

PRACTICES FOR PEAK CHILD STAFF, PARENTS AND CHILDREN TO PROTECT OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER FROM CORONAVIRUS/COVID INFECTION IN OUR PRE-SCHOOLS

November 2020

WHY ARE THESE PRACTICES IMPORTANT?

We have developed these practices and are taking this situation very seriously for the following reasons:

- Our highest priority is ensuring the safety and health of our children and staff.
- Following these practices will dramatically reduce the chances of infection at our pre-schools.
- If too many of our staff get sick, we will have to close our pre-schools again.
If too many children get sick and we are not taking the right precautions, the government will close our pre-schools again.

Staff and parents need to apply the sort of best practice and reasonable way of thinking in this document where a situation arises that we have not thought of. These practices will only be effective if everyone is doing them. Staff who do not make every effort to adopt these practices will be subject to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal. We would like to have the exact same rules for all of our pre-schools but there may have to be exceptions.

We provide care for children and babies, so it is impossible to apply strict social distancing of 1m between each child. Over and above what the education and health authorities require of us, we can only do what is practical. We will aim for social distancing for all adults in our schools as far as possible.

If you are finding that some of the practices are not practical or do not have the desired impact, please inform your Principal and we will reassess. All staff and parents must check with your Principal before you decide to NOT do any of the following and she must agree to it by WhatsApp or email before you do so.

SOME MORE INFORMATION ABOUT COVID

Sources: World Health Organisation (WHO) and the South African National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD)

- The symptoms of Coronavirus/COVID are: Fever, Dry Cough and Tiredness.
- Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, sore throat or diarrhoea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually.
- Some people become infected but only have very mild symptoms.
- Even people with very mild symptoms of COVID can transmit the virus.
- You are most infectious 3 days prior to your symptoms starting and 7 days after they have started.
- Most people recover from the disease without needing hospital treatment. Around 1 out of every 5 people who gets COVID becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Children without underlying health issues are at very low risk and children of pre-school age are at extremely low risk of getting seriously ill.
- Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart and lung problems, diabetes, or cancer, are at higher risk of developing serious illness. However, anyone can catch COVID and become seriously ill.
- People of all ages who experience fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ADULT OR CHILD WHO HAS BEEN IN OUR PRE-SCHOOLS SHOWS COVID SYMPTOMS?

For Children

- Any child who develops COVID symptoms at school must immediately be placed in the Isolation Area by their class teacher.
- The Isolation Areas at our pre-schools are: Nimble - the Library; Melville - the office; Arderne - Six's classroom; Harfield - the office. Each isolation area must have two mattresses with clean sheets. Sheets must be removed and washed once a child has been on the mattress. Each isolation area must have a first aid kit, containing spare masks and gloves.
- The class teacher must make the Head Teacher and "Isolation Nurse" aware.
- The class teacher must not leave the child on their own until the Isolation Nurse arrives and takes over care of the child.
- The class teacher must immediately contact the parents and ask them to fetch their child explaining that they may not return to school for 10 days or until they have been tested and their test result shows that they do not have COVID, whichever comes sooner.
- If someone who has been in the school tests positive for COVID then the Principal must contact the public hotline 0800 029 999 to report this.

For Staff

- Any staff member who develops COVID symptoms at school must immediately report to the Head Teacher who will assess the situation.
- The staff member will usually be sent home immediately unless by doing so they will place the children under their care at risk. While this would be highly unusual, if this situation arises the teacher will be immediately required to put on their travel mask in addition to their visor and practice extreme social distancing. The key intention is for no harm to come to the children in this situation.
- The staff member may not return to school for 10 days or until they have been tested and their test result shows that they do not have COVID, whichever comes sooner. Of course, if you are still showing symptoms at the end of 10 days, then you must not come back to school until you are symptom free.
- If someone who has been in the school tests positive for COVID then the Principal must contact the public hotline 0800 029 999 to report this.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ADULT OR CHILD WHO HAS BEEN IN OUR PRE-SCHOOLS IS A CLOSE / POSITIVE CONTACT OF SOMEONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID?

- Medical professionals assisting schools to navigate COVID talk about the concept of “positive contact” or “close contact” which we are also applying in our pre-schools.
- A positive/close contact is a person who does not have any COVID symptoms but who has been in contact with someone who has **tested positive for COVID within the last 72 hours**.
- The contact with that person has to have been either:
 - Face to face within 1m for any period of time.
 - For longer than 15 minutes in any room that is not well ventilated.
- If you live in the same house with someone who has tested positive then you are a positive/close contact.
- If you are a positive contact you should not come to school and immediately inform your Principal and Head Teacher. You should not come to school for 10 days or until your test result (if you get tested) shows that you do not have COVID, whichever comes sooner.
- While it is recommended, we do not make it mandatory for a positive contact to get a COVID test. If you decide to go for a test, you must do so within 24 hours of your close / positive contact.

SOME EXAMPLES TO APPLY THESE PRINCIPLES

Example 1

- If you start having a cough and a fever on Monday morning, you will isolate immediately. You can go for a COVID test, but you don't have to. You can return to work 10 days later on the following Wednesday, irrespective if you have a positive test or not. It also doesn't matter when you get the test results back. You could get a positive test back the day you are meant to go back to work, but you must still go back to work on the Wednesday as your symptoms started 10 days prior.

Example 2

- If you have close / positive contact with someone on a Thursday, you must self-isolate for 10 days until the following Sunday, and return to work on Monday after that Sunday. Again, it doesn't matter if you have a test, or not. You must return to work 10 days after your close / positive contact.