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COVID-19: Policies and Procedures

Updated: February 2021

This policy was created by Karen Cameron, Director of Good Morning Creative Arts and Preschool (GMCAPS) after a risk assessment for the school was completed by the Director and these safety guidelines and protocols are based upon that assessment.

During the pandemic, health and safety regulations are continually being updated. We operate in strict adherence to all directives and guidelines from Ottawa Public Health and The Ministry of Education and these directives override all published health and safety policies on our website or in the Parent Handbook.

Plans for Reopening

GMCAPS opened the program October 2, 2020.

For the reopening of the school the cohort will be as follows:

Preschool and Beyond: 2 educators with up to 12 children
+ 1 Program support educator

For the purposes of this document, a 'cohort' is defined as a group of children and the staff members assigned to them, who stay together throughout the duration of the program. Licensed ratios will still apply.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Director

- Develop and implement standards and procedures according to the most recent advice from Ottawa Public Health (OPH).
- Ensure adherence to the Ministry of Education - *Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Child Care reopening guidelines* released July 2020 and implement any updates in a timely manner.
- Ensure all staff have been properly trained on and understand the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- Ensure guidelines outlined in this policy are shared with all GMCAPS families and they have had an opportunity to ask questions (via Zoom, phone or email) to make sure they understand them.
- Ensure operating ratios are maintained at all times in accordance with the most current Ministry guidelines.
- Ensure there is proper signage at GMCAPS including a “Stop” sign at the entrance, hand washing and sanitizing guides and signs on how to properly use personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Implement a review of this policy as often as necessary to ensure the policy is adequately protecting workers.
- Reinforce the following with parents/guardians of children attending GMCAPS:
 - The importance of keeping sick children at home and informing GMCAPS of the child’s symptoms;
 - The importance of contacting GMCAPS if the child is going to be absent for any reason;
 - The importance of informing and communicating with OPH if they believe they have been exposed Covid-19, and following the recommendations set by OPH;
 - That strict screening processes for Covid-19 symptoms will be administered before children, parents/guardians, or anyone else, are able to enter GMCAPS;
 - That someone must be available to pick up a child within 30 minutes of being contacted, if the child develops symptoms of illness while at GMCAPS; and
 - Contact information for all families must be up to date.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Educators

- Participate in training including but not limited to reading this policy, training on the proper use of PPE, reviewing health and safety guidelines from Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), etc.
- Complete a self-assessment before returning to work. Staff will use the self-assessment tool found on OPH’s website: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

- Complete the Health Screening for Good Morning found on the main page at www.gmcaps.com
- Complete all daily screening protocols before entering the premises each day.
- Wear the PPE as directed by the Director and this policy.
- Read and understand the Outbreak Control Measures from OPH, available here: https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/outbreaks-in-child-care-centers.aspx?_mid_=19704
- Staff should remain on site for breaks and are encouraged to take breaks outside. If they leave the premises they will have to be screened again before re-entry to the facility.
- Read pages 17-20 of the Ministry of Education Operational Guidelines document for additional information <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/child-care-re-opening-operational-guidance.pdf>
- Review outbreak cleaning and disinfection protocols and ensure adherence.
- Review outbreak control measures as described by OPH.
- Ensure that the outbreak cleaning measures are in place and that there are enough cleaning supplies and PPE including face masks, smocks and gloves.
- Report any known violation of this policy or procedure to the Director or OPH.
- Report to the Director if you suspect that you may be infected with COVID-19 or not feeling well.
- Washrooms will be disinfected a minimum of twice daily.
- Not to use electronic devices at GMCAPS unless for the purpose of information sharing with parents. Disinfectant wipes will be provided for cleaning devices before and after use. Staff will wash hands before and after use.
- Organize any group events or in-person meetings to be transferred to a virtual Zoom meet with the Director, staff and/or Board
- Follow all directives on frequent handwashing, including:
 - immediately upon entering the premises;
 - when returning from outside;
 - before serving food;
 - after using the washroom;
 - before and after assisting children with toileting and/or after changing diapers;
 - always before touching one's face or the face of a child.
- Complete other duties as requested by the director.

Staff: Obligations in the Programs

- Ensure windows are open to create airflow within the room as much as possible.
- Wear required equipment and PPE, as required, including masks and face shields/goggles with the exception of at snack and lunch time in which staff must maintain proper physical distances
- Complete a visual health check for each child upon entry to the program – relay any symptoms of ill health to the director
- Monitor children for signs of ill health throughout the morning, report any signs and symptoms to the Director immediately.

- Practice and encourage physical distancing within the cohort as much as possible.
- Practice, promote and monitor hand and cough hygiene measures as instructed by OPH.

Cleaning

- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces using an enhanced cleaner/disinfectant used for outbreaks.
- Ensure the thorough cleaning of all toys and equipment daily
- Complete the enhanced cleaning log daily

Daily Activities

- Maintain daily attendance records with the date, arrival time and departure time
- Ensure the daily Health Screening is completed before allowing the child into the program (highlight on attendance sheet for easy visual)
- Spread children out into different areas when playing.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children.
- Remove shared items that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected (e.g. porous toys, puzzles, cushions).
- Reduce clutter and limit toys to those that can be disinfected daily.
- Suspend all sensory play (e.g. water and sand), dramatic play costumes, etc.
- Monitor children and ensure to remove any toys after the children have mouthed them.
- Promote physical distancing during snack and lunch times, if possible and if safe to do so.
- Ensure all drinks are labeled with the child's name and that they are not shared

Daily Protocols

Notice of Risk

When children from multiple families attend a single program, there is an increased risk of the COVID-19 virus coming into the program. 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 program. This means that children can bring home an infection acquired in the program and put other persons at risk. This Good Morning has a screening process to help detect infections when there are symptoms; however, this screening process will not detect infected children or adults who do not have symptoms at the time of screening.

Provincial school and child care screening tool

All children, child care staff, providers, placement students and visitors are required to screen for symptoms of illness every day before coming into Good Morning. As part of our efforts to strengthen public health and safety measures and update guidance to reflect provincial trends and transmission risks, the government has made changes to the COVID-19 school and child care screening criteria.

This includes new provincial direction that child care staff/providers and children with any new or worsening symptom of COVID-19, as indicated in the school and child care screening tool, even those with only one symptom, must stay home until:

- They receive a negative COVID-19 test result
- They receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional, or 2
- It has been 10 days since their symptom onset and they are feeling better.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health has now directed that the single-symptom screening criteria be applied provincewide. The provincial screening tool has been updated to reflect this direction and so has the Daily Health Screening Tool found at www.gmcaps.com. As a reminder, educators and visitors are now required to provide daily confirmation/proof of having self-screened prior to their arrival. Any individual that does not pass this screening procedure will be asked to stay home and self-isolate until they meet the criteria for return.

Obligations of families and staff in Case of Illness

If you develop signs of illness:

- Please contact Good Morning Preschool by email at gmcaps.staff@gmail.com (evenings and weekends included) as soon as you or anyone in your home develops signs of illness, including a mild fever.

See website below for Screening Guidance from OPH:

<https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/covid-19-and-schools.aspx>

Contact OPH at 311 for guidance, additional information is available at www.ottawa.ca including the location of testing centres. If a test is required you must stay home and self-isolate while waiting for results of COVID-19 test.

<https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/self-isolation-instructions-for-novel-coronavirus-covid-19.aspx>

Please note - If a child or staff tests positive for COVID-19, please immediately contact Ottawa Public Health's Outbreak (OB) Reporting Line at 613-580-2424 ext. 26325, 7 days a week between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or 311 outside business hours and ask to speak with the on-call Public Health Inspector for further guidance

Pre-Drop Off

Parents must complete the Online Daily Health Screening found at www.gmcaps.com
Parents must check the temperatures of their child and themselves before arriving at Good Morning.

If a fever (37.8C or higher) is detected in either the child or the parent please do not come to Good Morning.

All staff will self-screen before coming to work and will be screened upon arrival. Staff must keep spare clothes on site.

No persons will be granted access to Good Morning without the completed daily health screening.

Morning Drop Off Procedures

Morning Drop Off

- Parents/caregivers must wear a mask upon entering the building and at all times during drop off and pick up.
- Only one parent/caregiver will drop off and the same person will pick up at the end of day.
- A detailed log of everyone who comes to the school will be kept for the purpose of potential contact tracing.
- Parents will enter the main front doors at 174 First Ave.
- Drop off will take place in the hallway before entering the classroom.
- Parents are to keep themselves and their child at least 2 meters apart in the hallway. (only 2 children/parents in hallway at one time)
- Parents should limit movement by their child to avoid multiple touch points in the area. Disinfectant will be available on the top of the shoe cabinet for parents to wipe touch points, if this is not possible.
- Children and parents will be screened by designated staff to ensure Online Daily Health Screening has been completed.
- If screening has not been completed the parent/guardian is asked to do so and then take the child(s) temperature while the screener maintains 2-meter physical distance and monitors. The screener will ensure that the thermometer is properly cleaned following each use and that general infection prevention practices are followed between individuals.
- In exceptions, the childcare provider may need to take the child's temperature in lieu of the parent/guardian. In these cases, the childcare provider should take appropriate precautions when screening, including maintaining a distance of at least 2 meters from those being screened, or being separated by a physical barrier and wearing PPE (i.e. mask; gown; gloves; face shield.)
- Each day, parents must provide contact information for someone who can pick up their child within half an hour, in case of illness.
- Parents/guardians will not be permitted to enter the classroom area during drop off.
- Any items to be brought into the school (extra clothes, diapers, etc.) must be in a plastic bag with the child's name clearly marked on it. This bag will be disinfected and placed in the child's labelled bin.
- There should be no more than 4 families in the building at any given time (one at

the top of the stairs at the front door, one at the bottom of the stairs, one inside the hallway doors and one at the classroom door)

Child Cleared for Entry

- Once a child has been cleared, they will be granted access into the classroom.
- Staff will help children sanitize hands upon entering the classroom.
- Children's personal items will be placed on their labeled hooks in the hall and lunch bag (if staying for lunch club) will be removed from knapsack and placed on the hook for easy access.
- Parents will exit the building by the side door so there are no crossing paths with other children/parents. Please use caution when exiting the side door as this is a laneway.

Child Not Cleared for Entry

- If a parent or child does not pass the screening protocol, the child will not be able to enter the program until they have met the re-entry criteria (see below).

Afternoon Pick Up

- Parents will arrive/exit in the same manner as at drop off and we would ask that you quickly gather your child's belongings and dress them in the hall by the side stairs near the side exit so the next parent can move forward. Please use caution when exiting the side door as this is a laneway.
- If the same person who dropped the child off in the morning is not available to pick the child up than the parent must inform the educators at drop off and an outdoor pick up can be arranged with the educators.

Management of Suspected COVID-19 case or other illness

Staff

- If a staff member becomes ill, they will leave the building immediately or as soon as they can safely do so. They will wear PPE to protect others and keep a 2-meter distance from others until they can safely leave. Staff will isolate outside when possible or in a small area which will be cleaned after their departure.

Child

- In the event that a child develops any symptoms of illness (respiratory or otherwise) while at Good Morning, the child will be immediately isolated behind the bin shelf and their parent/guardian will be called to take the child home as soon as possible.
- The Director or staff member with the child will wear protective clothing (including a mask, face shield or goggles, gloves and gown) and remain outside of the area if possible.
- Children will not be required to wear a mask.
- Hygiene and respiratory etiquette will be practiced while the child is waiting to be picked up.

Staff/Child

- Once a symptomatic individual has left our classroom, we will ensure that contaminated surfaces and high touch areas are disinfected, including the isolation zone where the individual was isolated and/or spending time during the morning.
- All items used by the sick person should also be disinfected. Anything that cannot be cleaned should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.
- Inform parents/guardians that their child has come in contact with an individual that has developed a symptom and has been sent home pending testing and further assessment is needed.
- Parents are asked to monitor the health of their child(ren) and to notify Good Morning if their child develops symptoms.
- As long as children remain symptom-free, they can continue to attend Good Morning.
- No personal information about the individual will be shared with the group until otherwise directed by OPH.

Isolation requirement for household contacts of symptomatic individuals

As of February 12, the Ministry of Health has issued updated guidance to public health units regarding COVID-19 variants of concern (COVID-19 Variant of Concern: Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance, Version 2.0 – February 12, 2021), requiring all household contacts of symptomatic individuals to quarantine.

This guidance is being applied to children, child care staff, providers and placement students by requiring them to stay at home from child care if anyone in their household has new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19 and has been recommended for isolation and testing.

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.

These updates are included in the provincial school and child care screening tool.

Post-Illness Management

- Where a child or staff member at Good Morning becomes ill, Ottawa Public Health will be notified and will provide guidance on necessary steps including the information that should be shared with other parents of children in the program,

and whether children and staff who were present when a child or staff member became ill should be tested or isolated.

- Parents will be notified by email if a positive case is identified and OPH will provide guidance on next steps for the children/families and our staff.
- Children and staff in the preschool who were present while a child or staff member became ill should be identified as a close contact.
- Symptomatic staff and children will be referred for testing. Testing of asymptomatic persons will be performed as directed by the local public health unit as part of outbreak management.
- We will consider two or more, symptomatic, laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff member or child as a confirmed COVID-19 outbreak in consultation with the local public health unit. Outbreaks should be declared in collaboration between the preschool and the local public health unit to ensure an outbreak number is provided.

Conditions for Re-Entry

- **If you test positive for COVID-19 with mild to moderate illness** (the majority), the self-isolation period is now 10 days from **symptom** onset. Before you stop self-isolation, your **symptoms** must also have improved for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) before returning to work or school.
- **If you test positive for COVID-19 with no symptoms**, the self-isolation period is now 10-days from your testing day as long as you stay symptom free.
- **If you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19**, you must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days from your last contact with that person. Even if you test negative for COVID-19, the self-isolation period is 14 days as this is the incubation period for the COVID-19 virus.
- **If you test positive for COVID-19 and experience severe illness**, that requires intensive care unit (ICU) admission or have severe immune compromise (receiving chemotherapy for cancer treatment, or taking prednisone, or other immune suppressive medication) the self-isolation period is now 20 days. You may end self-isolation after this period, provided that you have no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and **symptoms** are improving for at least 24 hours.

Reporting and Serious Occurrence Reporting

- Good Morning has a duty to report suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the medical officer of health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
- Previously, Good Morning was also required to report all suspected cases of COVID-19 to the ministry. Currently, only where a child or staff has a confirmed case of COVID-19 (i.e., a positive COVID-19 test result), we must:
 - report this as a serious occurrence to the ministry.
 - report to the local public health unit and provide any materials (e.g., daily attendance records) to public health officials to support case

management and contact tracing and other activities in accordance with all applicable legislation, including the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

- Public health officials will determine any additional steps required, including but not limited to how to monitor for other possible infected staff/providers and children and the declaration of an outbreak and closure of rooms and/or entire child care settings.

If a closure is ordered by the local public health unit and the licensee has already submitted a serious occurrence for a confirmed case, the existing serious occurrence must be updated to reflect the closure.

- Should additional individuals at the child care program develop a confirmed case, licensees must either:

- Revise the open serious occurrence report to include the additional cases; or,

- Submit a new serious occurrence report if the first has been closed already.

- While licensees are no longer required to report a serious occurrence for suspected cases; if the local public health unit determines that a full or partial closure is required (i.e., program room, home premises or entire child care centre must remain closed for a period of time), a serious occurrence report must be submitted under the “Unplanned Disruption of Service” category.

Please also note there are requirements of employers to let workers know if they may have been exposed in the workplace. Please see the guide on developing a COVID-19 workplace safety plan for more information.

Physical Distancing and Ongoing Screening in the Programs

- Physical distancing will be encouraged within reason.
- Preschool room is set up to accommodate a low number of children and to encourage playing in small groups in separate areas.
- Each child will have their own art kit which will be labelled with their name.
- Individual water bottles will be labelled and kept out of children’s reach. We would ask that parents send bottles that have a cover for the mouthpiece or straw.
- Those staying for lunch club must be able to open their own lunch boxes and containers so please ensure to test and practice this at home before sending them to school.
- Snack and lunch tables will be limited to 4 children per table to avoid large numbers sitting in close proximity to each other.
- Staff will wear a smock when it is necessary to pick up a child. This will be removed and laundered after a single use.
- When comforting a child, staff will hold the child facing outwards if possible. If this is not possible, staff may use a receiving blanket and will wash hands and face immediately afterwards.

Cleaning and Sanitation

- Practice and promotion of good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze hygiene is the best way for us to all stay healthy.
- All toys and furniture that can't be easily disinfected have been removed.
- Books, blocks and other toys with high play value will be put out for a maximum of one day and then removed from the program for 1 week (supplies replaced daily.)
- Sensory material (sand, playdough) will be single use for each child.
- Any toys that are put in a child's mouth will be removed for immediate cleaning.
- Toys and high touch surfaces will be cleaned daily.
- Reinforce no food sharing policies.
- Cleaning logs will be kept.
- Only one child will be allowed in the washroom at a time, when possible. Educators will monitor washroom routines when more than one child is in the washroom.
- Change tables will be cleaned after each use. Toilets will be cleaned after each washroom routine unless visibly soiled
- Staff will wear appropriate PPE (face shield/goggles, mask, smock and gloves) when assisting children in the washroom or during diaper routines.
- Electronic devices belonging to staff members will be wiped down frequently and will not be shared. These devices will **ONLY** be used to communicate with parents
- All cleaning products will be checked to make sure they are not expired. Cleaning solutions and bleach/water solutions will be mixed according to Outbreak Protocols from Ottawa Public Health.
- Windows will be open to allow as much fresh air as possible
- All laundry will be done on high heat setting and sent home to the parent on duty.
- Garbage will be taken out by a dedicated staff member after closing hours. This staff member will also perform deep cleaning in all areas after hours.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Educators must wear face shields/goggles and masks daily in the classroom and when needed smocks and gloves will be worn during screening, toileting and when in close contact with a child
- Oversized shirts worn backwards may be used as single use smocks
- Homemade gowns or lab coats will be used by screeners at intake
- Gloves are disposable and single use. Smocks and masks are washable and single use. Face shields must be disinfected after each use.
- Full PPE will be worn by intake screeners at the start of each day.
- All staff have been trained in the proper procedures for donning and doffing PPE.

Masking/PPE requirements

As you may be aware, masks are now mandatory for all children in grades 1 – 12 and are now strongly encouraged for younger children (aged 2 to SK).

The ministry recognizes that some children will be unable to wear masks for medical reasons and it is expected that these will be relatively rare cases.

We are being asked to ensure that children are supported in wear masks to the greatest extent possible. We are open to discuss with parents/guardians, in consultation with the child's health care provider, whether other types of face coverings might work for your child.

In addition, resources can be made available to parents/guardians on supporting their child in wearing masks and on health and safety practices for children who cannot wear masks.

Staffing

- Director Shift 8:00am-1:30pm daily M/W/F
- Educator Shift 8:00am-3pm daily (break 12:15-12:45) M/W/F
- Program Support Educator 9:00am-11:30am M/W/F

Screening Questions

Every person dropping off a child is required to answer the following questions. Any person answering yes to any of the below questions may not be able to drop off that child and further action may be required.

1. In the last 14 days, have you or anyone you live with travelled outside of Canada?
2. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that you should currently be isolating (staying at home)?
3. In the last 14 days, have you been identified as a "close contact" of someone who currently has COVID-19?
4. In the last 14 days, have you received a COVID Alert exposure notification on your cell phone?
5. Are you currently experiencing any of these symptoms?

Fever and/or chills Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher

Cough or barking cough (croup) Continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing (not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Shortness of breath Out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Decrease or loss of taste or smell Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have

Sore throat or difficulty swallowing Painful swallowing (not related to seasonal allergies, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

- Runny or stuffy/congested nose Not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have
- Headache Unusual, long-lasting (not related to tension-type headaches, chronic migraines, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
- Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions you already have
- Extreme tiredness or muscle aches Unusual, fatigue, lack of energy, poor feeding in infants (not related to depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, sudden injury, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

6. Is anyone you live with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms?

The following logs will be kept on site:

- **Screening logs (google doc)**
- **Detailed daily cleaning logs (orange binder)**
- **Attendance records with arrival and departure times (orange binder)**
- **Name, contact information for anyone entering the facility (including times)**

Resources

This document was developed with reference to the following:

- Public Health Ontario's *Environmental Cleaning Fact Sheet* and the Public Services Health and Safety Association's *Child Care Centre Employer Guidelines*, available at: <https://www.pshsa.ca/resources/health-and-safety-guidance-during-covid-19-for-employers-of-child-care-centre>
- Ministry of Education - *Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Child Care reopening guidelines*, available at www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/child-care-guide-care.pdf
- Government of Ontario Public Health Information on symptoms of COVID-19, available at: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.
- Ottawa Public Health guidelines for Child Care Providers, available at: <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/child-care-providers.aspx>

