

# St. James Preschool Plan for Opening: Response to COVID-19

## Updated February 2021

At St. James Preschool, safety for our children, families, and staff is a top priority. In order to keep everyone in our program as safe and healthy as possible, we have developed a plan for opening our preschool in August 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have developed this plan based on the most recent guidelines from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Tri-County Health Department, the Colorado Office of Early Childhood, our Nurse Consultant, and the CDC.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, we will:

1. Encourage staff, children, and families to take everyday preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory illness. This includes:
  - Frequent handwashing (upon arrival to the classroom, after playing outside, before and after eating, after toileting, after coughing or sneezing)
  - Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces
  - Wearing face coverings (REQUIRED for all adults in the building, RECOMMENDED for children age 3 and above)
  
2. Require sick children and staff to stay home. This includes:
  - Communicating with parents about the importance of keeping children home when they are sick
  - Conducting daily temperature and health checks for children and staff upon arrival to our building
  - Establishing procedures to ensure children and staff who come to the preschool sick or become sick while at preschool are sent home as soon as possible.
  - Keeping sick children and staff separate from well children and staff until they can be sent home.
  - Ensuring that sick staff members should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation
  - Working closely with the Tri-County Health Dept.
  
3. Have a plan if someone is or becomes sick. This includes:
  - Establishing an isolation area that can be used to isolate a sick child or staff member
  - Following CDC guidance on how to disinfect our facility if someone becomes sick
  - Contacting the Tri-County Health Dept. if COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member and following their instructions

Please continue reading for more specific details on each section of our plan.

## **General Operating Procedures**

**Protecting Our Children, Families, and Teachers:** Our teachers are working hard to follow all the guidelines we have put in place to keep our children and families safe. However, our teachers are essential to our program and need to be protected as well. We are asking all our St. James Preschool families to be conscientious about their activities, especially during school breaks. We are asking that our families follow the safety guidelines presented by the CDC and our state health department regarding leisure travel and personal gatherings. We hope that each family can do their part to keep our school open and safe by abiding by the current restrictions in their county.

**Limiting the number of people in the classrooms:** One family member per child will be allowed to enter the classroom at the designate pick up or drop off time to sign the child in or out. Parents will be required to properly wear face coverings and practice physical distancing as much as possible. Our staggered schedule (see below) for drop off and pick up will help with limiting the number of people in the classroom and the building at one time. During the school day, teachers will be working in one classroom with one group of children and groups of children will not be combined. For example, each class will be on the playground at a designated time and will not be combined with any other group of children.

**Face coverings:** Face coverings will be REQUIRED for staff and parents at all times. Face coverings for children 3 and above are RECOMMENDED. Teachers will support the use of face masks by children in their classroom and will encourage children to wear them. Parents should provide two clean masks for their child each day and ensure that they are laundered before being returned to school. If wearing the face masks is preventing a child from participating in the classroom activities, the child can remove the mask and store it in their cubby basket. Children under the age of 3 will not be allowed to wear face masks per CDC guidelines.

**Daily health/temperature checks for staff and children:** All staff will receive a health screening and temperature check using a contactless thermometer upon arrival to the building each day, and we will maintain a health screening form for each staff member.

All children and adults who are dropping them off will receive a health screening and temperature check using a contactless thermometer upon arrival to the building each day, and we will maintain a health screening form for each child in our program.

Exclusion criteria includes:

- Feeling feverish, having chills, or temperature of 100.4 or greater
- Loss of taste or smell

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New or unexplained persistent cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or congestion
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting
- Diarrhea
- For any other signs of illness we will refer to the [“How Sick is Too Sick?”](#) document from CDPHE

If a child or staff member has ANY of these symptoms, they WILL BE EXCLUDED from our program for the appropriate length of time, as determined by the “Return to Learn” Guidance from CDPHE.

If a child or staff member has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 symptoms, we will follow the guidance of our Nurse Consultant and Tri-County Health Dept. for each individual scenario.

**Quarantining and school or classroom closures:** Decisions related to quarantining or school/classroom closures will be made in collaboration with Tri-County Health Dept. based on the facts and the individual circumstances. Parent will be notified via email and text if classrooms need to be closed for any length of time.

**Drop off and Pick up:** Each class will be assigned a drop off and pick up time which will be staggered to prevent too many people congregating at one time.

Caterpillars (3's & 4's) class:

- Drop off between 9:30 am and 9:45 am on the playground. Teachers will conduct health and temperature checks. Parents will wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing. Children will use hand sanitizer with supervision and parent assistance, and they will wash hands when they enter their classroom after their time on the playground.
- Pick up at 1:30 pm in the classroom. Parents will wear a face covering and will maintain physical distancing when waiting to pick up their child, following the signs on the wall next to the classroom.

Panda Bears (3's & 4's) class:

- Drop off between 9:30 am and 9:45 am in the classroom. Upon entering the building, children and parents will have a health and temperature check, then proceed down the hall. Children will receive an assigned place to wash their hands upon arrival, either in the classroom or in the hallway bathroom. Parents will wear a face covering, assist

with handwashing and will maintain physical distancing when waiting for their turn using the signs on the wall outside the classroom and the bathroom.

- Pick up at 1:30 pm outside on the playground. Parents will wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing.

Owl Babies (2 ½'s) class:

- Drop off between 9:15 am and 9:30 am in the classroom. Upon entering the building children and parents will have a health and temperature check, then proceed down the hall. Parents will wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing. Children will wash their hands in their classroom with parent assistance.
- Pick up at 1:15 pm on North end of the playground. Parents will wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing.

Thank you for your patience as we try out a new way of doing drop off and pick up. We may need to make some adjustments once school starts and we see how things are going.

**Isolating a sick child:** If a child becomes sick while in the care of St. James Preschool, they will be safely and comfortably isolated in the Preschool office in the care of a familiar caregiver. The child's parent will be contacted immediately. In case a parent cannot be reached, we will contact another person on the child's emergency contact list. Parents will be responsible for keeping their contact information up-to-date, and will leave a current phone number where they can be reached each day on the sign in form when they drop off their child.

**Cleaning, Sanitizing, & Disinfecting:** Teachers will routinely clean and sanitize the classrooms throughout the school day following the guidance of the [CDC](#) and the support of the Tri-County Health Dept. This includes cleaning and sanitizing tabletops before and after meals and disinfecting high touch surfaces (sinks, doorknobs, tabletops, light switches, bathrooms) every day. Toys that have been mouthed or sneezed/coughed on will be removed and disinfected every day. We will remove all toys/materials that are difficult to clean, as well as reduce the amount of toys/materials in the classroom. Any items that are soft or porous will be laundered each evening. Group sensory tables will not be used and sensory materials will be used on an individual basis. Toys will be sanitized daily and disinfected between groups of children (i.e. on Tuesday before the WThF group comes, then again on Friday).

**Lunch and snacks:** Children will be seated with as much physical distance maintained as possible. Each child brings their own lunch each day, and we will not have any family style meals.

**Physical distancing will be maintained as much as possible throughout the day.**

**Tuition:** Our current tuition policy states "Payments shall be made on a monthly basis. The payments will be due on the first day of school for each month. There will be no refunds if your child must be absent from school due to illness, vacations, or domestic problems." Due to the

uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, we acknowledge that there may be a time during the 2020-2021 school year where our program may be forced to close (due to an outbreak or recommendation from state and local health departments). The Preschool Board will make every attempt to be fair, honest, and flexible when making decisions regarding tuition payments related to closures.

The Preschool Board reserves the right to make changes to our tuition policy in the event of a COVID related closure. As a reminder, your child's tuition is a yearly fee based on a 32 week school year. For your convenience, we allow payments to be divided into 9 installments. That allows you to pay the same amount each month, rather than adjusting your payments based on breaks or holidays each month. Our annual budget is based on the entire annual fee, and that allows us to pay for the cost of running our program and paying our staff. We know that COVID has affected each family differently, and we want to remind you that the Grace Fund is available to provide tuition assistance. You can request an application from Hillary.