



Pandemic Policy

Updated September 2021

Due to the Novel Coronavirus known as Covid-19, the following Pandemic Policy is in place and will temporarily supersede any contradicting information in the Illness Policy in Section 11 of the Cream of the Crop Parent Handbook.

1. Pandemic Policy Statement

Per WorkSafe BC and the BCCDC Childcare Guidelines, staff, children, parents, and caregivers **must not enter the** centre if they have symptoms of COVID-19 (below) or have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days or have been identified by public health as a close contact of a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Key symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- [Fever](#) or chills
- Cough
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Difficulty breathing

Other symptoms may include:

- Sore throat
- Loss of appetite
- Congestion and sneezing
- Extreme fatigue or tiredness
- Headache
- Body aches
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

[Children](#) may show COVID-19 symptoms differently than adults. For example, fatigue may show in children as poor feeding, decreased activity, or changes in behaviour.

1.1. Health Check and When to Return to the Centre

Our health and wellness policy per our Parent Handbook continues to apply during a pandemic however, additional restrictions apply, based on government / licensing officer directives. Per the BCCDC Public Health Guidance for Child Care Setting parents and guardians are required to perform a [Daily Health Check](#) prior to attending the centre.

Please remember: If any member of the child's household is symptomatic, we also require your child stay home until the household member has been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infections diseases and has been symptom free for 24hours.



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In order to participate in our programming, it is mandatory that our clients and staff follow all Government recommendations pertaining to Covid-19. This includes social distancing, wearing masks, staying at home when possible etc. Due to the seriousness of Covid-19, failure to do this may lead to termination of your contract with Cream of the Crop Childcare.

Please see the pamphlet at the end of this document for information on when to test and when to return to activities as normal. Please be sure to stay in close, prompt contact with the manager of the centre regarding your child's health and to decide an appropriate return date.

1.2. Closures & Ratios

Childcare programs in British Columbia are licensed and regulated through the Ministry of Health, childcare licensing. As a result, Cream of the Crop Childcare may be directed by a childcare licensing officer to close operations during a pandemic or other communicable disease outbreak. Cream of the Crop Childcare will follow all directives provided from the Ministry of Health. The legal authority to close a childcare program for public health reasons falls under the purview of the local Medical Health Officer and the Provincial Health Officer and their decision overrules any decision to stay open that an individual childcare centre owner, or parent, may wish to make.

Childcare ratios are required during operation, even during a pandemic. In the event that employees are unable to come into work or are in a quarantine and ratio is not able to be met, Cream of the crop may need to have reduced operational hours or rotating days off between children. This decision would be made as a last resort in order to avoid a full closure, and would be communicated with parents in writing, via email.

We urge all our families to plan ahead for alternate care arrangements should we be forced to close, or if your child or a family member is ill and they need to be isolated at home. Moreover, it is required by law that parents or their alternate be reachable should their child need to be picked up in an emergency. We will do our best to be as accommodating and flexible as possible and keep everyone informed in a timely fashion.

1.3. Programme Amendments

Effective immediately, the following services will be suspended:

- Tooth brushing
- Culinary Academy for 3yrs-5yrs



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1.4. Safety & Sanitation Protocols

Daily: Please dress your child in clean clothes (i.e. don't reuse sweaters etc.) on days they are attending the centre. Those with long hair should be tied back to help discourage touching their face. Please wash outerwear, backpacks and lunch kits regularly as well as any comfort items/toys (i.e. cars, stuffies). Inside shoes will be kept at the centre.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures:

- Only two families drop off permitted at one time in order to maintain social distancing. Please stay at least 2m apart and follow the PHO's current mask recommendations. We ask the other families to wait outside and be 6ft apart.
- When you arrive, please ring the doorbell. Staff will unlock the door, back up to observe social distancing and waive you in.
- Your child will be asked to immediately go into the kitchen with the teacher to be supervised to properly wash hands as soon as you have said goodbye (hugs etc.).
- Please immediately sanitize your hands either using our gel sanitizer, or if you prefer you may use our kitchen sink and wash for 20 seconds. Parents who do not sanitize their hands either with soap/water or sanitizer may not enter the centre.
- Parents will sign in/out
- Teachers will wipe down or spray backpacks, lunch kits and any other personal items as necessary.
- Once a parent has left, staff will sanitize pens, counter & the door handle and doorbell behind them.

Distancing Practice

Please note for younger children physical distancing is less practical and the focus will be on minimizing physical contact instead. We will be frequently reminding them to keep their hands to themselves. Teachers will be mindful of keeping distance from the children and each other when practical. If necessary to assist with changing, comforting, etc., teachers will wash hands after contact.

We will remind and assist your child to wash hands a minimum 20 seconds. Handwashing will take place upon arrival, before eating, before going outside and upon return to the school, before the need to touch the face, after coughing or sneezing into hands, after using the toilet, after handling common resources/equipment/supplies or pet, whenever hands are visibly dirty and, upon departure.

We will remind your child to not to touch their face (nose, eyes, mouth)



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School-Age Protocols

- The included illness policies apply; if your child has symptoms, even mild ones, please keep them home and call the centre. As with your child's school, please assess them daily for symptoms.
- As it is not possible to maintain social distancing (minimum of 6ft apart) in the school-age room, school-aged children and their teacher will be required to wear a clean mask while inside the centre while the Provincial Health Officer recommends it.
- School aged children will be restricted to their room other than use of the washroom.
- Masks will not be needed when outdoors. Teachers will try to maximize as much outdoor play as is possible.
- Before boarding the van, the children and the teacher will sanitize their hands, put on a clean mask by the ear loops and then board. Masks need to be worn at all times in the van as it is not possible to maintain social distance.
- Children will be assigned seating in the van and siblings/families will be asked to sit together.

1.5. Additional Sanitation Procedures Used in Centre

In addition to our rigorous cleaning schedules, Cream of the Crop disinfects all high traffic areas at least twice a day (light switches, door handles etc.) and some surfaces after each use (e.g. Cots for napping children, tables, sign in pens, front door handles etc.).

Dramatic Play Area

- We are allowing costumes in dramatic play but are only allowing them one wear per child. Once worn they immediately go into the wash.

Park Transportation Protocol for 3-5yrs

- Children wash hands
- Are provided clean pinnies
- Hold clean walk rope
- Children play at park after safety check is completed
- In Summer when no gloves are worn, children will have their hands sanitized immediately after finishing on play equipment, before returning to the walk rope.
- After returning to centre, gloves, pinnies and rope are put in the laundry.
- Children wash hands



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Air Circulation

- Every evening, the centre runs ozone machines in the afterschool room and main room to kill any airborne viruses and bacteria.
- HVAV systems are kept in good repair and in the “fan” mode as often as possible
- The centre doors may be opened while the children are at the park to bring in fresh air (depending on weather)

1.6. Fees during pandemic / communicable disease closures

In the event of a short-term closure due to a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak (less than 30 days), fees are due and payable as per usual operations. Fees payable during closures exceeding 30 days will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Fee reductions such as the CCFRI or ACCB are provided through MCFD and may or may not be provided during required pandemic or communicable disease closures. Parents may directly contact the MCFD office at 1 888 338-6622, to discuss MCFD’s policy regarding CCFRI or ACCB payments; this decision is outside of Cream of the Crop’s authority.

If a child or family must self-isolate, if requested by the parents we will do our best to provide lieu days as is possible. This is not a guarantee but is a courtesy we will do our best to extend.

1.7. Government Recommendations

In the event that the Ministry of Health provides recommendations, including regional or provincial quarantine recommendation- be it due to international travel, linked to potential exposures, or linked to individual symptoms, Cream of the Crop will require all families and children to comply with this recommendation. In the event a quarantine recommendation occurs, the Ministry of Health will provide our childcare program with written information; this recommendation will be shared directly with families. This will apply equally to all children, families and employees.

1.8. Authorized sources of information

A pandemic or localized communicable disease outbreak is subject to governance by official sources: our childcare licensing officers, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Families, and the federal government. While we appreciate that social media and news sources provide an extensive amount of information, we will respond to official, authorized sources of information only.



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1.9. A non-biased, inclusive approach

Fear-based responses in times of pandemic or communicable disease, have historically led to actions stemming from bias and self-protective measures. Not only can these measures lead to conflict between parents, childcare educators, and community members, but they can also lead to actions rooted in racism. Cream of the Crop Childcare has an inclusive-based approach and works to be a safe space for all families and children; we will not tolerate acts of racism or bigotry towards any parent, child, employee, or community member. Any such acts may be subject to an immediate dismissal from our program.

1.10. Covid19 Resources

- Information about COVID-19, including advice and guidance to schools, is regularly updated on the BC Centre for Disease Control site. Information on Covid2019 and current recommendations from the health authority are found here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>
- Cream of the Crop has created its Pandemic Policy based on the COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Setting. The latest version can be found at [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#)
- Non-medical information about COVID-19 is available 7:30am-8pm, 7 days a week at 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).
- Anyone with [symptoms](#), even mild ones, can get tested for COVID-19. Use [the B.C. COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine if you need testing for COVID-19. You can complete this assessment for yourself, or on behalf of someone else, if they are unable to.
- To learn more about COVID-19 testing and find a collection to be tested, go to the [Testing page](#).