

# Sicamous Preschool

## COVID -19 Safety Plan & Policies

Sicamous Preschool has an unwavering commitment to the safety of our families, staff, and community. Intentional, thoughtful, and methodical measures have been put in place by the Society in response to COVID-19, minimizing the risk of exposure and the spread of the virus.

It is also important to know that staff will still provide the level of care you and your child (ren) have grown to expect. This includes close physical contact and meeting their emotional needs.

Some of the new policies and procedures will be implemented permanently and some will be for now, not forever. We appreciate the cooperation of all our families and staff as we navigate through these uncertain times and the new measures that have been put in place.

The following Safety Plan and Policies were developed following the requirements, recommendations and guidelines of: The Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Officer, The Ministry of Children and Family Development, WorkSafe BC, the Interior Health Authority, and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

### Controlled Access to the Preschool Facilities

When Preschool classes begin the Preschool will limit access into the facility to employees, registered children and emergency personnel, until we have been instructed by the Rec Center that we are allowed to use our entrance inside of the Arena. This procedure is necessary to limit the risk of exposure to COVID -19 to our employees, and because we are not allowed inside of the Arena at this point in time. All parents whose children are requiring direct parent to staff hand off will be required to wear a mask if unable to social distance. The Society will monitor and make any necessary changes to this procedure as recommend from the provincial health authorities.

Sanitize stations will be set up at the entrances for students and staff as they enter the classroom

Please allow yourself extra time to follow this new procedure.

### Preschool Program Access

Children attending the Preschool program will enter the facility by using the side door entrance along the far-left side of the building. It is a busy road so we ask that parents wait in the walk zone inside the white line to keep children safe from the road. Nov 15th the gate will close and this will make it safer for us. Please be patient as we navigate the new normal.

**Drop off** - Waiting & drop for preschool is done outside with physical distancing in mind. A staff member will greet your child at the outside door and conduct a health check-in with parents (see Health Requirements Policy) A staff member will be inside to assist your child if needed putting away their items and supervise children washing their hands.

**Pick up** - If the children are outside playing parents are to wait outside of fence perimeter at the park your child will be brought to the gate. Parents please ensure you are keeping the recommended 2 meters space between yourself and staff or any other parent. If the children are inside at pick up time please wait outside with physical distancing in mind and wait for our preschool classroom door to open. The child will wash or sanitize their hands before leaving the facility. Staff will take the responsibility to ensure each child is safely walked to you in designated area behind white line across the road.

### Daily Health Requirements

Staff and children are not permitted to enter the facility if they are sick, even if their symptoms resemble a mild cold.

It is required that parents assess their children daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious diseases prior to arriving at the Preschool facility. Staff will also be required to perform a self-check for these symptoms, at home, prior to arriving at work. The staff member who is greeting the children will ask a few standard questions to the parent and visually inspect the child for any signs of illness. A no-touch thermometer will be available if needed. If your child (ren) displays any signs of illness and/or you cannot confirm verbally that they are symptom free, you will be asked to take your child home.

Staff will also undergo a daily health check before being able to enter the facility.

### Illness Protocols

If your child (ren) or the person bringing them to Preschool is unwell, you must stay home!

A) Administering Medication – if your child (ren) requires prescription medication to be administered while attending the facility, you are required to fill out a medication form. All medication must have a pharmacy label adhered to it and must be given to a staff member; it is not to stay with the child.

B) Illness – for the protection of all children and staff, a child who is displaying signs and/or symptoms of illness or cannot fully participate in regular activities will not be permitted to attend the preschool programs until they are symptom free for 48 hours. If your child (ren) becomes ill or displays any signs or symptoms of illness while attending programs, your child will be required to be picked up immediately.

C) Contagious or Infectious Disease – parents are required to inform the preschool of a positive medical diagnosis of any communicable disease. The child may not return to the centre unless management has received a notice of clearance from a doctor.

The preschool is supporting staff during this time to ensure the health and safety of all at the Preschool. We are implementing temporary additional sick time benefits to ensure the staff do not feel pressured to come to work if they are unwell. Staff also must be asymptomatic for 48 hours prior to returning to work. To ensure staff are mentally healthy to be at work, resources and literature have been provide to them.

## COVID-19 Protocols

People with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms; everything from mild to severe illness has been reported. Symptoms appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The following symptoms may be present in someone who has contracted the disease: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, sore throat, muscle pain, loss of taste or smell, headache, and occasionally gastrointestinal symptoms have been reported.

Within childcare settings, children and staff will often have influenza or other respiratory viruses with symptoms like COVID-19. It is for this reason that children and staff are not permitted to enter the facility and required to stay home when sick.

If a child develops COVID-19 symptoms while at the centre, a procedure has been put in place to isolate the child with one staff member who is wearing appropriate PPE and immediately call that child's caregiver for pick up. Once the child has left the facility, proper and thorough cleaning procedures will take place to mitigate the risk to other children and staff. If your child is exhibiting these symptoms, we will require a doctor's note prior to the return to the centre, and also that your child is symptom free for the 48-hour period.

If a confirmed infected person has been in any of our facilities, the society will coordinate with local health officials and immediately notify Interior Health Licensing. These officials will determine the appropriate course of action for our facilities and programs, which may include a temporary closure.

### Conditions which Require Children to be Excluded from Child Care Facilities:

There is zero tolerance for bringing sick children to Preschool. Parents are expected to assess their child daily before dropping them off to ensure they are well and have no signs or symptoms of illness and can participate in Preschool activities.

Some of the conditions that will require your child to stay home are as follows.

1. PAIN – any complaints of unexpected or undiagnosed pain.
2. An ACUTE COLD with any one or more of the following: fever, runny nose and /or eyes, coughing or sore throat.
3. DIFFICULTY IN BREATHING – wheezing or an ACUTE PERSISTENT COUGH.
4. FEVER (99F or 38C)

A child who requires Tylenol or other fever reducing medication is not to attend Preschool. A child's temperature needs to be normal for 48 hours before returning to the Preschool.

5. SORE THROAT or trouble swallowing.

6. INFECTED SKIN or EYES (conjunctivitis, pink eye) or an UNDIAGNOSED RASH – child will need Doctor clearance note to return.

7. DIARRHEA or loose stool These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral infection which is very easily passed from one child to another.

The child may not return until 48 hours after their last symptom.

8. NAUSEA & VOMITING may be an early sign of illness that require a physician's attention.

The child may not return until 48 hours after their last symptom.

9. SEVERE ITCHING of body or scalp, including Head lice.

The child may not return until they have been treated.

10. Children with known or suspected COMMUNICABLE DISEASES e.g. Flu, measles, pertussis, etc.

**SYMPTOMS MUST BE ABSENT FOR 48 HOURS BEFORE CHILD MAY RETURN TO CARE.**

### Sanitization

Staff already engage in frequent and thorough cleaning every day, using routine practices that follow regulation for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Staff will increase cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces throughout the day. All high touch surfaces will be cleaned with disinfectant during the day.

To reduce the risk of transmission, all toys and articles that cannot be properly sanitized will be removed from the environment. All other toys will be rotated daily to ensure everything can be disinfected at the end of the day. Each class will have a separate assortment of toys and supplies only available to the children attending in that class.

### Physical Distancing

Physical/social distancing is challenging in a childcare setting and not practical for children or reasonable to ask them to do. Children with no symptoms will continue to be treated as we would typically care for a child.

Social distancing will be expected from parents dropping off their child (ren) and staff will do their best to keep the recommended 2 meters away from each other throughout the day.

Staff will role model social distancing and offer and prepare smaller group activities. Children will be spaced out as much as possible and spend more time outside (weather dependent).

### General Information

\*Hand washing with soap is still the single most effect way to reduce the spread of illness. Hand washing will occur at regular intervals during the day as well as after specific daily events. Staff will assist children that need help to ensure handwashing is done correctly.

\*Respiratory etiquette in the Preschool includes covering the mouth and nose during coughing or sneezing with a tissue or elbow and disposing of used tissues in the garbage can followed by hand washing. Children will be reminded not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

\*Children and staff do not and will continue to not share food, drinks, cups, facecloths, paper towel, and other personal items. Please send your child with a filled water bottle for snack as we will not be using water cooler to eliminate touching

\*Staff will continue to be sensitive to children's feelings, especially the new feelings that may arise due to family stress and the changes at the centre. Staff will support and listen to children and let them know they can ask questions and answer appropriately. All of this will be communicated to the parent.

### Expectations of Parents and Staff

We understand that these are stressful times for everyone. Please practice kindness, respect and understanding to each other as we navigate through the new normal at the Preschool.

Staff are expected to treat all children, parents, and families with respect and in turn the society expects the same. The Society will not tolerate any inappropriate actions from parents or guardians that are directed towards management, staff, or other families. Please be reminded of the existing policy from the Parent Manual of parent expectations.

We appreciate your patience as we implement these new procedures. Our goal is to minimize disruption while at the same time keeping our families safe and healthy.

### Communication

If the current COVID-19 situation changes and it becomes necessary to update our procedures or close our programs temporary, we will notify parents by email.

As we move into this new normal at the centre, there will be some noticeable changes that parents should prepare their children for. These changes include the new drop off/pick up

procedure, smaller group activities, and the possibility of staff wearing masks and other personal protective equipment. Having a conversation with your child (ren) will help to make this transition easier for them.

We look forward to welcoming your children back in to the safe, nurturing, and educational programs you have all come to expect at Sicamous Preschool. Though things might look a bit different for now, our commitment to the Preschool families, our staff, and the health and safety of all has not changed.

Information & Facts for Parents provided by BC Centre for Disease Control/ BC Ministry of Health

### [COVID-19 and Children](#)

- COVID-19 virus has a very low infection rate in children. In BC less than 1% of children and youth tested have been positive. Most children are not at high risk for the COVID-19 infection.
- Children under 1 year of age and older children with immune suppression and medical complexity are considered more vulnerable and at a higher risk for illness
- Children who are considered more vulnerable can attend childcare. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine if their child should attend childcare if they are uncertain.
- Children and youth typically have milder symptoms of COVID-19 most often presented with a low-grade fever and a dry cough. GI symptoms are more common over the course of disease, while skin changes and lesions, are less common.
- Many children have asymptomatic disease. However, there is no conclusive evidence that children who are asymptomatic pose a risk to other children or adults.
- Evidence indicates transmission involving children is primarily limited to household settings, and from COVID-19 positive adults to children. Most cases in children have been linked to a symptomatic household member.
- \* Clusters and outbreaks involving children and youth are unusual and tend only to occur in areas where there are high levels of community spread.
- Children are not the primary driver of COVID-19 spread in childcare facilities, schools, or community settings.
- For young children, maintaining physical distance is less practical and the focus should be on minimizing physical contact while caring for their emotional needs.

## COVID-19 and Adults

- While COVID-19 impacts adults more than children, some adults with specific health circumstances are at an increased risk for more severe outcomes, including individuals.

- \*Aged 65 and over

- \*With compromised immune systems

- \*With underlying medical conditions

- Most adults infected with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms that do not require care outside of the home

## Mental Health

COVID-19 has impacted all our lives in many challenging ways. One may be affected by the anxiety, stress and uncertainty created by the outbreak. Mental health is just as important as physical health, and everyone should take measures to support mental well-being and health during the transition getting back to work.

## Maintaining Mental Health

- Basic self-care eating regularly, hydrating, and getting good sleep.

- Outside of work stay in touch with friends and supportive family members.

- Take time for yourself after work- exercise, read a book, yoga, hot bath etc

- Limit the news and unplug from social media

- Other resources

- Free virtual counselling provided by registered psychological (British Columbia Psychological Association)

- Canada Mental Health Association-BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

- COVID-19 Public Health Agency of Canada <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/what-to-do-if-you-are-anxious-or-worried-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

Sicamous Preschool COVID-19 Parent Agreement Contract

I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read, understood and adhere to the updated COVID-19 parent information and policies and agree to the following statements.

I understand that Sicamous Preschool will not be liable for a child in care or family member being exposed to COVID-19 as long as staff are following the established protocols on how to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, like proper hand washing, regular cleaning and disinfecting and identifying children who are sick.

I understand that there is zero tolerance for bringing sick children to the facility. It is my responsibility as a parent to assess my child before bringing them to the programs and being honest and truthful of their health. I will notify management and find alternative care if my child has any signs or symptoms of sickness.

I have read and understood the symptoms of COVID-19 and will isolate my child if they are displaying symptoms for the recommended time set by the provincial Medical Health Officer.

I understand and agree if my child becomes ill at the centre, I must plan to have them picked up within 30 minutes either by myself or another person.

I have read and understood the updated list of when a child cannot attend the Preschool.

I fully understand the expectations of parents and will always ensure I act in accordance with the Preschools expectations of all adult's policy

If I breach policies, I may be removed from the program in accordance with the bylaws

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_