

RICHMOND COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

COVID-19 Operation Plan



3529 McBean St., Richmond, ON K0A 2Z0

Website: www.rcns.ca

E-mail address: Richmond_nursery_school@hotmail.com

Phone: (613) 838-2575

VERSION 6: November 15, 2021

INTRODUCTION

This plan was developed to communicate to parents and staff the health and safety protocols that Richmond Cooperative Nursery School (RCNS) is committed to implementing as we operate during the Covid-19 pandemic. RCNS is committed to the health, safety and well-being of its employees, children, families and all individuals who enter and are a part of the day to day operations of our programs.

In addition to this document, we will follow our existing Health and Safety policies and procedures, which are found in our Policies and Procedures binder. Added to this are new protocols and procedures that have been developed based on the Ministry of Education of Ontario (MEO) - Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Child Care re-opening guidelines released on August 3, 2021 and also on the Ottawa Public Health (OPH) guidance document for childcare centres, released on September 8, 2020 (see Resources). Advice from OPH must be followed in the event that it contradicts the MEO's recommendations in their Operations Guidance document. As the situation is constantly changing, we will be sending dated versions of the updated plan to parents and staff via email.

This plan will be modified as needed when these restrictions can be lifted and/or amended to reflect updated advice from the MEO and OPH. As always, the health and safety of the staff and children at RCNS is of the utmost importance to us. We will monitor our health and safety protocols closely, and we will strive to provide a warm and welcoming environment for children, families and staff.

NOTICE OF RISK

When children from multiple families attend a single child care centre, there is an increased risk of the COVID-19 virus coming into the centre. Children who are infected with the COVID-19 virus are more likely than adults to have very mild infections or to have no symptoms at all, but these children can still transmit the infection to other children and to adults in the centre. This means that there is a higher risk of centre acquired infection that can be transmitted on to families of children attending daycare. This child care centre has a screening process to help detect infections when there are symptoms; however, this screening process will not detect children or adults who are infected and who do not have symptoms at the time of screening. The risk of serious COVID-19 infection increases with age, which older child care providers (and those with certain underlying medical conditions) should consider in terms of the risk to themselves personally, particularly if working in child care centres with children from multiple families.

ACTIVATION

This plan will be activated on September 21st, 2020 and remain in place during the Covid-19 pandemic and until further notice.

REOPENING DATE

Richmond Cooperative Nursery School will be open beginning Monday September 21st, 2020.

STAFFING

RCNS will ensure that our program has required number of qualified staff as set out in the CCEYA. All educators at RCNS that are included in ratios are required to have valid and up to date certification in first aid training, including infant and child CPR, and a Police Vulnerable Sector Check.

EVENTS

All in person events, including monthly Executive meeting will be rescheduled, cancelled or done virtually until it is safe to meet in person.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS & PROTOCOLS

RCNS will follow the advice of officials when establishing health and safety protocols. As new recommendations come out on a regular basis, we will amend our plan to reflect these changes.

RCNS will follow our policies and procedures outlining our health and safety protocols. Our submitted attestation to the MEO confirms that our new reopening plan and procedures have been developed and reviewed with employees. The directions and recommendations set out by OPH details how our childcare setting will operate during and throughout the recovery phase following the pandemic including:

- sanitization of the space, toys and equipment;
- how to report illness;
- how physical distancing will be encouraged;
- rescheduling of group events and/or in-person meetings;
- parents drop off and pick up procedures.

All RCNS families and employees will also receive a copy of operational plan (via email), and any other revised versions of it, as they come out.

COVID-19: IMMUNIZATION DISCLOSURE POLICY AND TESTING REQUIREMENTS

RCNS 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 COVID-19 immunization policy aims to protect our 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 the individual's work does not involve in-person interactions:

- Employees of RCNS
- 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 (e.g., special needs resourcing consultant)

The Chief Medical Officer of Health has directed all licensed child care programs to develop, implement and ensure compliance with a COVID-19 immunization disclosure policy. 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 (i.e., permanent or time-limited).
3. Proof that the individual has completed an educational session approved by the Ministry of Education

Child care staff, volunteers, students, Special Needs Resources and frequent visitors, who are not immunized, including those with medical reasons, will be required to complete COVID-19 testing rapid antigen testing at a minimum frequency prescribed by the Ministry of education.

RCNS will follow the directives of the Ministry and use the Resource guide for licensed child care Covid-19 immunization disclosure policy as our guide.

CLEANING OUR CHILDCARE SITE

The risk associated with transmission with shared objects is low. We will continue with daily disinfecting of toys. We will focus on regular hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette to reduce the risk of infection related to shared equipment. This is especially the case for young children where shared equipment is important for learning (for example, toys for imaginative play).

Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily as they are most likely to become contaminated (for example, doorknobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, and tabletops). The bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each morning.

We will follow OPH advice regarding best practices for cleaning and disinfecting. We will keep a cleaning and disinfecting log to track and demonstrate cleaning schedules.

MASKS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Masks are an additional layer of precautions in addition to physical distancing, hand hygiene and sanitation. Masks do not replace the need for these. Good hand hygiene must be performed before and after putting on or removing a mask. Masks can be removed when eating or drinking.

Although masks for children are not required, children are **encouraged** to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while inside the school. RCNS will follow MOE guidelines regarding the use of masks and PPE.

RCNS has secured and will sustain an amount of PPE and cleaning supplies that can support our current and ongoing operations. We will perform and promote frequent, proper hand hygiene (including supervising or assisting children with hand hygiene).

All staff are required to wear medical masks and eye protection (i.e., face shields or goggles) while inside the child care premises. Eye protection is required for staff working in close contact with children who are unable to wear face protection but is not required when working with children who wear face protection. **Masking not required outdoors when 2m of physical distance is maintained.** Physical distancing is strongly encouraged.

When children are not present, masks and eye protection will not be required indoors if the staff can reliably maintain 2-meters distance from others in a controlled space, for

example: a staff is working in the office where 2-meters distance can be maintained from others or staff working in the program and can maintain 2-meters distance.

HAND HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies. Our staff will assist children with appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), and reinforcing its use.

Hand hygiene must be conducted by anyone entering the child care setting and will be incorporated into our daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended (for example, before eating food, after using the washroom).

- Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method.
- ABHR 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.
- Support or modifications will be provided to allow children with special needs to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.
- Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets (for example open basket) will be provided, where possible.
- ABHR with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration must be available (60-90% recommended, including ideally at the entry point to each child care room) and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks and paper towels in dispensers.

ACTIVE SCREENING FOR SYMPTOMS

Active screening is the process of proactively checking for symptoms by means of a questionnaire about symptoms, contacts, travelling and temperature checks. All staff, children and other essential visitors attending RCNS, must be screened each day before entering the child care setting. We will maintain daily records of screening results and all records will be kept on the premises.

RCNS encourages all parents and educators to use the online screening questionnaire (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening>). The online screening must be completed between 7am – 8:45am and a copy of the results must be emailed to richmond_nursery_school@hotmail.com.

In rare cases that parents are unable to complete the screening at home, a paper form will be provided at the school

If a child, staff, placement student or visitor received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms as indicated in the COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, they may continue to attend the child care program if they are feeling well enough to do so.

If the mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain symptoms worsen, continue past 48 hours, or if the individual develops other symptoms, they should leave the child care setting, to self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.

The child, staff, or placement student must not attend child care if household members are experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms (this direction does not pertain to those who received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms) and/or are waiting for COVID-19 test results after experiencing symptoms.

Monitoring COVID-19 Symptoms: If a household member received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms as indicated in the updated COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, they are not required to self-isolate (stay home). If the symptoms worsen, continue past 48 hours, or if the individual develops other symptoms, they should immediately self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Drop off times will be limited to the first 15 mins after opening.

Everybody expected to respect and maintain 2-meter physical distancing rule.

At this time only staff, children and essential visitors will enter the childcare centre. If parents must enter the childcare centre (ie to pick up an ill child) they are required to be screened, wear a mask and maintain a 2 meter physical distance.

There will only be one entrance used for pick up and drop off (main entrance –parking lot side). The program may start and end outside, weather permitting. Parents are asked to not enter the playground area, children will be brought to the gate by an educator. Parents should maintain 2-meters of distance between each other while awaiting their child and wear a mask.

Drop Off Procedure:

1. Parent/child arrive and line up respecting physical distancing and wearing a mask
2. Parent/child sanitize hands as they arrive at the door
3. Parent/child will be met at the door or gate to the park by an educator
4. Only children with a pass screening results will be admitted
5. If required, staff will use a receiving blanket (barrier) if child needs to be carried
6. Educator washes/sanitizes hands before collecting next child
7. Child will be signed in by staff upon arrival

Pick up Procedure:

1. Parent arrives at main entrance of school or playground
2. Parent practices physical distancing while waiting for child outside of main entrance and wears a mask
3. Educator will bring the child and their belongings to meet the parent
4. Educator signs child out
5. Parent and child leave
6. Educator washes/sanitizes hands before collecting next child

With toddlers and young preschool children that need to be picked up at drop off, the handover from parents to staff may use a blanket or towel to put on the educator as a barrier. The blanket/towel will be used only once and then washed.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Personal belongings (e.g., backpack, clothing, etc.) should be minimized, labeled and will be kept in the child's cubby/ designated area. No toys from home, please.

~~No strollers can be left inside the building. You must take them home or you can leave them outside, but this will be at your own risk.~~

SPACE SET-UP AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

RCNS recognizes that physical distancing between children in a childcare setting is difficult and we encourage our educators to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children. In the toddler and preschool programs, our educators will be required to physically touch the children to go about their regular childcare activities.

At RCNS we will encourage physical distancing by:

- spreading children out into different areas, particularly at meal and dressing time
- incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children
- using visual cues to promote physical distancing
- extending outdoor play as much as possible
- removing extra furniture out of the program

Recognizing that physical distancing is difficult with small children, additional suggestions include:

- when possible, planning activities that do not involve shared objects or toys
- when possible, moving activities outside to allow for more space
- singing indoors is permitted; masking is encouraged but not required for singing if a minimum of 2 meters can be maintained

EQUIPMENT AND TOY USAGE AND RESTRICTIONS

We will provide toys and equipment which are made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected. Toys and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected regularly and mouthed toys will be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it.

If/when sensory materials (playdough, water, sand, etc.) are offered, emphasis will be placed on hand hygiene before and after use of the materials.

OUTDOOR PLAY

We will try to remain outside (weather permitting) for as long as possible. We may find alternate outdoor arrangements (e.g. community walk).

FOOD PROVISION

Each child will continue to bring in a small nutritious snack in a labelled lunch bag with labelled containers and a labelled ice pack. **All lunch bags, containers, ice packs and reusable water bottles MUST be individually labelled.**

Where possible, children will practice physical distancing while eating. There will be no sharing of food, utensils or water bottles.

AIR CIRCULATION AND VENTILATION

RCNS will do our best to implement best practices and measures to optimize ventilation (see Public Health Ontario's guidance: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems in Buildings and COVID-19).

Adequate ventilation will be provided by opening windows, moving activities outdoors when possible, and through mechanical ventilation including HVAC systems.

Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVACs) and their filters are designed to reduce airborne pollutants, including virus particles, when they circulate through the system. While ventilation is important, it must be used along with other public health measures. There is not one public health measure that can guarantee protection from COVID-19; multiple strategies are needed. Other measures include symptom screening and self-isolation for people with symptoms, practicing physical distancing, wearing a mask, and practicing good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

We will maintain records of anyone entering our facility and the approximate length of their stay (such as cleaners, people doing maintenance work, and people providing support for children with special needs).

Records will be kept on the premises. Records (e.g. name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, screening completion/result, etc.) will be kept up-to-date and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Communication with families regarding the enhancement of health and safety measures facilitates transparency of expectations. Our new policies will be shared with families, for their information and to ensure they are aware of these expectations, including **keeping children home when they are sick**, which is aimed at helping to keep all children and staff safe and healthy.

In person communication will be limited. All other communication will be done via email or by phone. If you would like to talk about your child's day, how they are adjusting, etc. please call 613-838-2575 or email (Richmond_nursery_school@hotmail.com).

All communication will be primarily done through email, including any changes to policies and procedures regarding health and safety protocols related to Covid-19, potential and confirmed cases of Covid-19 as well as Covid-19 outbreaks so please ensure your contact information is always up to date.

PARENT FEES

Monthly tuition fees and non-refundable registration fees will remain the same prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and until further notice.

Should a child become ill, there will be no refunds of tuition for the time the child is absent from the program. If RCNS is closed for more than 2 weeks, tuition fees will be refunded and all further payments cancelled until RCNS is reopened.

STAFF TRAINING

RCNS will ensure that training is provided to all staff on the health, safety and other operational measures outlined in this document plus any additional local requirements in place prior to re-opening. This may include instruction on how to properly clean the space and equipment, how to safely conduct daily screening and keep daily attendance records, and what to do in the case that someone becomes sick.

Educators will need to follow all procedures that have been put in place regarding the new Covid-19 guidelines.

VISITORS

There will be no non-essential visitors entering the school when the children are in the program, with the provision of special needs services still continuing. Should questions arise in respect of which service providers are permitted to enter the premises, we will consult with OPH. Ministry staff and other public officials (e.g. fire marshal, public health inspectors) are permitted to enter and inspect a childcare centre at any reasonable time.

All essential visitors entering RCNS will be required to complete the online screening, wear a mask and sanitize their hands upon entry.

PROVISION OF SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCES SERVICES

RCNS recognizes that children with special needs, and their families, continue to require additional support and services in childcare settings. The provision of in-person special needs services at RCNS will continue where appropriate. Should questions arise in respect of which service providers are permitted to enter the school, we will consult with OPH. We will work with special needs service providers (CISS) to explore alternative modes of service delivery where in-person delivery is not possible.

Maximum capacity rules do not apply to Special Needs Resource Staff (consultants and program assistants) on site (i.e., if they are not counted towards staff to child ratios, they are not included in the maximum capacity rules). Where Special Needs Resource services are provided through external staff/service providers, we should inform all families of this fact, and record attendance for contact tracing purposes. All Special Needs Resource staff must be screened before entering RCNS, as per the protocol in the screening section above.

MONITORING AND RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

See the provincial COVID-19 screening tool for symptom screening, monitoring and isolation procedures. All individuals must follow the monitoring and isolation advice outlined in the screening tool.

If an individual becomes ill while at RCNS:

- The ill individual must be immediately separated from others, in a separate room where possible. Parents/guardians will be contacted for pick-up of symptomatic children.
- Symptomatic children who are separated from others will be supervised.
- Staff providing care to the ill individual will maintain as much physical distance as possible. If physical distancing is not possible (e.g., if a child needs comfort) staff will consider additional PPE (i.e., gloves, gown).
- 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. If tolerated, the ill child should also wear a medical mask.
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette will be practiced while the ill child is waiting to be picked up.
 - Cleaning of the area the separated individual was in and other areas of the child care setting where the ill individual was will be conducted as soon as reasonably possible after the ill child leaves.
- The parent or guardian of the ill child will 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.
 - Communication protocols to update and inform necessary stakeholders within the child care community while maintaining confidentiality of the ill child will be initiated
- Regular child care operation can continue unless directed otherwise by Ottawa public health.

- An ill individual who has a known alternative diagnosis provided by a health care professional may return to child care if they do not have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.

The Ministry of Health updated guidance to public health units regarding COVID-19 variants of concern, requiring all household contacts of symptomatic individuals to quarantine. **We will follow all directions from Ottawa Public Health regarding isolation and testing requirements.**

- ~~All asymptomatic household contacts of symptomatic individuals are required to quarantine until the symptomatic household member: receives a negative COVID-19 test result, or receives an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional~~
- ~~If the symptomatic individual tests positive, or is not tested and does not receive an alternative diagnosis from a health care professional, the symptomatic individual must isolate (including from household members) for 10 days from symptom onset, and all household contacts must isolate until 14 days from their last contact with the symptomatic individual. Anyone who is symptomatic, does not pass screening, or has been advised to self-isolate by the local public health unit will not be permitted to attend the program (this includes children, staff, placement students,).~~
- ~~If a household member received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms as indicated in the COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, they are not required to self-isolate (stay home). If the symptoms worsen, continue past 48 hours, or if the individual develops other symptoms, they should immediately self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.~~
- ~~Persons who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance of Ottawa public health and health care professional regarding direction for isolation and returning to a child care setting. The individual cannot return until cleared by OPH.~~

Staff with symptoms:

- Staff who develop symptoms during a shift will be separated from others, wash their hands and leave the centre as soon as possible.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING

RCNS has a duty to report ~~suspected or confirmed~~ cases of COVID-19 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Child Care Centres are to notify OPH when:

- ~~Any child, staff, or student have Covid-19 symptoms and requires a Covid-19 test~~

- Any child, staff or student test positive for Covid-19
- Three or more children, staff or students have gastro-intestinal symptoms (nausea, stomach cramps, vomiting and/or diarrhea) within a program group or the facility/daycare in a 3-day period (even if the illness occurred at home)
- One or more people have a reportable enteric disease (as defined by OPH).
- Greater than 15% of children, staff and students report symptoms of illness within a group or daycare on one day (in the absence of underlying reasons for these symptoms such as seasonal allergies, post-nasal drip, etc).

~~We will contact OPH to report a child or staff suspected to have COVID-19 and they 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 has a confirmed case of COVID-19, we will report this to the Ministry of Education as a serious occurrence. When RCNS has to close due to COVID-19, we will report this to the Ministry as a serious occurrence.

We will post the serious occurrence notification form as required under the CCEYA, unless Ottawa Public Health advises otherwise.

OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT

An outbreak may be declared by Ottawa Public Health when within a 14-day period, there are two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in children or staff

- If Ottawa Public Health declares an outbreak, they will determine what happens next. This could include closing a program or closing RCNS.
- Ottawa Public Health will help determine which groups of children and/or staff need to be sent home or if a partial or full closure of RCNS is required.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

One month's (30 days) written notice must be given to the Registrar prior to withdrawal or one month's fee will be forfeited but at this time due to Covid-19, if the spot in the program can be filled immediately the fee **may be** lessened at the Executive's discretion.

No refunds will be made after April 1st or for holidays or absenteeism. For example, if a parent wishes to withdraw your child on December 1st, written notice must be given no later than November 1st, or the December fee will be forfeited.

The membership fee is non-refundable in the case of a withdrawal from the Richmond Co-operative Nursery School Program.

RESOURCES

Please refer further information for current pandemic information:

Ottawa Public Health

- https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/novel-coronavirus.aspx?utm_source=
- <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/child-care-providers.aspx>

Ottawa Public Health Guidance Document

- https://www.santepubliqueottawa.ca/fr/public-health-topics/resources/Documents/Guidance_-Centre_CC_ENG_Aug-13.pdf

Ministry of Education

- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/>

Ministry of Education Guidance Document

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

Provincial Covid-19 website

- <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/index.html>

Public Health Ontario

- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

Government of Canada

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>