

Woodridge Pre-school COVID-19 procedures

Preamble:

The global Corona Virus 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 during term two 2020 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.

The COVID19 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:

- 4YO class time, Mon & Wed 8:30am – 4:00pm, Tues & Thurs 8:30am – 4:00pm with 4:00pm – 6:00pm aftercare
- 3YO class time, Mon & Wed **8:45am – 1:15pm** (slight change to class time)
- On arrival parents need to enter following the crosses marked on the deck, (which are 2 metres apart) to ensure safe distancing occurs.
- 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 and will welcome you and your child
- They will firstly take your temperature and then your child/ren's temperature
- If the temperature checks are within the norm, educators will sign the child/ren in.
- 4YO Parents will walk the children through the room, say a quick goodbye and promptly depart through the supervised front door.
- 3YO Parents will walk the children through the room to the outdoor area, say a quick goodbye and promptly depart through the supervised outdoor side gate .
- 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.
- 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 will not be allowed soft toys or any other items from home, so please ensure you clean out their kinder bags before coming.
- 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 two. 3YO children to bring along a morning tea snack and 4YO children will be expected to bring a morning tea/snack as well as their lunch.
- 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.

Processes for entering the Pre-school:

- The entrance to the Pre-school will be clearly marked so that social distancing can be observed.
- Parents may enter to drop off their child, once they have had their hands sanitised and temperature checked.
- Staff will monitor parents entering and exiting the Pre-school at a safe distance. This may lead to delays as a lower number of parents can enter the Pre-school at once, than usually is the case. Parents are asked to be patient and follow staff guidelines each morning and afternoon at drop off and pick up.
- Staff will sign children in and out of the Pre-school to ensure parents are not required to share a pen. This will be discussed with parents on arrival.
- All parents and children will sanitise hands on entering. 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 Coronavirus through stories, demonstrations, songs etc.
- Social distancing will occur at group times (if we have them, they will be SHORT)
- Some children may be anxious and struggle to settle due to changed arrangements in regards 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.

Non-Attending Students:

- Parents are well within their right to refrain from sending child/ren to Pre-school if they are concerned about the spread of the virus.
- The Kinder staff will maintain contact with children who are learning from home. Educators will provide suitable activities for the children to do at home, so they can remain engaged during this time.

Staff:

- Like all members of the community staff can and will have concerns about the COVID19 virus. Staff will be supported in this time and concerns about their wellbeing will be addressed where possible through adjustments in the Pre-school program.
- Staff like children must not attend if unwell and should remain home if unwell.

Positive Cases:

- If a staff member or attending children are found to have contracted the Coronavirus the Pre-school will be closed for an undisclosed period until the safety of those attending can be assured.

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