

Silverspring Preschool

COVID-19 Safety Plan

Dear Silverspring Preschool Families,

In creating a plan, the safety of our students, teachers and families was put first. As your Board of Directors, we did not and will not allow fear and misinformation to guide our decision making. Instead, we have active, ongoing consultations with many community partners and are utilizing the endless sources of information available to us to make decisions based on science and critical thinking.

Our re-opening must be in compliance with the Government of Saskatchewan's Guidance for Childcare Facilities and since we are located in an Elementary School, we must also comply with the Re-opening Guidelines set forth by the Saskatoon Public School Division.

In order to comply with all of these guidelines there have been some changes to our program, classroom and pick up/drop off procedures. This plan and the following processes will be reviewed and assessed on an ongoing basis. If changes are required, we will make them to meet these changes.

We welcome your feedback as we move into action. The board is made up of preschool parents and we are here to represent you. If you have feedback at any time, please forward it to your session rep and it will be addressed by the board.

This plan is subject to change at any time based on direction from the SHA, Saskatchewan's Chief Medical Health Officer and the Saskatoon Public School Division or as deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.

This plan is an addition to our original Parent Handbook, please familiarize yourself with it if you haven't already. It can be found on our website. With all of the COVID planning it may not yet be 100% up to date but we will be working on that over the next few weeks. Please be patient.

I am going to quote the ever-steady principal, Miranda Low, at Sylvia Fedoruk Elementary school as she nailed our sentiments exactly.

"This is not going to be a typical year for any of us. There are many unknowns, a lot of adjustments, and a lot of moving parts. We ask that you join us in demonstrating strong compassionate virtues of flexibility, patience, grace, and kindness to help us all be safe and have some joy in learning this year."

Thank you,

Your 2020/21 Board of Directors

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

SELF MONITORING & ISOLATION

The safety of our classroom begins with each of YOU!!

The first step to everyone's safety is ongoing self-monitoring. This means paying attention to your health and your child's health to identify any symptoms of illness.

Every morning before leaving for preschool you must check in with your child. **If they are experiencing any of the symptoms below do not send your child to school.** Contact Healthline 811 for advice and directions for testing.

The same check-in applies to you before attending your parent-helper shifts. If you have any of these symptoms you will not be permitted to enter the school.

How do you feel today?

Every morning before your child leaves for school, please check to see if they are experiencing any of these symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Headache
- Aches and pains
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or congestion
- Loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis
- Dizziness

If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms, **do not send your child to school.** Contact Healthline 811 for assistance.

Saskatoon Public Schools
Inspiring Learning

Self-isolation is required if you have been diagnosed for COVID-19, recently returned from travelling internationally, or had close contact with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. If you have COVID-19, you must isolate until you have medical confirmation that you are illness-free.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

Parents and caregivers should **have a plan prepared in case their child needs to be picked up early from school due to illness**. Your session reps will ensure your contact information and emergency contact is up to date at the beginning of school. Please inform your session rep immediately if any of those contacts change throughout the school year.

IF A STUDENT IS SICK

If a student is experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, headaches, aches and pains, sore throat, chills, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing), they must not attend school. Parents/caregivers should contact HealthLine 811 for direction.

If the student is referred for testing, they must remain home and self-isolate until they have received their results and direction from the health authority.

IF A STUDENT BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL

We will have an isolation space for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms who cannot leave the facility immediately. If a student is showing symptoms, they will be isolated in this space and provided with a medical mask until they can be picked up. Students will be supervised in this area. The supervising adult must wear a mask and face shield during all interactions with the ill student. We are awaiting word from the school if we can utilize their isolation space. If we cannot we will have one that meets all requirements put forth by the Government.

The student's parents or caregivers will be contacted and **must** pick up the student immediately. After the student/staff member has been picked up, the space will be cleaned and disinfected.

The teacher will contact the Elementary School Principal & Board President to provide notification of the student being removed from the school due to illness. Public health officials will then conduct an initial assessment and provide direction to the school/preschool.

IF THERE IS A COVID-19 CASE AT PRESCHOOL OR IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Saskatchewan Health Authority will notify the school division if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 linked to a school. In abiding by the *Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (LAFOIP), Saskatoon Public Schools will not be sharing names or health information of students and staff. Instead the school and school division will work with public health officials on communication and the next steps, which may include self-isolation, self-monitoring, contact tracing, and testing.

Following a positive case, a thorough cleaning of the school will be conducted. If this cleaning disrupts normal school operations, families will be notified about any scheduling changes.

Students and staff members should self-monitor to ensure they are not developing symptoms. If the individual had close contact with any students or staff members who may need testing, those individuals will be contacted by public health officials.

PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS

HAND HYGIENE

Proper hand hygiene is a key element to reducing the spread of illness. Students will be taught to follow proper hand hygiene. This includes washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and the frequent use of hand sanitizer.

Hand sanitizer is safely and readily available in numerous spots inside our classroom. We have sourced a Health Canada approved Pharmaceutical grade Hand Sanitizer called Little Hands from a local Saskatchewan company. An automatic no-touch sanitizer dispenser was donated to our school and will allow for many no-touch opportunities for the students to clean their hands.

Children will sanitize: upon entry to the classroom, before and during play/craft time, before snack, before/after gym, and when leaving the classroom.

Soap and water washes will occur after snack, after using the bathroom, after craft if needed, and anytime their hands are visibly soiled.

COUGH ETIQUETTE

We will teach & remind the students of good cough/sneeze etiquette. Covering their mouth/nose with a tissue or their “cough pocket” (the inner bend of their elbow) each time they need to cough or sneeze. The students will be asked to wash/sanitize their hands as needed.

MASKS

Masks are optional and not required to be worn by the students; they are however optional. If you wish for your child to wear a mask, then you must send your child to school wearing it. The teachers and parent helpers cannot make your child wear it if they take it off. Efforts to get the child to put it on and leave it on will be made but if that is not happening, it will be placed in the child’s school bag for the remainder of the class, as it becomes more of a risk and a great distraction. If you choose to have your child wear a mask you need to have them practice at home. To be an effective barrier they should not touch it, should not remove it unless they need to, cannot leave it laying around and cannot share it with any of their classmates. If your child cannot consistently do these things for 2 hours than the risk of them wearing it improperly and spreading germs through that is greater than not wearing it at all.

CLEANING

DISINFECTION PROTOCOL To support a safe environment for students, staff, and families, regular disinfection of surfaces that individuals regularly touch will be of high importance. The disinfection of a surface is the process of applying a mixture of water and disinfectant (as per manufacturer's recommendation) to surfaces to kill any virus that may be present.

SANITIZATION PROCESS A mixture of water and disinfectant per manufacturers recommendation is required. The mixture is placed in a pail or spray bottle depending on the method being used. Disinfection is not the action of cleaning a surface, it is the action of coating a surface with a light film of the disinfecting mixture and allowing it to air dry. The dry time allows for the disinfectant to work. A spray bottle and rag or roll of paper towel will be readily available for each session.

We will be sanitizing our environment using a bleach solution as per Government guidelines. All touch points, surfaces, bathrooms, toys and lockers will be cleaned & sanitized at the end of each session. If it cannot be sanitized between sessions it has been removed from the classroom. Cleaning of all these areas is still done throughout and after the sessions as always.

GENERAL OPERATION

Preschool programs look different than other classrooms in the school. These programs are unique in their educational approach and address the specific needs of young children. As such, schools must consider the classroom and learning environment differently.

In the Government of Saskatchewan's guidelines, schools and childcare facilities are not required to meet a specific physical distance between individuals. With students— especially young children—maintaining physical distance is challenging. Instead, the focus will be on limiting physical contact & distancing when possible. Preschools are limited to a maximum of 15 children in the classroom. Our pre-existing maximum enrollment per session falls below this limit already.

START TIMES

*****Class times for the morning sessions has been changed to 9:00-11:00*****

With this new start time our students will be arriving AFTER the elementary students are in class. The entrance will be less busy and there will be less traffic in the hallways. This change will maximize our physical distance from staff/students in the school and minimize our risk of interaction with the school students to almost zero. Fortunately, this also opens up parking in the loop at drop off time, as 15-minute parking is available after 8:45 now (see below).

Parents are not to drop children off more than 15 minutes before the start of class.



PICK UP & DROP OFF GUIDELINES

Dropping off students at the front entrance is strongly encouraged. We will have a “muster point” set up for the drop off and pick up of the students.

DROP OFF - Our teacher and/or parent helper, identified by a “[Preschool Parent Helper](#)” Badge, will be at the front entrance door for you to hand off your children to when you arrive. They will escort your children all the way to the classroom on your behalf. Once in the classroom, children will be helped to their lockers and encouraged to remove their coats and get their shoes on. Help will be provided when necessary.

We know and understand that some children will be fine with this from the start and some children will need some time to adjust. If your child will not be fine with this at first don't panic, you can still bring them to the classroom but must follow the requirements below. The ultimate end goal is that all children get dropped off at the muster point as they get settled into the school routine. This will become easier as the students make friends with their classmates and see them doing it too. No unnecessary visitors in the school is strongly recommended by the school division and we must respect their space and rules to be able to continue using it. This will continue to be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

If parents or guardians must enter the school for parent helper shifts or for those kids struggling with the muster point, they are required to fill out a health questionnaire before entering the building. The form can be filled out by using a smartphone to scan the QR code posted at the entry door of the school (as seen below), which will go directly to the questionnaire site. Paper copies will be made available as needed. These forms will be used if a contact tracing investigation is necessary.

Parents and caregivers must put on a mask and use hand sanitizer immediately upon entering the school. The preschool cannot provide masks. Parent helpers are required to wear a mask the entire time they are within the school (as per SPSD guidelines) and therefore need to bring their own mask to wear.

When using the muster point, a parent will not have to do the questionnaire, sanitize at the door or put on a mask, as you will not be entering the school. We ask you to maintain a physical distance of 2 meters from others if you happen to arrive at the same time as another family.

PICK UP - At the end of the session your child will have help putting on their coat, packing up their bag and they will be escorted to the muster point at the front door by the teacher and parent helper. You will pick your child up at the front entrance door, it is expected that NO parent is entering the school at pick up time. The teacher will ensure the child is released to the correct person, as they always have. It is important to let your teacher know if someone other than a parent is picking up at the end of the session.



PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Teachers & Parent Helpers will encourage and practice physical distancing whenever possible.
- Teachers & Parent Helpers will have minimal direct physical contact with the students
- Focus will be on helping children learn about physical distance & health hygiene behaviours (such as handwashing, cough etiquette, not touching face, etc.)
- Close greetings (ex. Hugs) will be avoided & instead the students will be encouraged to wave, “air-five”, sign hello with sign language.
- Students will be encouraged to play in smaller groups or individually. For example, only 2 children at the train table at one time.
- The third table will be utilized this year to allow the students more physical distancing during snack time
- We borrowed the following tips from SPSD as it is very pertinent to Preschool as well. Please review and practice developing these skills at home.



CLASSROOM SETUP & MATERIALS

- Unnecessary furniture has been removed from the classroom to provide greater space between students and encourage new methods of interacting to avoid close contact.
- The area rug and soft furnishings have been removed
- The rice table has been removed and sensory bins will not be used.
- Many toys have been removed and will be used in rotation only. All toys that are out must be able to be sanitized after use.
- **ALL** toys, contact surfaces, touch points and lockers will be fully sanitized after **EVERY** session.
- Learning materials that are shared amongst students during classroom lessons will be reduced and sanitized. Items that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected will not be used.
- Each session will have its own material (pens, glue, scissors, etc.) bin. These will not be used by children in other sessions. They will be sanitized after each class. The children will be sanitizing their hands prior to using those items.

PARENT HELPER SHIFTS

- Parent helpers are required to wear a mask for the duration of the session and utilize the required questionnaire upon entering the school.
- As often as possible, in trying to limit the number of different people in the school, try to have the same person perform your parent helper shifts. We understand this isn't always possible, but something to be conscious of if you can.
- Parent helpers **MUST BE ON TIME**. Parent helpers need to arrive at the classroom by **8:35** for morning sessions and **12:20** for afternoon sessions. **THIS IS VITAL** to the function of our sessions.
- Parent helpers are required to help clean throughout the session as we always have. These specific duties will be outlined by your session reps and on your orientation day.
- No siblings are allowed to attend the classroom on parent helper days.

OTHER CHANGES & IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- At this point, field trips that require busing are not allowed. Our end of year Forestry Farm walk is still allowable at this time.
- We will not utilize the small gym for at least the first month of school. This will be reassessed with Ecole Silverspring as they are able to let us know the evolving guidelines they have. Our teachers have come up with other creative ways to be active in the classroom.
- Our usual ½ class orientation day is allowed, but only 1 parent is allowed to attend it. Parents entering the school for this will be required to do the questionnaire and wear a mask, as per above guidelines. Please allow yourself enough time to get to class on time.
- Lunch kits are not allowed. Please pack your child's snack in disposable bags as often as possible or a simple to open compact container.
- Water glasses are not allowed this year. Please send your child with a filled labeled water bottle they can open and close themselves.
- We do not know yet if Fall student photos will be permissible. If not, we may try to postpone them until Spring.
- Younger siblings are not allowed to play in the classroom during drop off if not using the muster point. As much as possible try to utilize a car seat or stroller to keep them confined and not touching items in the hallways or classroom. We feel that the use of the muster point and being able to park in the loop will really help those who will have other kids with you at these times.

BUDGETARY

For those of you new to the preschool it is important for you to know that we are a non-profit organization. Tuition and fundraising rates are reviewed and set annually to cover our costs for the upcoming year. Every year rates are set in January. This year that unfortunately was pre-COVID. As you can imagine our cleaning and sanitization costs have increased substantially this year. We do have some supplies left unused from last year and some saved costs from not being able to go on field trips, but we will require a small increase to fundraising amounts to help bridge the gap.

Typically, our cleaning supplies, Kleenex, soap, etc. were purchased as a 'donation item' that parents were required to sign up for at the beginning of each year. Our cleaning supplies have changed this year and are very specific and we have some left over paper supplies from last year. So, instead of a \$10 donation item this year, we are increasing the fundraising amount by \$20 to a total of \$80. Overall, this is only an extra \$10 we are asking from families and we are allowing the opportunity to fundraise that extra amount.

The Board of Directors and Teachers have been working hard on cost savings and best solutions to avoid having to front these costs onto you, our families. Given that these extra costs will exceed an extra \$5000 minimum, asking this extra bit seems reasonable.