

Parent Handbook COVID-19



Durham Montessori School and Daycare

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DURHAM MONTESSORI SCHOOL AND DAYCARE **POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19**

Durham Montessori School and Daycare is required to follow all existing health and safety requirements as outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, as directed by the local medical officer of health, and as outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and other policies and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education. Plans are also in place to respond should any staff, children, or parents/guardians be exposed to COVID-19.

For the current up to date information, please refer to the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: Childcare Centres.

Childcare capacity and group size

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will comply with the maximum overall capacity that limits 15 children per classroom and the appropriate ratio of teachers.

Maximum capacity rules do not apply to Special Needs Resource staff on site at DMSD (i.e., if they are not counted towards staff to child ratios, they are not included in the maximum capacity rules).

Cohorts will stay together throughout the day and will not be permitted to mix with other cohorts at DMSD.

Reduced ratios are permitted as set out under the CCEYA if cohorts are not mixed with other cohorts at DMSD.

Staffing

Where applicable; staggered start and finish times will be practiced at DMSD.

Supervisors and/or designates will limit their movement between rooms, doing so when necessary at DMSD.

Supply/replacement staff will be assigned to specific cohorts.

Staff at DMSD will respect public health physical distancing guidelines. Staff will not gather during breaks or other activities.

Health and Safety Protocols

Durham Montessori School and Daycare has submitted an attestation to the Ministry that confirms updated policies and procedures have been developed and reviewed with employees and parents. These policies and procedures include direction set out by the local public health,

and how the childcare setting will operate during and throughout the recovery phase following the pandemic.

- **personal protective equipment**

DMSD will supply the use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for all staff and children when in the premises and will follow local public health guidelines pertaining to their use. This includes but not limited to gloves, masks, face shields/eye protection, hand sanitizer, blankets/aprons (for carrying children), cleaning supplies and thermometers.

The use of this equipment will be used during but not limited to the following times:

- in the screening area and when accompanying children into the program from the screening area. Please see the screening section of this guidance document for more information;
- when cleaning and disinfecting blood or bodily fluid spills if there is a risk of splashing, also referred in the Public Services Health and Safety Association's Child Care Centre Employer Guideline for more information on working safely in a childcare setting;
- when caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness. See the section in this guidance document on protocols when an individual is sick for more information

When wearing a mask, staff will wash their hands before applying the mask and after removing the mask. Refer to Public Health Ontario resources for how to properly wear and take off masks and eye protection.

DMSD will secure and sustain an amount of PPE and cleaning supplies that can support their current and ongoing operations.

Staff and children will perform and promote frequent, proper hand hygiene (including supervising or assisting participants with hand hygiene). Hand washing using soap and water is recommended over alcohol-based hand rub for children. Refer to Public Health Ontario's How to Wash Your Hands.

- **sanitization of the space, toys and equipment**

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will ensure the disinfection and sanitation of frequently touched surfaces at least twice a day and when visibly dirty as they are most likely to become contaminated (for example, doorknobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, counters, sinks, stair railing, electronic devices, chairs and tabletops) throughout the building.

Upon arrival, children will be screened, and a thermometer will be used to record a child's temperature. Thermometers will be disinfected between every use.

DMSD will ensure all materials, toys, cots and blankets used at the centre are made of material that can be cleaned and disinfected. DMSD will increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting to as used and twice daily.

DMSD will use disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN).

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content will be placed at all screening stations and classrooms. Dispensers will not be in locations that can be accessed by young children.

Play activities used outside during outdoor playtime will be cleaned and sanitized after each classroom (group of cohorts that use them).

DMSD will incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule and perform proper hand hygiene (including assisting children with hand hygiene).

DMSD will encourage more physical space between children by:

- Spreading children out into different areas within the classrooms;
- Staggering outdoor playtime;
- Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children.

DMSD will not use water or sensory tables in groups but rather for single use and labeled with child's name.

Mouthed toys and activities will be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it at DMSD.

Toys, activities and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected at a minimum between cohorts.

DMSD will mostly have designated toys and equipment (e.g., balls, loose equipment) for each classroom or cohort. However, where toys and equipment are shared, they will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being shared.

DMSD will encourage outdoor playtime in small groups in order to encourage physical distancing.

DMSD will increase the distance between nap cots, if possible. If space is tight, children will be placed head-to-toe or toe-to-toe. Cots will be disinfected after each use as per section 4 of the Ministry of Education's Child Care Centre Licensing Manual (September 2019).

Linens will be laundered daily.

Children will not share soothers, bottles, sippy cups, toothbrushes, facecloths, etc. and these items will be labeled with the child's name to discourage accidental sharing.

DMSD will always practice proper hand hygiene including preparation of food and for all individuals before and after eating. Meals and snacks are provided by DMSD and will ensure each child has their own individual meal or snack and will not practice self serve or sharing of food, allowing teachers to serve individualized meals to children at mealtimes. Utensils will be used to

serve food and will be disinfected and sanitized after each use. No items will be shared during mealtimes (i.e. serving spoon). Staff will only be allowed to refill children's water bottles from classroom water jugs using safe serving protocols accordingly. There will be no food provided by the family/outside of the regular meal provision of the program (except where required and special precautions for handling and serving the food must be put in place). Where possible, DMSD children and staff will practice physical distancing while eating.

- **preventing the spread in the classroom using proper hand hygiene**

DMSD will follow proper hand hygiene guided by the Ministry of Health such as washing hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (approximately the length of the ABC song or Happy Birthday twice). Hand sanitizing products will be used in lieu of handwashing when outdoors if hands are washed upon returning indoors.

In addition to usual handwashing, make sure to wash hands:

- ✓ Upon arrival in classroom
- ✓ Before and after outdoor playtime
- ✓ Before and after eating meals
- ✓ After blowing noses, coughing, sneezing or when in contact with body fluids
- ✓ After toileting or changing diapers

Parent Drop off and Pick up Procedures

There will be marked lines outside of childcare centre for families that are dropping off or picking up children at DMSD to direct families.

Parents and staff will wear a mask when giving children to DMSD staff for care as well as keep a minimum 6 ft distance from staff and other families waiting to drop off or pick up their children where possible.

Pick-up and drop-off of children at DMSD will happen in the screening area of the building (front for children in upstairs classrooms and back entrance for children in the downstairs classroom).

Staff will encourage children to wear a face shield with the permission of parents and direct them to wash their hands thoroughly when entering the classroom and before resuming program.

Everyday, as children arrive, parents will need to sign a daily health checklist and a temperature check will be taken of child before entering the building and in the afternoon. If a child's temperature is equal or greater than 37.8 degrees Celsius or if the child has any signs or symptoms of respiratory infection, such as cough (dry or productive), nasal congestion, runny nose, sneezing, chills, loss of appetite, headache, fatigue, sore muscles, soar throat/hoarseness in voice, wheezing, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, difficulty swallowing, diarrhea, vomiting, loss of taste or smell, pink eye or other unwell symptoms, they must stay home after they have consulted and have been assessed with either a doctor, Lakeridge Health Website

Assessment or the Public Health Department. If the staff/child is NOT required to test for COVID-19, the person must be **48 hours symptoms free** before returning to DMSD. If the staff/child **IS** required to test for COVID-19, they will need to stay off until the results come back. If the results come back negative, they can return to the center **48 hours** after symptoms resolved. If the results come back positive, the staff/child will receive more direction from the Public Health Department as they will tell the child/staff how long they are required to stay in self-isolation from their test date. The Public Health Department are the ones who determine their return day and next steps of DMSD as a whole.

If staff or children/families attending DMSD have traveled outside of Canada in the last 14 days, they **must also self-isolate for 14 days** before returning to DMSD.

Personal belongings (e.g., backpack, clothing, etc.) should be minimized. A child's belongings should be labeled and kept in the child's designated area/hook.

All classrooms will use the front door of the building for drop off and pick up and will support physical distancing as best as possible.

DMSD will use a staggered entrance and exit times for families for drop off and pick up.

All entrances to the centre and classrooms at DMSD will have hand sanitizer to be used upon entering the area.

- **physical distancing will be encouraged at DMSD**

The ministry recognizes that physical distancing between children in a childcare setting is difficult and encourages Childcare staff and providers to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children at DMSD.

Face shields, masks and gloves at pick up, drop off changing diapers, helping children with toileting needs and when in close contact with families will be used by staff.

When holding toddlers, a separate blanket or an apron will be used over staff's clothing when carrying children and will change the blankets or apron between children.

Good hygiene and respiratory etiquette will be taught daily, reminded and practiced at DMSD i.e.: reminded to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth, coughing/sneezing in elbow and cleaning nose with Kleenex followed by proper disposal of the tissue and hand washing.

Children at DMSD will be encouraged to wear face shields when present (only with written permission given by parents).

When setting up the activity/play space, physical distancing of at least 2 metres will be maintained between cohorts and will be encouraged, where possible, between children within the same cohort by spreading children out into different areas of the classroom, particularly at meal and dressing times. DMSD will incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children; and use visual cues to promote physical distancing. Childcare staff will also avoid singing activities indoors.

In shared outdoor spaces, DMSD will schedule separate outdoor times for each classroom to facilitate physical distancing. At all times, cohorts will be encouraged to maintain a distance of at least 2 metres between each other. Play activities used outside during outdoor playtime will be cleaned and sanitized after each classroom (group of cohorts that use them).

Parents will provide sunscreen and other personal items for each child that will not be shared by other children at DMSD.

DMSD will increase the distance between cots and place the children head to toe or toe to toe if the space is limited.

- **screening staff, children and parents/guardians**

Parents and guardians will be advised upon registration and through visual signage at the entrances and drop off areas of the building of screening protocols.

All individuals, including children, parents/guardians, staff and visitors will be screened upon arrival to DMSD daily with a temperature check and symptom checklist at the screening area. Staff at DMSD will deny entry to any person including the child of a parent/guardian who has any of the symptoms outlined in the 'COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms' on the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 website. Children will be monitored for atypical symptoms and signs of COVID-19.

Screeners will take appropriate precautions when screening, including maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from those being screened, and wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) (i.e., surgical/procedure mask; gown; gloves; eye protection (goggles or face shield)).

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content will be placed at all screening stations and classrooms. Dispensers will not be in locations that can be accessed by young children.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare, within the meaning of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, have a duty to report suspected or confirmed cases COVID-19 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. DMSD will contact their local public health unit to report a child suspected to have COVID-19. The local public health unit will provide specific advice on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected staff members and children.

Thermometers will not be used between children/staff without single-use protective covers or disinfecting between use.

DMSD will not permit children who are ill to attend the childcare centre as per our COVID-19 illness policy.

DMSD have protocols in place to notify parents/guardians if their child begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 while in our care, including the need for immediate pick up.

DMSD will maintain daily records of screening results for children and staff. Up to date records are to be kept on the premises to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

- **how an illness is reported**

Staff, parents and guardians, and children must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

- Symptoms to look for include but are not limited to: respiratory infection, such as cough (dry or productive), nasal congestion, runny nose, sneezing, chills, loss of appetite, headache, fatigue, sore muscles, soar throat/hoarseness in voice, wheezing, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting or other unwell symptoms, they must call DMSD to tell them of person's symptoms to notify Public Health, be assessed by a health care provider and referred for testing. Those who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded from the program for **24 hours symptoms free** before returning to DMSD. If a positive result is given, DMSD must be notified thereafter to notify Public Health, staff and parents of an outbreak. The centre would then be closed for **14 days** for self-isolation and testing.
- If staff or children/families attending DMSD have traveled outside of Canada in the last 14 days, they **must also self-isolate for 14 days** before returning to DMSD.

Children will always be monitored for atypical symptoms and signs of COVID-19 by staff while at DMSD

If a child of staff member at DMSD becomes sick while in the program, they will be isolated and family members contacted for pick-up immediately.

If a separate room is not available, the sick person will be kept at a minimum of 2 meters from others at the center.

The sick person will be provided with tissues and reminded of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and proper disposal of tissues.

If the sick person is a child, a childcare staff/provider at DMSD will remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives. If tolerated and above the age of 2, the child should wear a surgical/procedure mask. The childcare staff/provider will always also wear a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection and not interact with others. The childcare staff/provider will also avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions.

All items used by the sick person should be cleaned and disinfected. All items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, cardboard puzzles) will be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.

DMSD will notify Public health, their advice and DMSD policy will be followed.

Where a child or staff at DMSD is suspected of having or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, DMSD will report this to the ministry as a serious occurrence.

A single, symptomatic, laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff member or child must be considered a confirmed COVID-19 outbreak, in consultation with the local public health unit. Outbreaks should be declared in collaboration between the program and the local public health unit to ensure an outbreak number is provided.

Staff, parents/guardians, and children who are symptomatic or have been advised to self-isolate by the local public health unit, must not attend the program. Asymptomatic individuals awaiting results may not need to be excluded and should follow the advice of public health.

Other children, including siblings of the sick child, and child care staff at DMSD who were present while the child or staff member became ill will be identified as a close contact and further cohort (i.e., grouped together) until they can be picked up by parents/guardians to self-isolate at home. The local public health unit will provide any further direction on testing and isolation of these close contacts.

Children or staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded from DMSD for **14 days** and receive clearance from Public Health before returning with negative test result.

Serious Occurrence Reporting

DMSD has a duty to report suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. DMSD will contact the local public health unit to report a child suspected to have COVID-19. The local public health unit will provide specific advice on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected staff members and children.

Where a child, parent or staff is suspected (i.e. has symptoms and has been tested) of having or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, DMSD will report this to the ministry as a serious occurrence.

Where a room, centre or premises closes due to COVID-19, DMSD will report this to the ministry as a serious occurrence.

DMSD is required to post the serious occurrence notification form as required under the CCEYA, unless local public health advises otherwise.

Rescheduling of group events and/or in-person meetings

There should be no non-essential visitors at DMSD including group events or parent/teacher conferences.

The use of video and telephone interviews/conferences will be used to interact with families where possible, rather than in person.

The provision of special needs services may continue. Should questions arise in respect of which service providers are permitted to enter the premises, DMSD will consult with the local public health unit.

Ministry staff and other public officials (e.g. fire marshal, public health inspectors) are permitted to enter and inspect DMSD, at any reasonable time.

As much as possible, parents are not permitted to go past the screening area.

DMSD will ensure that there are no volunteers or students at the program.

Provision of Special Needs Resources (SNR) Services

The provision of in-person special needs services at DMSD will continue where appropriate. Should questions arise in respect of which service providers are permitted to enter the premises, DMSD will consult with the local public health unit. DMSD will also work with special needs service providers to explore alternative modes of service delivery where in-person delivery is not possible.

As per ministry guidelines, maximum capacity rules do not apply to SNR staff (consultants and enhanced staff) on site (i.e., if they are not counted towards staff to child ratios, they are not included in the maximum capacity rules).

Where SNR services are provided through external staff/service providers, DMSD will inform all families of this fact, and record attendance for contact tracing purposes.

All SNR staff will be screened before entering DMSD, as per the protocol in the screening section above.