Covid-19 Policy updated

Rowan Tree Children’s School, v. March 21, 2022

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Covid-19 Policy

*Policies and procedures may change as instructions from the Ministry of Education are received. The Peterborough Public Health also advise and send us updates and revised procedures from time to time.*

*\*” Families” is used and refers to any parent, guardian, adult household member, or designated caregiver that has responsibility for care and collection of the child in care.*

Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms of COVID-19, which is the disease caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus, range from mild — like the flu and other common respiratory infections — to severe.

Call 911 if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

* severe difficulty breathing (struggling for each breath, can only speak in single words),
* severe chest pain (constant tightness or crushing sensation),
* feeling confused or unsure of where you are,
* losing consciousness.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19covid 19 include:

* fever (feeling hot to the touch, a temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher),
* chills,
* cough that's new or worsening (continuous, more than usual),
* barking cough, making a whistling noise when breathing (croup),
* shortness of breath (out of breath, unable to breathe deeply),
* sore throat,
* difficulty swallowing,
* runny, stuffy or congested nose (not related to seasonal allergies or other known causes or conditions),
* lost sense of taste or smell,
* pink eye (conjunctivitis),
* headache that’s unusual or long lasting,
* digestive issues (nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain),
* muscle aches,
* extreme tiredness that is unusual (fatigue, lack of energy),
* falling down often (for older adults),
* for young children and infants: sluggishness or lack of appetite.

Covid-19 Response Plan:

When someone in care shows symptoms or becomes sick

Persons who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance of Table 1 and their health care professional regarding direction for isolation and returning to a child care 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 but should follow the directions of the ONLINE SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL referred to below. If an individual becomes ill while in the child care setting:

1. The ill individual must be immediately separated from others, in a separate room where possible (i.e., an isolation room).
2. Parents/guardians must be contacted for pick-up of symptomatic children.
3. Symptomatic children who are separated from others must be supervised.
4. 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 additional PPE (i.e., gloves, gown).
5. The person caring for the individual must wear a medical mask and eye protection and be trained on proper use of PPE, including donning and doffing.
6. If tolerated, the ill individual should also wear a medical mask.
7. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the ill individual is waiting to be picked up.
8. 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.
9. The ill individual and/or their parent or guardian should be advised to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions which may include seeking medical advice and/or going for testing for COVID-19.
10. If there is a confirmed case:
    1. Contact the Ministry and fill out a Serious Occurrence Report. Post in the classroom.
    2. Contact the local Public Health Unit and follow their advice and requirements.
    3. *See p. 21 of the Operational Guidance document.*
11. Regular child care operation can continue unless directed otherwise by the local public health unit.
12. If the individual sent home receives an alternate diagnosis from a health care professional, they may return to care when they have been symptom and fever free for 24 hours.
13. Maintain confidentiality of individuals and their circumstances.

Procedures Implemented in Programs

Daily Screening for Symptoms and Contacts

All individuals entering the childcare premises will self-screen ***daily before attending the program.*** The province will continue to update the online self assessment tool for ease of use and paperless screening. The screening tools tell you what to do if any answers are ‘yes’. Please follow monitoring and isolation advice outlined in the screening tool.

1. Families\* must screen their children each day for symptoms and contacts, including taking their temperature.   
   1. They can go to this link and follow the prompts. This is also found on the school website: ONLINE SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

1. Teachers and employees must self-screen each day for symptoms and contacts.  
   1. They can go to this link and follow the prompts. This is also found on the school website: ONLINE SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL**:** <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>
2. Daily logging of screening is no longer necessary. Attendance will be collected in the traditional manner and any visitors will be logged in the classroom logbook, including contact information.
3. Any staff, family member, or child not passing the self-screening should not enter the classroom. See the ONLINE SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL for instructions.

The online Self-Assessment Tool will provide guidance on what to do in the cases of household members who have tested positive, depending on the age and vaccination status of the person taking the assessment. Children under 5 with a close contact must stay home from care for 5 days. Others should follow the guidance of the online assessment or call their Public Health Unit for direction.

**Case Management**

*Table 1: Isolation Period for Test-Positive Cases and Individuals with COVID-19*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Isolation Period** | **Population** |
| **5 days** after the date of positive test or start of symptoms, whichever is first. First day of symptoms is Day 0. | * Fully vaccinated individuals * children under the age of 12. |
| **10 days** after the date of positive test or start of symptoms, whichever is first. First day of symptoms is Day 0. | * Individuals 12+ who are not fully vaccinated * immunocompromised * hospitalized |
| 20 days after the date of positive test or start of symptoms, whichever is first. First day of symptoms is Day 0. | * Severe illness (discretion of hospital) |

Anyone who is sick with any illness should stay home for (the isolation period recommended and) until symptoms are improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, diarrhea).

A single negative RAT result is not sufficient to rule out COVID-19 infection. An individual with two negative RATs done 24-48 hours apart and no fever is able to return to care if their symtoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, diarrhea).

Drop off and Pick up Procedures

1. Arrivals and pick up will be outdoors when possible.
2. Handwashing and/or sanitizing should be available at entrances.
3. Parents will let the teacher know they and their child(ren) have passed the self screening, and stay outdoors when possible.
4. Parents who do not need to enter the classroom will not. Parents who have not self-screened or not passed the self-screening will not enter the classroom.

Masks and PPE

1. Masks will not be required for staff, children, or visitors, with some exceptions.
2. Eye protection will no longer be required for adults in the programs.
3. Individuals including educators, families, and children may choose to continue to wear masks and/or eye protection. The Ministry will continue to provide these items for staff and the employer will keep them accessible.

Masks should be replaced when they are wet or soiled. The school may want to keep a back-up supply of masks for children.

Masks and PPE, Exceptions

Masks will be required for 14 days for individuals who return from international travel. Daily screening and contact tracing are also required during this period.

Families or children that are advised by the ONLINE SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL to mask due to close contact with positive cases must do so in the program.

Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two, for those who cannot remove their mask independently, or those with reasonable medical exemptions.

Physical Distancing

Cohorting and distancing will no longer be required for indoor and outdoor activities. The ratios and group sizes will be determined by the CCEYA, the conditions in the license, and the discretion of the educators.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Classrooms

Includes all classrooms, washrooms and all furnishings, materials, and surfaces inside:

* 1. All surfaces, used toys, tables, floors, and chairs will be cleaned and disinfected daily with an approved non toxic, hydrogen peroxide-based spray or wipe. Floors may be done less frequently at the discretion of the teacher. However, food and other soil must be swept and any high touch areas cleaned daily.
  2. Toys or material that have been mouthed, sneezed/coughed upon, or otherwise in contact with bodily fluids will be removed for washing and disinfecting.
  3. Materials that can not be washed or sanitized will be removed.
  4. Fabric, dolls, etc., can be washed in the washing machine and heated in the dryer.
  5. Bathrooms, kitchen, tables, and frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs will be cleaned and disinfected twice per day.
  6. Washrooms will be accessed by one group at a time and sanitized in between groups.
  7. A sanitization chart will be present in each classroom, kitchen, and washroom and documentation of the cleaning schedule and the implementation of it will be carried out daily.

Hand Washing, Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette

Handwashing with soap and water OR hand sanitizer will occur immediately upon arrival, after being outdoors, and after using the washroom, sneezing, etc., and at the teacher’s discretion. Hand sanitizer does not replace hand washing.

Staff and students should be provided with targeted, age-appropriate education in proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Local public health units can provide additional guidance. Age-appropriate posters or signage should be placed around the school.

* Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.
* Alcohol based hand rub 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 alcohol-based hand rub to avoid consumption is important, especially for young children.
* Support or modifications should be provided to allow students with special needs to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.
* Children will be taught how to sneeze into a tissue or their elbow, how to wash their hands adequately after blowing their nose, and how to dispose of soiled tissues. Posters with visuals will be used in areas where children can see them.
* Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets (for example, foot pedal-operated, hand sensor, open basket) are to be provided.
* Staff and students should have the supplies they need to conduct appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette and these supplies should be easily accessible.
* Alcohol based hand rub with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration must be available throughout the school (including ideally at the entry point to each classroom) and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks and paper towels in dispensers.

Required critical supplies, for example, hand sanitizer, will continue to be provided to school boards through the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and the government's pandemic supply chain.

Refer to Public Health Ontario's [how to wash your hands](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en) fact sheet.

Refer to Health Canada's [hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19covid 19): list of hand sanitizers authorized by Health Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html), including which sanitizers may be appropriate for different groups of staff and students.

Meals

Utensils are used to serve food by the educators and not shared. Proper hand hygiene will be practiced by all who prepare or serve food and for children before and after eating. There should be no food brought from home.

Visitors

Non-essential visitors are now allowed but not encouraged in children’s programs at this time. Parents may enter a classroom briefly to settle a child, after passing self-screening, and with a note in the daily log. Ministry licensers, first responders, fire inspector, cleaners, or those doing essential repairs may enter with the same conditions. Students may now complete placements within the programs if they follow the same safety protocols as staff.

Parents, Information, and Access

1. Parents must not be denied access to their child when requested as per the CCEYA. Safety precautions can be taken.
2. Parents are entitled to view COVID policies and procedures upon request.

Rapid Antigen Tests

RATs will continue to be made available by the Ministry. Licensees will be expected to distribute RATs to staff and families who are symptomatic or return from an absence. Licensees may distribute 2 or 5 tests per child at once to families, however, the Ministry will not be increasing the number of tests sent out. Families may also access free tests in their community.

Absence Reporting

1. Report absentee rates to PHU should they rise to a defined level.

Appendix A:

COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

1. As of March 14, 2022, the Vaccination and Disclosure Policies are revoked by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Heath. Licensees are no longer requied to collect proof of COVID-19 vaccinations, medical exemptions, or completion of education programs, or report statistics to the Ministry of Education.
2. As of March 14, 2022, unvaccinated individuals are no longer required to do RAT screening three times per week. However, tests will continue to be provided to individuals and should unvaccinated individuals choose to continue testing, they may do so. They are not obligated to send proof of testing to the employer.
3. As of March 14, 2022, licensees are no longer required to report usage of RATs from the government to the Ministry of Health.

Appendix B

(Hardcopies in binder)

1. Operational Guidance for Child Care During Covid-19 Outbreak, version 7-August 2021
2. Daily Screening tool for children in school and child care settings
3. Daily Screening for employees and essential visitors in school and child care settings
4. Self-screening Sign for front door
5. How to Wash Your Hands / How to Use Hand Sanitizer poster (2 sided), Public Health Ontario
6. Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings poster
7. When to Wash Hands poster
8. COVID Screening Log sample

Downloadable Documents and Links

1. COVID-19 health and safety measures for child care, Ministry of Education, Ontario: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-health-and-safety-measures-child-care>
2. COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-22) v. Nov. 2021
3. Operational Guidance for Child Care During Covid-19 Outbreak, version 7-August 2021: <https://files.ontario.ca/edu-operational-guidance-child-care-during-covid-19-en-2021-08-10.pdf>
4. Daily Screening tool for children in school and child care settings: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid19-cms-assets/2021-08/COVID_screening_Student_Child%20Care_AODA.pdf>
5. Daily Screening for employees and essential visitors in school and child care settings: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid19-cms-assets/2021-08/COVID_screening_Staffs_Visitors_AODA.pdf>
6. Sign for front door must be posted: <https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/COVID_19_bus_orgs_question_signage.pdf>
7. How to Wash Your Hands / How to Use Hand Sanitizer posters, Public Health Ontario: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>
8. Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings poster: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf>
9. Non-medical masks, About, Public Health Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html#a5>
10. When to Wash Your Hands poster, Canadian Paediatric Society: <https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/uploads/wellbeings/wash_hands.pdf>
11. Signs and poster from Public Health: <https://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/for-professionals/health-professionals/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-professionals/covid-19-signage/#gen>

Employer Responsibilities

1. Keep employees safe, provide PPE, make sure they wear it. COVID-19 and the Occupational Health and Safety Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-occupational-health-safety-act>
2. Post screening questions and ensure anyone entering the premises has passed the screening. Verbal attestation with a signature, time, date in the log book is sufficient for staff and registered parents. Visitors must also leave contact information.
3. First Aid certificates of staff that have expired have been temporarily extended. Monitor the WSIB website for any updates on First Aid/CPR certificate extensions for any staff whose certification would have expired after March 2020.
4. Licensees are still required to obtain Police Record Checks including Vulnerable Sector Checks as per the CCEYA.
5. Create and follow policies during the outbreak specific to Covid-19 safety. From Ontario website for Child Care: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-health-and-safety-measures-child-care>

**Health and safety measures**

Child care and early years providers must:

* **Create a COVID-19 (coronavirus) response plan:** All childcare and early years settings must have a plan in place if a child, parent, staff member, volunteer, student on educational placement or child care provider is exposed to COVID-19.
* **Screen for symptoms:** Everyone must screen for symptoms of COVID-19 every day before they enter the premises using the [provincial screening tool](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/screen-covid-19-going-any-public-place) or a screening tool designated by the local public health unit. Anyone experiencing a COVID-19 symptom (not related a COVID-19 vaccine) or feeling unwell must stay home. Home child care providers feeling unwell cannot offer service.
* **Log daily attendance:** Child care and early years providers must keep daily records of everyone entering the premises to help support contact tracing.
* **Clean frequently:** Child care and early years providers must thoroughly clean the space, toys and equipment frequently and regularly, according to public health advice. This includes following appropriate regular hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (for example, covering your mouth and nose to cough).
* **Parents and visitors are allowed:** Parents and visitors are allowed to enter the premises and must follow all health and safety protocols for screening, masking, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. The number of visitors indoors should be limited to ensure appropriate physical distancing can be maintained.
* **Create child care drop-off and pick-up protocols:** Child care providers must establish drop-off and pick-up protocols that facilitate physical distancing.
* Local public health units have the authority to proactively close child care and early years settings in their areas.

Private School requirements

Private schools are not required to follow requirements in this document that apply only to school boards, such as requirements relating to in-person instruction time, remote learning, and secondary school timetabling. All protective strategies must be followed. In addition, private schools are encouraged to develop their own school reopening plans and to work with their local public health unit in doing so.

Private schools must immediately report any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19covid 19 within the school to the local public health unit as required under the [*Health Protection and Promotion Act*](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h07), (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h07>) and provide any materials (for example, daily attendance and transportation records) to public health officials to support case management and contact tracing and other activities, in accordance with all applicable privacy legislation. Public health officials will determine any additional steps required.

(https://www.ontario.ca/document/covid-19-health-safety-and-operational-guidance-schools-2021-2022/provincial-demonstration-private-and-first-nations-schools#section-1)

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