



Early Childhood Programs  
Child Care Center  
Parent Handbook: Covid-19 Amendment

Prepared by Heather Quinn, Director of Early Childhood Programs, in accordance with the Department of Early Education and Care's *Suggested Strategies for the Prevention and Response to Covid-19 in Early Education and Care Programs*

August 8, 2021

## **Enrollment:**

We are currently operating three classrooms:

Toddler/Preschool: 15 months to 3 years

Pre-K One: 2.9 to 5 years

Pre-K Two: 2.9 to 5 years

The ratio in our Pre-K classrooms is 3:15 and the ratio in our Toddler/Preschool classroom is 3:9. When suitable to the children's ages and developmental level, siblings are enrolled in the same classroom.

## **Program Space:**

Our dedicated team of teachers has worked diligently to transform our program space to honor all of the suggested health and safety protocols while ensuring that our classrooms are joyful places where children can grow and learn together.

- Our Toddler/Preschool classroom is 661 square feet. The children have access to the Toddler/Preschool playground throughout the day.
- Our Pre-K One classroom uses 2 adjacent classrooms, providing them with 1278 square feet of space.
- Our Pre-K Two classroom uses 2 adjacent classrooms, providing them with 1705 square feet of space.
- Our Pre-K One and Pre-K Two classrooms use our Preschool playground and our Courtyard.

The regulations require that each child have a minimum of 35 square feet of activity space. We are well above that number in all classrooms, ensuring that the children have ample space to explore! We have also structured our classroom schedules in a way that allows for the children to spend a large part of their day outdoors.

## **Drop-off/Pick-up:**

Drop-off and Pick-up will continue to take place outdoors. Each classroom has a designated entrance. A staff person will meet you at the door to check your child in. We will share details about what drop-off/pick-up will look like in individual classrooms prior to your child's first day of school (e.g., which door to use).

## **Hours of Operation:**

Our program hours are 8:00 – 4:30. Late pick-up (4:30 – 5:00) is also be available for a fee of \$5.00 per day with prior written contractual agreement.

## **Covid-19 Resources and Information:**

We recognize that it continues to be essential for all of us to stay up-to-date on the information available on Covid-19, including symptoms, transmission and prevention. Here is a link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website, which offers comprehensive information on the virus:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

It will also be important for us to provide the children with developmentally appropriate information and guidance. We have gathered classroom resources, collaborating with other programs and identifying new strategies to support the children in engaging in healthy practices throughout the day. Sesame Street continues to offer wonderful resources to guide you in helping your child understand the reason for these changes.

<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/health-emergencies/>

## **Health Screenings:**

All families are required to participate in a daily health screening. It is essential that you self-screen your child and all household members for the following symptoms at home:

- Fever of 100 degrees F or higher
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity)
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting)
- New runny nose or congestion
- New loss of taste or smell
- New muscle aches

The following symptoms, if observed in combination with symptoms listed above:

- Fatigue
- Headache
- Any other signs of illness

Children who are experiencing any of these symptoms or have a household member who is experiencing any of these symptoms may NOT attend child care. In addition, children who have had contact with someone with a confirmed or presumptive diagnosis of Covid-19 or someone who is ill with a respiratory illness or children who have a household member that has had contact with someone with a confirmed or presumptive diagnosis of Covid-19 or someone who is ill with a respiratory illness may NOT attend child care. If you observe symptoms in your child or become aware that they may have been exposed, please contact Heather Quinn, Program Director, at (508) 693-7900 ext. 281 as soon as possible.

## **Preventing and Responding to Infection and Illness:**

Children will be monitored throughout the day for signs of illness. If a child becomes symptomatic during the course of the day, they will immediately be isolated from the group and you will be contacted to pick your child up. It is important that we have up-to-date contact information for you and anyone who is authorized to pick your child up. If your child exhibits any of the symptoms on the Covid-19 exclusion list, you will be required to consult with a medical provider. In order for your child to return our program, we must receive one of the following:

- Documentation of a negative Covid-19 test
- A note from the medical provider that identifies an alternate diagnosis and provides guidance on your child's return

If your child tests negative for Covid-19, they may return when their symptoms begin to improve and they have been fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours. If your child's medical provider recommends Covid-19 testing and you decline, your child may return 10 days after the onset of symptoms, provided that their symptoms have improved and they have been fever-free without fever reducing medication for at least 24 hours.

Please note that per the advice of the state epidemiologist, we will ONLY accept molecular PCR tests.

In the event that the program experiences an exposure, we will notify the following:

- All enrolled families and staff
- The local Board of Health
- The Department of Public Health
- The Department of Early Education and Care

If our program has an exposure, we will utilize our Remind text messaging app to communicate with you. We will follow up with a phone call to ensure that you have received the information and to offer additional guidance.

- If your child has been exposed to Covid-19, they must quarantine until they are released by a Board of Health Authority. We will consult with the local Board of Health for guidance on quarantine for other children and staff and what additional precautions will be needed to ensure the program space is safe.
- If your child tests positive for Covid-19 or their doctor states that they have confirmed or probable Covid-19, they will be required to stay home. We will consult with the local Board of Health for guidance on quarantine for other children and staff and what additional precautions will be needed to ensure the program space is safe. We will also follow the Board of Health's guidance to determine when the child can safely return to care.
- If a member of your household is identified as a close contact of someone with a confirmed or presumptive case of Covid-19, your child must stay home. In order for your child to return to care, the household member must have a Covid-19 test 5 or more days after the exposure. Evidence of the negative test must be provided in order for your child to return to care. If the household member is NOT

tested, the child will be required to stay home until the household member is released by a Board of Health Authority.

We are taking a number of measures to prevent the spread of illness in our program, including increasing handwashing, enhancing cleaning/disinfecting procedures and wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) when appropriate. At this time, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention have recommended that all children over the age of 2 and all staff wear face masks when indoors. Children who can safely and appropriately wear, remove and handle face masks will be encouraged to wear them indoors when 6 feet of distancing is not possible. Please send your child with 2 face masks per day. Be sure that they are labeled with your child's name and the front and back are clearly marked. Masks must be stored in a bag and washed daily. Masks are not required for parents/caregivers during our outdoor Drop-off and Pick-up.

## **Travel**

If your family travels within the United States, there are no testing or quarantine requirements for your child to return to care. We do ask that you consult the CDC's guidance on domestic travel when you are planning your trip. At this time, the CDC recommends that unvaccinated people delay travel. More guidance can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html - unvaccinated-people>

The CDC has also created a map that provides detailed information about community transmission rates at the state and county level.

[https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/ - cases\\_community](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/ - cases_community)

If your family or a household member travels out of the country, you will be required to follow the guidance provided by the CDC at the time of travel in order for your child to return to care. This information is being updated frequently due to the introduction of the new Covid-19 variants. Up to date information can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.html>

It is essential that our school community continue to work together to help to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Program Director, Heather Quinn, and Program Coordinator, Judy Thomas, are available to answer questions and offer additional guidance. In addition, your child's teachers will contact you to share classroom-specific information.

Heather Quinn: (508) 693-7900 ext. 281; [hquinn@mvcommunityservices.org](mailto:hquinn@mvcommunityservices.org)

Judy Thomas: (508) 693-7900 ext. 285; [jthomas@mvcommunityservices.org](mailto:jthomas@mvcommunityservices.org)

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we navigate yet another new phase of the pandemic!