

Woodridge Preschool COVID-19 procedures & COVID Safe Plan

Preamble:

The global Coronavirus pandemic has seen significant changes to operating procedures of most businesses and organisations throughout Australia and in particular Victoria. These have included but are not limited to encouraging people to work from home where possible and reduce the amount of face to face contact people are exposed to through social distancing measures.

The Department of Education has clearly stated Pre-school's should remain open to cater for students who are attending. The Pre-school acknowledges it has a duty of care to cater for not only its usual cohort of children but, in particular, children of essential workers and those from vulnerable families. In the current climate this is a crucial way that Woodridge can support these families and the broader Victorian economy.

Under Stage 4 restrictions, the Pre-school will remain open to provide care for children of permitted workers, where there is no one else in the household who can care for the child, and those from vulnerable families. Information regarding access to childcare permits is available at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/permitted-worker-scheme-covid-19#childcare-permit> and also at <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/permitted-worker-scheme>.

The COVID-19 virus is highly contagious and people with pre-existing medical conditions and older people can be especially vulnerable to severe side effects. This is of particular concern to some staff and community members who may elect to keep children at home to help prevent the spread of the virus and exposure of family and friends in the before mentioned categories. Considering these dual obligations we at Woodridge Pre-School will implement a comprehensive set of procedures to ensure that where possible, it will be safe to send children to the Pre-school and ensure the safety of staff, children and their families. This document will outline procedures for students on arrival and some processes in which staff can help support and manage students and parent's anxiety around the COVID19 virus.

COVID19 PROCEDURES:

PROCEDURES WHEN STAGE 4 RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE IN METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

Combined Groups

- Parents of children attending must provide the pre-school with a copy of their Permitted Worker Permit (including Childcare) or an Access to Onsite Childcare/Kindergarten Permit.
- Mon & Wed 8:30am combined start, 1:00pm 3YO departure, 4:00pm 4YO departure and Tues & Thurs 8:30am combined start, 1:00pm 3YO departure, 4:00pm 4YO departure.
- Drop off and pick up via the deck, lining up on the markers for social distancing and face masks for adults must be worn.
- The educator will sign your child/ren in and out.
- Temperature checks will occur on arrival.
- Parents are asked to be patient and follow staff guidelines each morning and afternoon at drop off and pick up.
- Parents MUST be contactable and come immediately, if contacted by educators notifying them that their child is sick.

- There will be a lower threshold of tolerance for children with any flu like symptoms than under normal operating processes due to the threat of COVID19.
- Parents will not be able to enter the Pre-school unless under exceptional circumstances in order to minimise contamination of colds, flus and COVID-19.
- Some children may be anxious and struggle to settle due to changed arrangements in regard to staffing and children's attendance. If this is the case, parents are asked to be understanding and supportive if they are requested to pick their child up if s/he is unable to settle.
- Children will not be allowed soft toys or any other items from home, so please ensure you clean out their kinder bags before coming.
- Children will be expected to bring a morning tea/snack as well as their lunch (4YOs only) and water bottle.

PROCEDURES WHEN STAGE 3 RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE IN METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

3YO Groups

- 3YO class time, Mon & Wed 8:45am – 1:15pm and Tues & Thurs 8:45am – 1:15pm (slight change to class time).
- Morning drop off (8.45am) will be conducted through the door into the garden/outdoor play area. Parents and children are to enter the outdoor play area through the gate to the right of the building and line up at the entry to the 3YO room - please hold your child/ren's hand and obey any signage and social distance markers in place. An educator will greet you at the door and welcome your child into the pre-school. Parents are then to exit the garden promptly via the gate (please close after use). Do not delay your exit from the garden as this will delay the children being able to play outside as part of their program.
- All late arrivals are to enter via the deck, ring the bell and wait for an educator to collect your child.
- Afternoon pick up (1.15pm) will be conducted via the deck. Parents are to line up on the deck (using markers to ensure spacing) and children will be brought to their parent individually and the parent and child/ren are to then exit promptly via the deck. Please do not stop for a chat whilst passing people on your way out as this will cause congestion.
- The educator will sign your child/ren in and out.
- Temperature checks will occur on arrival.
- Parents **MUST** be contactable and come immediately, if contacted by educators notifying them that their child is sick.
- There will be a lower threshold of tolerance for children with any flu like symptoms than under normal operating processes due to the threat of COVID-19.
- Parents will not be able to enter the Pre-school unless under exceptional circumstances in order to minimise contamination of colds, flus and COVID-19.
- Parents are asked to be patient and follow staff guidelines each morning and afternoon at drop off and pick up.
- Some children may be anxious and struggle to settle due to changed arrangements in regard to staffing and children's attendance. If this is the case, parents are asked to be understanding and supportive if they are requested to pick their child up if s/he is unable to settle.

- Children will not be allowed soft toys or any other items from home, so please ensure you clean out their kinder bags before coming.
- Children to bring along a morning tea snack and water bottle.

4YO Groups

- 4YO class time, Mon & Wed 8:30am – 4:00pm, Tues & Thurs 8:30am – 4:00pm with 4:00pm – 6:00pm aftercare.
- Morning drop off (8.30am) and afternoon pick up (4pm) will be conducted via the deck.
- In the morning parents and children are to line up on the deck (using markers to ensure spacing). When you reach the front door, please sanitise both your hands and your child/ren's. An educator will meet you at the front door to welcome your child into the pre-school.
- All late arrivals are to enter via the deck, ring the bell and wait for an educator to collect your child.
- In the afternoon parents are to line up on the deck (using markers to ensure spacing) and children will be brought to their parent individually and the parent and child/ren are to then exit promptly via the deck. Please do not stop for a chat whilst passing people on your way out as this will cause congestion.
- The educator will sign your child/ren in and out.
- Temperature checks will occur on arrival.
- Parents are asked to be patient and follow staff guidelines each morning and afternoon at drop off and pick up.
- Parents MUST be contactable and come immediately, if contacted by educators notifying them that their child is sick.
- There will be a lower threshold of tolerance for children with any flu like symptoms than under normal operating processes due to the threat of COVID19.
- Parents will not be able to enter the Pre-school unless under exceptional circumstances in order to minimise contamination of colds, flus and COVID-19.
- Some children may be anxious and struggle to settle due to changed arrangements in regard to staffing and children's attendance. If this is the case, parents are asked to be understanding and supportive if they are requested to pick their child up if s/he is unable to settle.
- Children will not be allowed soft toys or any other items from home, so please ensure you clean out their kinder bags before coming.
- Children will be expected to bring a morning tea/snack as well as their lunch and water bottle.

ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS WITHIN THE PRE-SCHOOL THROUGHOUT PANDEMIC:

- Children will wash hands before and after eating, after coughing, sneezing, blowing/wiping nose and as required (frequently) and/or noticed by staff.
- There will be regular intentional teaching about hygiene and COVID-19 through stories, demonstrations, songs etc.
- Social distancing will occur at group times (if we have them, they will be SHORT)

- Children will not participate in shared sensory play – playdough, water (unless soapy), finger-paint etc.
- While all children are encourage to attend the Pre-school a lower volume of adults and children can be accommodated to maintain the 4msq per person regulations outlined by the government.
- Children’s water bottles and food to be kept in the lunch lockers.
- No card games/items that can’t be wiped/washed will be used.
- Extra soap will be available and children and staff will use more frequently than usual.
- Fruit will no longer be shared amongst the children. Fruit Duty will not occur during term three.
- Children will have their own water-bottles. Communal water will only be provided when requested by students.
- Children will be unable to share cakes/other food for birthday celebrations as may normally occur.
- Hygiene habits will be specifically taught and will be a focus of the Pre-school program each week.
- All parent/teacher discussions will need to be done via phone and email, or in an emergency conducted briefly at a distance of 1.5m.
- A higher standard and more regular cleaning of the Pre-school will be conducted to ensure lower risk of virus transmission.
- Arrangement of chairs at activities and arrangement of room and playground will reflect social distancing rules (although we know these are difficult to maintain). E.g. at meal times, children to be seated 1.5m apart, at group times (if held) use of carpet circles or chairs to indicate 1.5m apart.
- The Three and Four year old groups may be required to be joined depending on staff availability and the number of children attending the service.
- Use this document in conjunction with the COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

Non-Attending Students:

- Parents are well within their right to refrain from sending children to Pre-school if they are concerned about the spread of the virus.
- The educators will maintain contact with children who are staying home for extended periods and where possible, provide suitable activities to the children so they can remain engaged to kinder during this time.
- During stage 4 restrictions remoting learning will be provided to all families not attending.

Educators:

- Like all members of the community educators can and will have concerns about the COVID-19 virus. Educators will be supported in this time and concerns about their wellbeing will be addressed where possible through adjustments in the Pre-school program.
- Educators like children must not attend if unwell and should remain home if unwell and get tested.
- Educators are to wear masks when working in the office when 2 or more people are present and when welcoming children in and out of the service.
- Maintain high cleaning standards to all areas of the service.
- Maintain communication with families that are remote learning during stage 4 restrictions.

- COVID safe training completed by all educators.

Positive Cases:

- If an educator or attending children are found to have contracted COVID-19 the Pre-school will be closed for an undisclosed period until the safety of those attending can be assured.
- Arrange for a deep clean of the pre-school during the shut down period.
- Report any positive cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) to DHHS (1300 651 160), Worksafe (13 23 60 or via online form) and notify the staff and families.
- Services are requested to lodge a notification through the [National Quality Agenda IT System \(NQA ITS\)](#) or call 1300 307 415.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS TO MANAGE ANXIETY ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

Don't be afraid to discuss Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Most children will have already heard about the virus and educators shouldn't avoid talking about it.
- Not talking about something can make children worry more. Help children feel informed by providing them with facts from trusted sources.

Use student-friendly honesty

- Think about the age of your children. Offer information using language they will understand.
- It's okay if you can't answer everything; being open to the discussion is what matters.
- Do your best to answer honestly and clearly. Don't share too much information all at once, as this may be overwhelming.
- Try to remain positive when talking to children.
- Avoid talking in a way that could make children feel more worried.

Be guided by your Children

- Invite children to tell you anything they may have heard about COVID-19, and how they feel.
- Give them opportunities to ask questions, particularly when you can see /hear that it is impacting on their learning and/or wellbeing