



# Muppets Cooperative Preschool

## Health and Cleaning

## Policies and Procedures

## Parent and Families Handbook

Ongoing Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Updated: September 2022

*Document located and shared from Google Drive*

## Introduction

Welcome to Muppets Cooperative Preschool. This document provides information regarding our operations and outlines the additional health and safety procedures we have in place during the pandemic. 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

- Arrival will be through the upstairs small room. Hand washing or sanitizing is required upon entry into the big room.
- Families will be provided with a 15 minute time period for arrival. Please arrive within this 15 minute period to assist us with physical distancing. The screening will take place between 9:15am – 9:30am.
- The screening process is **mandatory** and all questions need to be recorded and submitted each time your child comes to school. **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)

**Muppets will be using the Ontario School and Child Care screening tool.**

**<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/> Upon completing the tool, the results **MUST** be emailed to: [muppetscovidscreen@gmail.com](mailto:muppetscovidscreen@gmail.com) for the school to keep documentation of all results of every person who enters the premises.**

- A staff member will ask if you have completed the mandatory screening questions upon arrival. If you have not done so, you will be asked to step aside and answer them before the next step.
- Parents and guardians need to pass all the screening questions (proof is not required) to enter the Church for child drop-off.
- Parents and guardians are asked to respect social distancing as much as possible during arrival time.

### Staff, Volunteer, and Guest Screening and Vaccination Policy

Staff, volunteers and guests will use the screening tool prior to entry into the school. All adults will use hand sanitizer upon arrival. All staff members and volunteers are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19, with documentation filed at the school. It is strongly recommended for all people entering the school to have 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.
- Families will be provided with a 15 minute time period for dismissal. Please arrive within this 15 minute period to assist us with physical distancing. Dismissal time is 12:15pm – 12:30pm.
- 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.
- Parents and guardians are asked to respect social distancing as much as possible during dismissal time.

**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 volunteers, the guest book will be used for other visitors (ie: Public Health, Ministry of Education).
- 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 during the pandemic.

**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 provide snacks from home.

**Classrooms**

Physical distancing is encouraged with smaller groups in each space at a time. At this time, Muppets is limiting registration to 16 children, but still using both Big (licensed for 16 children) and Small (licensed for 8 children) classrooms.

**Common Areas**

Staff will minimize foot traffic at any time and ensure that physical distancing is possible during transitions through common areas. Markers will be placed on the floor if deemed necessary to assist in physical distancing.

**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:

- 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

### **Covid-19 Immunization Disclosure Policy**

Muppets recognizes the importance of immunization of individuals regularly interacting and providing services to children due to the nature of their work and potential for exposure in the community. This policy aims to protect the child care program's population including children, staff, volunteers, students on educational placements and any person providing child care or other services to a child in care.

The Immunization Disclosure Policy will apply to the following groups of individuals, except where the individual works remotely and does not involve in-person interactions:

- Employees of the licensee
- Volunteers
- Students on an educational placement
- Any licensee who regularly interacts with children, staff or providers
- Any person who provides child care or other services to a child who receives child care (ie: resource consultant)

## Policy

Under the direction of The Chief Medical Officer of Health all individuals covered by this policy MUST provide one of the following:

1. Proof of all required doses of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the World Health Organization.
2. Written proof of a medical reason, provided by either a physician or nurse practitioner that sets out:
  - a) That the person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19; and
  - b) The effective time period for the medical reason (ie: permanent or time-limited)

## 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 until 24 hours after the symptoms resolve
- Those who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program for 5-10 days after the onset of symptoms
- 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
- Ensure that staff and children use the daily screening tool

**!! If you suspect a child has symptoms, use a RAT (rapid antigen test) or seek medical advice from your physician. !!**

### **Reporting**

Muppets requests the following individuals to report a positive COVID-19 test to the preschool immediately:

1. A child enrolled at Muppets
2. A parent/guardian of a child enrolled at Muppets
3. A staff of the licensee currently working at Muppets

Muppets will notify parents if there has been a positive COVID-19 case reported to the school.

### **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

### **Returning from Exclusion Due to Illness**

Staff/children who are being managed by Halton Region Public Health (i.e. confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) should follow instructions from Halton Region Public Health to determine when to return to the facility.

## **Sanitary Health and Safety**

### **Review**

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

### **Policy**

Muppets Co-operative Preschool is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. We will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases.

### **Definitions**

*Cleaning*: refers to the physical removal of foreign material (i.e. dust, soil) and organic material (i.e., blood, secretions, microorganisms). Cleaning removes, rather than kills microorganisms. Warm water, detergent and mechanical action (i.e. wiping) is required to clean surfaces. Rinsing with clean water is required to complete the cleaning process to ensure the detergent film is removed.

*Disinfecting*: describes a process completed after cleaning in which a chemical solution (i.e. 1:9 ratio of bleach and water solution) is used to kill most diseases causing microorganisms. In order to be effective disinfectants must be left on a surface for a period of time. Contact times are generally prescribed by the product manufacturer. Any items children may come into contact with require a final rinse after the required contact time is observed.

### **Procedure**

All products including cleaning agents and disinfectants must be out of reach of children, labelled, and must have Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

#### *Cleaning*

- Use detergent and warm water to clean visibly soiled surfaces
- Rinse the surface with clean water (warm to tepid temperature preferred) to ensure detergent is removed
- Let the surface dry

#### *Disinfecting*

Staff are to use a 1:9 bleach and water solution (prepared daily) or a disinfectant with a DIN number.

- For general environmental disinfection of high touch surfaces, large toys and equipment that cannot be immersed in a disinfectant solution, use a wet cloth soaked in a 1:9 bleach and water solution – the contact time for disinfecting is one minute
- For all other toy cleaning and disinfecting first clean toys in a detergent and water solution, rinse in clean water followed by soaking in a 1:9 bleach and water solution with a contact time for disinfecting is one minute, then air dry toys

### **Cleaning and Disinfection Frequency Requirements**

- A cleaning and disinfecting log should be tracked and demonstrate cleaning schedules
- Classrooms will be cleaned daily
- Toys that have been in contact with bodily fluids (ie: in a child's mouth) will be cleaned immediately
- Toys will be cleaned or rotated on a bi-weekly basis
- Toys will be disinfected in the Church Dishwasher/Sanitizer in November, February and May

### **Clean and Disinfect Frequencies for Other Surfaces and Items**

Cleaning and disinfecting routines must be increased as the risk of environmental contamination is higher:

#### Cleaning and Disinfecting Toys

- The Dishwasher/Santizer will be used in Appleby United Church Kitchen for any toys that can withstand the heat – any other toys will use the 3-step method or lysol wipes
- The 3-step method will be used to ensure proper cleaning of toys
- Mouthed toys will be placed in a basket and disinfected properly before being returned to the classroom
- Group sensory play will be limited or suspended when directed by Halton Public Health

#### Clean and Disinfect Daily/Weekly

- High touch surfaces (railings, light switches, door knobs) must be disinfected daily
- Low-touch surfaces (any surface s at your location that has minimal contact with hands) must be disinfected weekly (i.e. window ledges, doors, sides of furnishings etc.)
- Carpets are to be vacuumed daily and steamed cleaned at a minimum once a year
- Floors are to be steam mopped at minimum twice weekly

#### Clean and Disinfect as Required

Blood/Bodily Fluid Spills: Using the steps below, the surface must be cleaned first then disinfected:

1. Isolate the area around the spill so that no other objects/humans can be contaminated
2. Gather all supplies, perform hand hygiene, then put on single-use gloves
3. Scoop up the fluid with disposable paper towels (check the surrounding area for splash/splatter) and dispose of in separate garbage bag
4. Clean the spill area with detergent, warm water and single-use towels
5. Rinse to remove detergent residue with clean water and single-use towel
6. Discard used paper towels and gloves immediately in a tied plastic bag
7. Spray 1:9 bleach and water solution in and around the spill area and allow the appropriate one minute disinfecting contact time
8. A final rinse is required if children come into contact with the area
9. Remove gloves as directed and discard them immediately



10. Perform hand hygiene as directed

**Notes:**

- If the spill includes broken glass, ensure a brush and dustpan is used to pick it up and discard. Disinfect the brush and dustpan after use; NEVER use your hands to clean up the glass
- If the spill occurs on a carpet, follow the above steps along with steam cleaning the carpet

### **Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedures**

#### **Policy**

Muppets Co-operative Preschool is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. We will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases.

#### **Definitions**

'*Hand Hygiene*' is a general term referring to any action of hand cleaning. Hand hygiene relates to the removal of visible soil and removal or killing of transient microorganisms from the hands. Hand hygiene may be accomplished using soap and running water or a hand sanitizer (60 - 90% alcohol based). Hand washing with soap and running water must be performed when hands are visibly soiled.

#### **Procedure**

Hands carry and spread germs. Touching your eyes, nose, mouth or sneezing or coughing into your hands may provide an opportunity for germs to get into your body or spread to others. Keeping your hands clean through good hygiene practice is one of the most important steps to avoid getting sick and spreading germs.

Ensure that employees staff and children are always practicing good hand hygiene when hands are visibly dirty and/or after:

- Sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- Using the washroom
- Handling garbage
- Handling uncooked/raw foods
- Outdoor play
- Toileting/diapering routine
- Handling soiled laundry or dishes
- Handling soiled toys or other items
- Coming into contact with bodily fluids
- Coming into contact with any soiled/mouthed items
- Gardening
- Touching commonly touched surfaces

Hands should be cleaned using soap and water or hand sanitizer before and after:

- Preparing, handling, serving and eating food
- Handling animals
- Touching a cut or open sore
- Changing diapers
- Glove use
- Before and after giving medication
- Communal sensory play activity

When hands are visibly soiled, follow these steps for cleaning hands:

- Wet hands
- Apply soap
- Lather for at least 20 seconds and rub between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, under nails
- Rinse well under running water
- Dry hands well with paper towel or hot air blower
- Turn taps off with paper towel, if available

When hands are not visibly soiled, follow these steps for cleaning hands:

- Apply hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol-based)
- Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds
- Work sanitizer between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, and under nails.
- Rub hands until dry

### **Hand Sanitizing Information**

When your hands are not visibly dirty, a 60-90% alcohol based hand sanitizer can be used. Hand sanitizers can only be used on children who are over the age of two and must always be used under adult supervision. Adults must ensure that the product has completely evaporated from the child's hands before allowing the child to continue their activity. Please ensure that written parent consent is obtained before applying hand sanitizer to any child.

### **Hand Hygiene Monitoring**

To ensure that employees are using proper hand hygiene methods, supervisor will review hand hygiene practices on a regular basis and provide feedback to employees as required.

### **Glove Use**

Gloves shall be worn when it is anticipated that hands will come into contact with mucous membranes, broken skin, tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces. Gloves are single use only.

### **Gloves and Hand Hygiene**

Hand hygiene shall be practiced before applying and after removing gloves. Gloves shall be removed and discarded after each use.

To reduce hand irritation related to gloves:

- Wear gloves for as short as time as possible
- Ensure that hands are clean and dry before wearing gloves
- Ensure gloves are intact, clean and dry inside
- Gloves are single use only, and must be task specific such as nitrile gloves for diaper changes

### **Gloves when Cleaning/Disinfecting**

Employees must wear gloves when immersing toys in diluted disinfectant when toy washing.

### **Covering Your Cough Procedure**

Germs, such as influenza and cold viruses, are spread by coughing and/or sneezing. When you cough or sneeze on your hands, your hands carry and spread these germs.

Attempt to keep your distance (preferably more than 2 metres/6 feet) from people who are coughing or sneezing. Follow these steps to stop the spread of germs:

- If you have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose when you cough, sneeze or blow your nose
- Put used tissue in the garbage
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve, not in your hands
- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol based) regularly and after using a tissue on yourself or others

### **Additional Resources and Information**

Halton Region Official COVID-19 website

<https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Immunizations-Preventable-Disease/Diseases-Infections/New-Coronaviruses/COVID-19-School-Information>

Public Health Ontario

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

[Operational Guidance during COVID-19 Outbreak \(Ministry of Education\)](#)

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/child-care-guide-child-care.pdf>