Symptoms arising while at work
- Hand hygiene
- Cleaning, sanitization and disinfection
- Social distancing for children
- Possible curriculum changes and changes to the physical environment

Communication with Families/Group Events

From time to time, in-person communication may be limited. Muppets will rely on email and phone communication. When further communication may be necessary, we will offer the use of video-conferencing (Zoom). The Program Support Staff will communicate any information to the teachers at time of child's arrival (ie: if the parent shared how the child slept, toileted, ate, etc.). The daily logs will be available to view via Google Drive for families to view classroom activities.

We know that regular communication with our families is essential and we will do our best to maintain this connection via technology. In the interest of reducing infection, we will be putting in place the following guidelines during times of outbreak:

- All large group meetings/events will be limited, held outdoors or virtually
- Required meetings will be conducted via Zoom as much as possible
- Any in person meetings conducted inside requires people to pass the screening tool and strongly recommends having their COVID-19 vaccinations
- Masking is optional and encouraged during in person General Meetings or indoor social events
- Only staff members, volunteers, essential board members, required visitors (ie: Public Health, Ministry of Education program advisor, Quality First advisor), and children enrolled will be permitted to enter the preschool during program hours

Continuation of Service

If the school is mandated to close for the health and safety of the community, an assessment and response will be formulated as appropriate.

- All families and staff will be contacted via email regarding the closure and any pertinent information
- Refunds will be determined as per Halton Region/Ministry of Education guidelines

Exclusion Policy

Purpose

To ensure that all staff are aware of and adhere to the directive established by Halton Region Public Health, and Children's Services Division regarding the exclusion of sick staff and/or children attending Muppets.

Procedure

Note: Children and staff must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold. As required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), child care employees must separate children of ill health and contact parents/guardians to pick up their child immediately.

When children are ill and/or exhibit COVID-19 related symptoms, staff will ensure the following:

- The ill or symptomatic child will be separated into the designated exclusion room (supervisor's office) or separated area in the classroom (small room) and be removed from other children to be monitored by a staff until parent/guardian pick up.
- Symptoms of illness will be recorded in the child's file and in a daily log as per the CCEYA.
- The parent/guardian of the ill child will be notified to pick up their child immediately; or
- If it appears that the child requires immediate medical attention, the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner or a nurse registered under the Health Disciplines Act. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 262, s. 34 (3).

When to Exclude

Staff and children should be excluded when there are signs and/or symptoms that are greater than normal, or if a child is unable to participate in regular programming because of illness.

- Fever
- Cough that is new or worsening
- Shortness of breath

- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Digestive issues (nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain)
- Runny, stuffy or congested nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known condition)
- Extreme tiredness that is unusual
- Headache that is unusual or long lasting
- Chills
- Pink eye
- For young children and infants: sluggishness or lack of appetite

How to Exclude

Staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and children who are symptomatic or have been advised to self-isolate by their local public health unit must not attend the program.

- Immediately isolate any child or staff who becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 from the rest of their group, in a designated room or space with hand washing supplies or alcohol based (60-90%) hand rub
- If the child appears sick or feverish, a temperature check is recommended with using the least intrusive method (i.e. non-contact thermometer) and ensure the person using the thermometer is wearing a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection
- Place a non-medical mask on children older than two years (if tolerated) and ensure proper use
- Notify parents/guardians or emergency contacts to pick up the ill child as soon as possible and supervise while waiting to be picked up
- Supervising staff must maintain physical distancing as best as possible and wear personal protective equipment as noted above
- Require staff who become ill at work to immediately go home
- Those who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program for 24 hours after the onset of symptoms (48 hours for gastrointestinal issues)
- Those who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program for 24 hours after the onset of symptoms (48 hours for gastrointestinal issues)
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area if it can be done safely
- Clean and disinfect the designated room or space immediately after the ill child or staff member goes home and items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days
- Testing of asymptomatic persons should only be performed as per provincial testing guidance
- Asymptomatic individuals awaiting results may not need to be excluded and should follow the advice of Public Health
- Recommend that staff and children use the daily screening tool

Testing for COVID-19

- Symptomatic staff and children should be referred for testing
- Testing of an asymptomatic person should only be performed as directed by Halton Region Public Health as part of outbreak management
- Those who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded until 24 hours after symptom resolution
- Those individuals who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded until 24-48 hours after symptom resolution, preferable with a negative RAT test
- Asymptomatic individuals who are fully vaccinated are not required to isolate if they are in contact with an individual who is symptomatic or who tests positive for COVID-19 unless otherwise directed by the Public Health Unit
- Any Staff who test positive for COVID-19 must inform their supervisor of the positive test result
- Outbreaks should be declared in collaboration with the preschool and Halton Region Public Health
- RAT are available from the preschool, please enquire with the supervisor

Surveillance

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are constantly monitored is essential in preventing and reducing illness. Staff must monitor for an increase in above normal amount of illnesses among other employees and children by looking at the normal occurrence of illness at that location and during the specific time period.

Ensure surveillance includes the following:

- Observe children for illness upon arrival
- Active screening is required for anyone entering the child care centre with anyone who fails the screening criteria will not be allowed into the childcare centre
- Record symptoms of illness for each child including signs or complaints the child may describe (i.e. sore throat, stomach ache, headache) and record the date and time that the symptoms occur
- Keep all screening records on site
- Record attendances and absences

Sanitary Health and Safety

Review

This policy and resource will be reviewed and signed off by all staff prior at the beginning of the school year.

Policy

Muppets Co-operative Preschool follows the Halton Public Health directive **Child Care Health Resource** (2023 Part 1: Immunization, Communicable Diseases and Healthy Environments and Part 2: Healthy Child).

Additional Resources and Information

School Screening Tool

<https://www.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

Halton Region

<https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Immunizations-Preventable-Disease/Diseases-Infections/COVID-19#school-child-care>

Public Health Ontario

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>