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February 22, 2021

Hello Families and Teams:

### **Urgent Update Symptom Screening Criteria and Sibling/Household Isolation**

The COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening has been updated and it is important that this message is received and understood.

The screening criteria and sibling/household isolation information has changed effective immediately. It is suggested that every family and staff self-screen at home prior to coming to program using the COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening app and you will also be screened again, in person upon arrival to the program.

Public Health Ontario has moved back to a **single symptom criteria** and further direction around **isolation in households**.

COVID-19 Symptoms include new or worsening, and not related to other known causes or conditions you already have:

- Fever and/or chills
- Cough or barking cough (croup)
- Shortness of breath
- Decrease or loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Runny or stuffy/congested nose
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
- Extreme tiredness or muscle aches

**Continued on the next page /2**

Everyone in your household should stay home if anyone has COVID-19 symptoms or is waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms. Stay home until the person with symptoms get a negative COVID-19 test result, is cleared by public health, or is diagnosed with another illness. You must screen for COVID-19 every day before going to school/child care. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

Children and staff with any new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19, even those with only one symptom, must stay home until:

- They receive a negative COVID-19 test result.
- They receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional, or
- It has been 10 days since their symptom onset and they are feeling better.

Isolation requirements for household contacts of asymptomatic individuals includes staff, students and children are directed to stay home from school or child care, if anyone in their household has new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19 and has been recommended for isolation and testing.

All asymptomatic household contacts of symptomatic individuals are required to quarantine until the symptomatic household member:

- Receives a negative COVID-19 test result, or
- Receives an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional

If the symptomatic individual tests positive, or is not tested and does not receive an alternative diagnosis from a health care professional, the symptomatic individual must isolate (including from household members) for 10 days from symptom onset, and all household contacts must isolate until 14 days from their last contact with the symptomatic individual.

If you have any questions please contact us and or Public Health Sudbury and Districts. We continue to keep the safety and well-being of the children, your family and our teams as our priority.

Stay well and stay safe,

Tracy Saarikoski, RECE

Executive Director

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January 26, 2021

**Important Update: Mandatory Non-Medical Mask Policy**

Hello Discovery Families,

The safety and well-being of the children and our teams is our priority.

We have recently been notified of an updated health and safety protocol in regards to wearing masks and would like to share the new guidelines with you.

Effective immediately, a non-medical mask is mandatory for all children in grades 1 and up while inside our child care sites, including hallways and outside when a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

All FDK children are also encouraged to follow these same guidelines which align with those of the school board.

We would invite you to send additional masks, if necessary, with your children for the before and after school programs. Labelling the masks will help if they need to be returned to children.

Thank you in advance for your support in speaking with your children about the new guidelines and continuing to support the safety of all children and employees.

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January 15, 2021

Hello Discovery St. John Site Families:

**RE: Re-Opening St. John Site for Monday, January 18, 2021 at the St. John Site**

Thank you for your patience as we begin to plan for the re-opening of the St. John Site. Those families who have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 confirmed case contact have been provided with a “return to program date” specific to your child from Public Health Sudbury & Districts. These dates range in time due to attendance in cohorts over the past few weeks and vary between children.

Public Health Sudbury & Districts have assured us that the environments and staff are able to welcome the return of all children not directly impacted by this situation to our programs on **Monday, January 18th, 2021**. We eagerly await the return of the children who were directly in contact with our Educator on their specific return date.

We invite you to please email Tina Madore, Program Supervisor, at [stjohn@discoverycare.ca](mailto:stjohn@discoverycare.ca) with changes to your schedules.

We would like to thank the St. John Site team for their dedication to the safety and well-being of our children and families during this sensitive time.

Warmest regards,

Tracy Saarikoski

Executive Director

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January 14, 2021

Hello Families;

**NOTICE ST. JOHN SCHOOL SITE - CLOSED FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2021**

We are writing to inform you that an Educator at our St. John Site in Garson, has tested positive for COVID-19. The St. John Site families were made aware of this late last night and into the early morning today, as we were instructed by Public Health Sudbury & Districts to close three cohorts as a precautionary measure, until they had time to further investigate. We were allowed to offer child care for two cohorts today.

In considering the safety and well-being of the children and team, and at this present time, Public Health is still contacting families and reviewing documents, we are making the decision to close the entire St. John School Site tomorrow, January 15, 2021 and wait for further direction from Public Health.

We are grateful that Public Health is taking extra caution with our youngest citizens at this time.

We hope that our Educator is on the mend. We would like to thank you for your kindness and support as we navigate through this very difficult time for both the families, Discovery St. John team and our St. John School partners.

We hope to further update you as we receive direction from Public Health as the investigation is ongoing.

An email will be forwarded to all families at the St. John Site later this evening. If you have any questions please email Tina Madore, Program Supervisor at [stjohn@discoverycare.ca](mailto:stjohn@discoverycare.ca) or myself at [tsaarikoski@discoverycare.ca](mailto:tsaarikoski@discoverycare.ca)

Thank you so much for your patience as we move forward through this together.

Tracy Saarikoski

Executive Director

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January 12, 2021

Hello Discovery families:

**STAY AT HOME ORDER**

With the announcement today from Premier Ford, in regards to the “Stay at Home Order”, we are confirming that Discovery Early Learning & Care will remain open under our current business operations. We are also waiting for further direction from Public Health in regards to any additional health and safety requirements.

We will continue to keep you updated.

Stay well, stay safe

Tracy Saarikoski

Executive Director

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December 22, 2020

Hello Families;

**URGENT UPDATE REGARDING PROVINCEWIDE SHUTDOWN**

**INFANT TO SENIOR PRESCHOOL CARE**

We are open as usual for infant to senior preschool children for the week of January 4 - 8, 2021. We are asking you to please email your Program Supervisor if there is any change in your child care arrangements due to the shutdown for that week, by noon on Wednesday, December 23, 2020. Some of you may have to cancel care since your FDK/School Age child is not in school and you are at home if your work is not deemed essential. You will not be charged if you cancel child care for the week of January 4 - 8, 2021 by noon tomorrow.

**FDK / SCHOOL AGE CARE**

Unfortunately, we don't have the staffing capacity to provide Emergency Child Care for your FDK/School Age child(ren). We will not be able to offer any child care for FDK/School Age children for January 4 - 8, 2021 and you will not be charged for any care previously booked at this time for that period. Your child care space will be there when you return on January 11, 2021.

Please confirm your child care needs with your Program Supervisor by email by noon tomorrow, and if you have any questions please ask. We hope that you will continue to be as diligent in following the COVID safety guidelines and now the Provincial Shutdown directions.

Thank you in advance for your immediate response.

Tracy Saarikoski

Executive Director

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December 14, 2020

Dear Discovery Early Learning & Care Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for your ongoing efforts which have made the child care re-opening process possible, and for adhering to public health and safety measures that have ensured child care settings remain safe places.

The holidays are going to look a little different this year and we understand that there may be challenges as the winter break approaches, but we encourage all families to consider how we can work together to make this time as safe as possible, and start 2021 off right. We would also like to remind you about the actions we are taking to reinforce the health and safety protocols aimed at protecting us all while limiting the spread of COVID-19 within our child care setting.

During the holidays, it is important for everyone to adhere to [the public health measures](#) in our community, at home with family, at work and at child care. By [following public health advice](#), we can all have a safe and fun holiday season. You can check the government's [holiday web page](#) for more direct and up-to-date guidance on how individuals and families can plan for a safe holiday season.

Throughout the holiday season, Discovery Early Learning & Care will continue to:

- Reinforce masking and hand hygiene etiquette, as well as physical distancing
- Limit interactions between groups of children and educators/employees
- Ensure that everyone is screened before they enter the child care premises
- Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of the toys, equipment, and premises

As a reminder, individuals showing symptoms of illness should not attend the child care program. All children, students, staff, and visitors must be screened for symptoms of illness every day before attending school or child care. To help meet this requirement, you may use either [the provincial COVID-19 school screening tool](#) or, the screening tool required by your school board, child care provider, or local public health unit.

We encourage you to visit [Ontario.ca/covidresponse](https://ontario.ca/covidresponse) to learn the public health measures in place in our community and remind you that these measures could change depending on public health trends, so please visit the website regularly. We also suggest checking out Public Health Sudbury & Districts ([www.phsd.ca](http://www.phsd.ca)) website as they may also have helpful resources and supports.



If you have any questions about what Discovery Early Learning & Care is doing to protect your children and family in response to COVID-19, please let me know.

In considering the financial viability of the operations, the health and well-being of the children and teams, I would also like to remind you of the Christmas closure period from December 24, 2020 to January 4, 2021. We hope that you have a safe, restful and happy holiday and we look forward to seeing you back in the New Year.

Sincerely,

*Tracy*

Tracy Saarikoski, RECE, AECEO.C, BA

Executive Director

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