



# Nursery Reopening Operational Guidelines: Roles and Responsibilities

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This document was created in September 2020 and may be updated as new information and protocols are received. Any subsequent protocols or new regulations set by the government or guidelines that are set by MOHAP must be followed.



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## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clarify the roles and responsibilities for each nursery stakeholder in implementing the Nursery Reopening Guidelines. It is the responsibility of each member of the nursery community to ensure that the guidelines are adhered to and properly implemented in the nursery to ensure safe day to day operations, to maintain health and safety standards and to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

## Basic Principles

The basic principles are the underpinning ideas that must be prevalent in implementing the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. When preparing for and transitioning into reopening post COVID-19, nurseries must follow all recommendations from MOHAP, to try to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community. The following Basic Principles must be incorporated into each stakeholders daily interactions within the nursery community.

- **Social/ Physical Distancing & Hand Washing** – Practicing social/ physical distancing and frequent handwashing is the best tools we have to stop the spread of COVID-19. These strategies must be used together to become a part of the day to day operations within the nursery. Nursery staff and children must avoid shaking hands or coming into close contact with other staff or parents by making sure at least 1.5 meters is kept between individuals. Children must be taught to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth and to wash their hands often throughout the day.
- **Staying Home If They Are Ill** - Requiring parents to keep their children at home if are ill must be adopted into the nursery culture. Additionally, children and staff who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 are required to work and learn from home.
- **Identifying Symptoms** - Conducting health checks are necessary to identify any nursery staff or children with COVID- 19 symptoms. If nursery staff or children develop any symptoms such as a mild cough, fever of more than 37.5 degrees, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, they must stay at home.
- **Hygiene and Safety** - Establishing routines and procedures that ensure hygienic and safe practices are followed by all stakeholders to ensure a feeling of confidence and security when attending the nursery.



- **Wellbeing** - Ensuring the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of all nursery staff, children and parents is embedded into the culture of the nursery as well as in the daily operations.
- **Support and Respect** - Establishing a culture that is supportive and respectful of all stakeholders and takes into consideration personal circumstances.
- **Transparency** - Establishing open and clear communication so that all nursery staff and parents feel comfortable and confident disclosing personal information related to health and circumstances.

## Guideline 1: Know the Latest Facts

During the COVID-19 pandemic and post pandemic it is critical that nurseries remain informed of current information to ensure the safety and wellbeing of nursery staff, children and parents. As facts and knowledge about the virus continue to change and improve, procedures and practices in the nursery will need to be updated. Nurseries are an integral part of all communities and have a duty to ensure all stakeholders understand the latest information about COVID-19, including its symptoms, complications, transmission and prevention and most importantly the impact this has on the nursery provision.

Nursery staff must stay informed, share current information and implement new knowledge of COVID-19 into existing policies and procedures. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### 1.1 Nursery Principal

1.1.1 The nursery principal must develop new policies and/or update existing policies as new information regarding COVID-19 is received to ensure that the nursery continues to be operational.

1.1.2 The nursery principal must share new and/or updated policies with all key stakeholders and ensure there is a thorough understanding of the procedures to be implemented.

1.1.3 The nursery principal must share accurate information with all nursery staff and parents and provide updated information on prevention and control efforts at the nursery. This may include providing useful links to reputable sources of information including, MOE, MOHAP and WHO.



1.1.4 The nursery principal must conduct all training and information sessions for nursery staff and parents through e-platforms (MS Teams, Google, or other secured video conferencing platforms). It is essential to avoid people gathering unnecessarily in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

1.1.5 The nursery principal must ensure clear communication channels are established to disseminate current information regarding COVID-19 and the nursery procedures to nursery staff and parents. Conveying any information to children must be age-appropriate and relevant.

1.1.6 The nursery principal is encouraged to utilize parent-teacher committees to promote information sharing.

1.1.7 The nursery principal is expected to address and respond to nursery staff and parent concerns or queries concerning COVID-19 and/or nursery procedures referring to the latest information available.

## 1.2 Nursery Staff

1.2.1 Nursery staff must ensure they have access to current and reliable information regarding COVID-19 and are aware of how to minimize the risk of the spread of the virus.

1.2.2 Nursery staff must action any new or updated guidelines/policies received from the nursery principal immediately and implement the new procedures in their daily practice to ensure the safe operation of the nursery and ensure that the nursery continues to be operational.

1.2.3 Nursery staff must refer to the principal regarding any questions or concerns about new protocols or a change to existing policies/procedures.

1.2.4 Nursery staff must attend any training sessions regarding COVID-19, update nursery guidelines and/or health and safety protocols.

1.2.5 Teaching staff may provide children with current age appropriate information regarding COVID-19 if children show interest or concern.

## 1.3 Nurse

1.3.1 The nurse must provide nursery staff with updated information on COVID-19 in regards to health and wellness. This may include, but is not limited to, ways that staff can stay healthy, active and other preventative measures.



## 1.4 Parents

1.4.1 Parents must follow any updated nursery policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 and how to minimize the risk of the spread of the virus.

1.4.2 Parents must keep up to date with information from organizations that provide reliable information such as MOE, MOHAP and WHO.

1.4.3 Parents must refer to the principal if there are any questions or concerns regarding updated information or changes to existing policies/procedures.

1.4.4 Parents are encouraged to attend remote training and/or information sessions conducted by the nursery to explain updated policies and procedures.

## Guideline 2: Hygiene Awareness

It is critical that a nursery's hygiene policies, practices and procedures are strictly adhered to such as hand washing, sanitizing facilities and resources, daily cleaning and disinfecting and the inclusion of hygiene education into the curriculum and daily routines. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### 2.1 Nursery Principal

2.1.1 The nursery principal must develop new policies and/or revise existing policies that pertain to hygiene practices and procedures within the nursery in order to meet the needs of post COVID-19 reopening.

2.1.2 The nursery principal must share all new or updated hygiene policies with all key stakeholders and ensure that nursery staff have a thorough understanding of the procedures to be implemented.

2.1.3 The nursery principal is to ensure that a full sanitization of the entire nursery, no less than 5 days prior to reopening, is implemented to address the fact that the premises have not been used during the suspension period.

2.1.4 The nursery principal must ensure that all nursery staff receive adequate training in regards to COVID-19 regulations, hygiene practices, proper usage of PPE, that will be implemented within the nursery and that are required by their licensing authorities.

2.1.5 The nursery principal must closely monitor and use checklists to implement all hygiene related procedures, or nominate a key person to do so, to ensure that hygiene within the nursery is not compromised. The checklists must be relevant to ongoing cleaning



that occurs throughout the day, as well as a cleaning checklist for the end of each operating day.

2.1.6 The nursery principal must refer to protocols established by local authorities to ensure accurate hygiene guidelines are implemented and monitored. As there is new data on COVID-19 emerging daily, it is the role of the principal to ensure that any new regulations, standards or recommendations related to hygiene are shared with staff and implemented.

2.1.7 The nursery principal must ensure that there is adequate and accurate signage posted in relevant places of the nursery to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene practices for both staff and children.

2.1.8 The nursery principal must ensure that the nursery has adequate supplies to address hygiene effectively. This includes but is not limited to: providing disposable paper-towels for diaper changing areas; providing high quality soap in all handwashing areas for children and staff; providing an adequate supply of tissues in all indoor and outdoor learning areas; providing disposable paper-towels for all children and staff to use in bathrooms; providing wall mounted hand-sanitizers with an alcohol base of at least 65-90% in all areas for children aged 2-4 years, and staff; and providing cleaners with adequate disinfectants and cleaning materials to effectively meet cleaning standards.

2.1.9 The nursery principal must ensure that nursery staff and children's bags and shoes will be immediately cleaned and sprayed with sanitizer when arriving at nursery. In facilities where taking off shoes is required, designate a shoe rack outside at the entrances rather than taking them inside the classrooms.

2.1.10 The nursery principal must ensure there are no cloth hand-towels at the nursery; cloth hand-towels for communal or individual use are prohibited.

2.1.11 The nursery principal must provide PPE to staff such as face masks, aprons and gloves.

2.1.12 The nursery principal must ensure that nursery staff wear face masks and gloves on their way to the nursery and back home each day.

2.1.13 The nursery principal must ensure that nursery staff wear face masks in the classrooms and while in the nursery.

2.1.14 The nursery principal must ensure that nursery staff wear face masks and gloves when using communal staff areas (e.g. staff room) and face masks, gloves and aprons during diaper changing.



- 2.1.15 The nursery principal must ensure that communal rooms such as staff rooms are regularly sanitized and cleaned at least once a day and after every person. Staff from different bubbles must maintain 1.5 meters distance between them when using communal areas. If this is not possible, staff must pray, eat and take breaks within the classroom.
- 2.1.16 The nursery principal must ensure that natural ventilation is used wherever possible (e.g. open windows) while considering employee wellbeing and abidance by work and environment standards. Windows must be opened when not in operation to ensure that fresh air and sunlight enter the nursery. The use of a HEPA filter or authorized company to clean the air ducts is required.
- 2.1.17 The nursery principal must ensure that surfaces such as desks and meeting tables are disinfected daily.
- 2.1.18 The nursery principal must ensure that common areas in the nursery (i.e. toilets, pantry, reception areas, waiting areas, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected every hour or after every use. This also applies to frequently used areas/surfaces such as door handles, dining tables, seat rests, elevator keys, etc.
- 2.1.19 The nursery principal must ensure that equipment is assigned per child, and thoroughly disinfected if it must be shared.
- 2.1.20 The nursery principal must ensure that sand and water tables are not used.
- 2.1.21 The nursery principal must ensure that toys and learning resources that cannot be easily wiped down or cleaned are removed and packed away (e.g. resources or toys with porous surfaces, soft toys, dress ups/costumes). Rotations of learning resources must not occur and instead an adequate amount of learning resources must be in each classroom.
- 2.1.22 The nursery principal must ensure that all learning resources in classrooms such as toys, books, scissors, pens, pencils, crayons, arts and crafts materials and messy play resources as well as roleplay and other materials must be cleaned after each and every single use where possible.
- 2.1.23 The nursery principal must ensure that learning resources/ items/ toys if sneezed on, coughed on or put in the mouth must be removed immediately. They may be kept in a designated, clearly labeled, basket/ container for separating items that have been in children's mouths, sneezed or coughed on, etc. and must be cleaned and sanitized prior to returning to the children's area.
- 2.1.24 The nursery principal must monitor the use of books in the nursery. If books are shared across classes, they must be removed from one class and left without access for 24





hours before being moved into a different area as the virus has been shown to survive less than 24 hours on paper. Books with plastic or laminated covers must be wiped with disinfectant and left over-night before use.

2.1.25 The nursery principal must move to paper free and electronic business as much as possible.

2.1.26 The nursery principal must ensure that all sanitary procedures regarding the handling of food containers and items follow a strict protocol to avoid cross-contamination and the potential spread of COVID-19. Sanitary procedures may include, but are not limited to: staff washing their hands before and after handling each child's belongings; effective storage of child's food items to minimize cross contamination; encouraging increased independence of children as developmentally appropriate to ensure they handle their own food containers and items; cleaning all surfaces that are in contact with food containers; and sanitary procedures for bottle preparation.

2.1.27 The nursery principal must review the mealtime schedule to avoid mixing bubbles of children during meal breaks. It is recommended that bubbles of children be assigned their own meal table to reduce contact on surfaces between different bubbles of children.

2.1.28 The nursery principal must ensure that all bedding is washed regularly and that children are not sharing cots/beds or any bedding such as sheets, blankets, pillows etc. All bedding is to be washed daily.

2.1.29 The nursery principal must ensure that children are transported to the nursery by their parents and that the use of the bus must be suspended until further notice.

2.1.30 The nursery principal must ensure that hygiene education is included in lesson plans.

2.1.31 The nursery principal must guide nursery staff in implementing hygiene education in classroom routines and procedures throughout the day.

2.1.32 The nursery principal must support any nursery wide hygiene education initiatives and/or programs. This may include providing resources necessary that support the teaching of hygiene practices.

2.1.33 The nursery principal is encouraged to communicate hygiene practices and ways that they are safeguarding the children, staff and parents against COVID-19 to all parents.

## 2.2 Nursery Staff



- 2.2.1 Nursery staff are required to attend any required trainings with licensing authorities.
- 2.2.2 Nursery staff are required to attend and implement all hygiene training sessions provided by the nursery and as required by MOHAP and MOE.
- 2.2.3 Nursery staff are required to ensure that personal bags and shoes, and children's bags and shoes will be immediately cleaned and sprayed with sanitizer when arriving at nursery. In facilities where taking off shoes is required, designate a shoe rack outside at the entrances rather than taking them inside the classrooms.
- 2.2.4 Nursery staff must ensure that they do not enter communal rooms such as staff rooms when staff from other bubbles are present. If this is not possible, staff must pray, eat and take breaks within their own classroom.
- 2.2.5 Nursery staff must ensure that children do not share cubbies and that they are disinfected daily.
- 2.2.6 Nursery staff must ensure that sand and water tables are not used.
- 2.2.7 Nursery staff are to ensure that all bedding is washed daily.
- 2.2.8 Nursery staff are to ensure that children do not share any cots/mattresses or bedding.
- 2.2.9 Nursery staff are to ensure adequate spacing between cots/beds to prevent any cross-contamination.
- 2.2.10 Nursery staff are required to wear a face mask inside the classroom and when in the nursery.
- 2.2.11 Nursery staff are required to wear face masks and gloves when using communal staff areas (e.g. staff room) and face masks, gloves and aprons during diaper changing.
- 2.2.12 Nursery staff must display age-appropriate posters on general hand hygiene in bathrooms and all handwashing areas in the nursery.
- 2.2.13 Nursery staff must implement hygiene education into classroom routines and procedures throughout the day.
- 2.2.14 Nursery staff must plan and initiate nursery wide hygiene education initiatives and/or programs.
- 2.2.15 Nursery staff must develop age appropriate lesson plans that help children understand the importance of good hygiene and how to effectively carry out hygiene practices (such as handwashing, behaviors when accessing bathrooms, hygienic



behaviors before, during and after meal time, hygiene when using toys and learning materials, covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow).

2.2.16 Nursery staff must communicate effective healthy habits and topics to parents in daily and weekly communication platforms (e.g. emails, digital-newsletters, social media, and apps).

2.2.17 Nursery staff must ensure they are aware of the locations of the hand sanitizers and must supervise its use by the children. Hand sanitizer must not be left within reach of children.

2.2.18 Nursery staff must ensure that children are not sharing food, and utensils.

2.2.19 Nursery staff must ensure that children are adequately spaced apart during snack and meal times.

2.2.20 Nursery staff must encourage children to be independent at mealtime as per their developmental stage and follow sanitary processes at the start of mealtimes such as washing hands, not sharing foods and using own utensils. Children aged 2-4 years must be encouraged to remove their own food items from their bag and feed themselves. In the event that children need support, teaching staff must wash hands thoroughly and wear gloves before touching any child's food items and/or containers or cutlery and in between each child.

2.2.21 Nursery staff must ensure that children's lunch boxes are stored in a place in the classroom that is specific to their bubble. The lunch box must be wiped down on arrival by a member of staff and kept in the bubble specific location.

2.2.22 Nursery staff are to follow sterilization protocols for infants and children who are bottle-fed.

2.2.23 Nursery staff must refrain from sending home children's work. Other methods of sharing children's achievements must be implemented (e.g. apps, emails).

### 2.3 Cleaners

2.3.1 Cleaners are required to clean and disinfect tables, chairs and highchairs before and after a bubble of children eat at the table.

2.3.2 Cleaners are required to disinfect common areas in the nursery (i.e. toilets, pantry, reception areas, waiting areas, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected every hour or after every use. This also applies to frequently used areas/ surfaces such as door handles, dining tables, seat rests, elevator keys, etc.



- 2.3.3 Cleaners are required to ensure that trash is removed daily and disposed of safely. They should double-bag and securely store disposable gloves, aprons and any other disposable items used while cleaning contaminated areas for 72 hours before being disposed, as recommended by MOHAP.
- 2.3.4 Cleaners are required to wear disposable cleaning gloves and aprons for cleaning.
- 2.3.5 Cleaners are required to use a disposable material (such as a paper towel) when cleaning surfaces.
- 2.3.6 Cleaners must first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water and then disinfect these surfaces with cleaning products. They should clean frequently touched electronic devices, such as telephones and computers with sanitizer wipes.
- 2.3.7 Cleaners are required to clean an area with disinfectant after someone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 has left in order to minimize the risk of spreading the virus. Disposable gloves, aprons and any other disposable items used while cleaning contaminated areas must be double-bagged and securely stored for 72 hours before being disposed of as recommended by MOHAP.
- 2.3.8 Cleaners are required to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds at regular intervals throughout the day, including after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning.

## 2.4 Nurse

- 2.4.1 Nurses are responsible for their own personal hygiene while in the nursery.
- 2.4.2. Nurses are required to wash their uniforms each day and keep them at the nursery. Uniforms must not be worn or taken home and must remain at the nursery. Shoes must be kept at the nursery and a separate pair worn to and from work. A spare uniform must be kept at the nursery in the even of an incident requiring the nurse to change.
- 2.4.3 Nurses are required to attend and implement all hygiene training sessions provided by the nursery and as required by MOHAP or other relevant entity.

## 2.5 Parents

- 2.5.1 Parents must be aware of policies related to hygiene.
- 2.5.2 Parents must ensure that their child/children does/do not bring any unnecessary items from home, such as toys, to the nursery.



- 2.5.3 Parents must ensure that their child/children bring their lunch in a hard plastic easy to clean bag that is only used for home and to the nursery. The external surface of the lunch box will be wiped down on arrival.
- 2.5.4 Parents must ensure that one set of bedding is provided to the nursery if the nursery does not provide their own bedding. This bedding will not be returned home daily as it will be the responsibility of the nursery to wash the items on site each day.
- 2.5.5 Parents are encouraged to give their child/children opportunities to become increasingly independent with hygiene procedures such as handwashing, using the bathroom and feeding themselves as per developmentally appropriate under the supervision of an adult.
- 2.5.6 Parents are encouraged to send food items for snack and meals that children can manage independently (removing from bags, opening containers, independent feeding) as per their developmental stage; this will minimize contact for support at snack and mealtime.
- 2.5.7 Parents are encouraged to remain connected with the nursery via their communication channels to ensure that they are aware of information pertaining to hygiene and how it can be further reinforced and supported at home.

### **Guideline 3: Handwashing**

During the presence of COVID-19, handwashing is crucial to stopping the spread of the virus. It is critical that the nursery implement handwashing protocols for all nursery staff, parents and children.

According to the MOHAP, effective handwashing can be described as washing hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and warm water and then thoroughly drying hands afterwards with paper towel. Cloth hand towels must not be used to dry hands as they can spread germs. Handwashing is preferable to hand sanitizer. However, in instances where soap and water are not immediately available, hand sanitizer must be used but only for children between the ages of 2 to 4 years old. Hand sanitizer units must be wall mounted, closely supervised and kept out of the reach of children.



It is critical that a nursery revises handwashing policies, practices and procedures in order to protect and safeguard children, staff and parents. The nursery must recognize appropriateness of strategies for the relevant age-groups within the nursery.

It is imperative that staff teach and model hygiene practices with children in a fun manner and any reference made to the virus is neutral rather than negative to reduce children's anxiety surrounding the situation. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Nursery Principal

3.1.1 The nursery principal must develop a new Handwashing Policy or revise the existing policy in order to meet the needs of post COVID-19 reopening.

3.1.2 The nursery principal must share the new/updated Handwashing Policy with all key stakeholders and ensure there is a thorough understanding of the procedures to be implemented.

3.1.3 The nursery principal must provide nursery staff and parents with information on the importance of handwashing, how to effectively wash and dry hands and when hands must be washed.

3.1.4 The nursery principal must monitor nursery staff to ensure they are implementing handwashing protocols into the daily routine. This includes: after blowing noses, toileting and changing nappies; prior to and after eating; before and after preparing a bottle; between activities; prior to and after outdoor play; and upon entering or leaving the nursery as well as throughout the day.

3.1.5 The nursery principal must ensure that adequate amounts of soap, paper towel and hand sanitizer are purchased for the nursery. Soap and paper towels must be available in all bathrooms and wall mounted hand sanitizer available in all classrooms, common areas and in the entrance to the nursery.

3.1.6 The nursery principal must ensure that soap and paper towel dispensers are available at child height to encourage children to carry out handwashing independently as per developmentally appropriate under the supervision of an adult.

3.1.7 The nursery principal must ensure that she effectively washes her own hands throughout the day.



## 3.2 Nursery Staff

- 3.2.1 All nursery staff must ensure that they effectively wash their hands throughout the day.
- 3.2.2 Nursery staff must immediately inform a cleaner if soap, paper towel or hand sanitizer needs to be replaced in any area of the nursery.
- 3.2.3 Teaching staff must ensure that regular handwashing is included into the daily routine.
- 3.2.4 Teaching staff must model and teach children how to effectively wash and dry their hands
- 3.2.5 Teaching staff must develop age appropriate lesson plans that help children understand the importance of handwashing.
- 3.2.6 Teaching staff must supervise handwashing to ensure that it is carried out effectively.
- 3.2.7 Teaching staff must wash the hands of children who are too young to wash their own hands.
- 3.2.8 Teaching staff must encourage children to carry out effective handwashing independently as per developmentally appropriate under the supervision of an adult.
- 3.2.9 Teaching staff must monitor children aged 2 to 4 years using hand sanitizer at all times.

## 3.3 Cleaners

- 3.3.1 Cleaners must ensure they effectively wash their hands regularly throughout the day.
- 3.3.2 Cleaners must ensure that if they are wearing gloves, they are changed between the cleaning of each area and after coming in contact with any contaminates.
- 3.3.3 Cleaners must ensure that soap and paper towel are available at all times in each bathroom in the nursery. It is essential for cleaners to monitor the supply of soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer and to replenish supplies in a timely manner.
- 3.3.4 Cleaners must ensure that wall sanitizer is available in every classroom, common area and entrance to the nursery. Hand sanitizer must always be kept out of child reach and wall mounted.

## 3.4 Parents



3.4.1 Parents must ensure that they effectively wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before dropping off or collecting their child/children from the nursery.

3.4.2 Parents must model and teach their child/children how to effectively wash their hands at home.

3.4.3 Parents must give their child/children opportunities to become increasingly independent with handwashing as per developmentally appropriate under the supervision of an adult.

## **Guideline 4: Social Distancing**

Social distancing is defined as keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. Keeping space between others is one of the best tools available to avoid exposure to COVID-19 as well as slowing the spread of the virus. The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Nursery Principal**

4.1.1 The nursery principal must ensure that children are placed into bubbles who remain together within the same bubble every day and at all times.

4.1.2 The nursery principal must ensure that a maximum of 16 (45 day old to 2 year old) and 20 (2 year old to 4 year old) children are allocated to a bubble.

4.1.3 The nursery principal must ensure that a maximum of 8 children aged 45 days to 2 years and a maximum of 10 children aged 2-4 years of age from each bubble attend at any one time during the day.

4.1.4 The nursery principal must ensure that children remain in small bubbles and do not inter-mingle. Maintain the mandated qualified staff requirements.

4.1.5 The nursery principal must organize child bubbles so that the minimum space requirement for each child is 3.5 square meters.

4.1.6 The nursery principal must allocate one internal room/space as a base classroom per bubble.

4.1.7 The nursery principal must allocate nursery teaching staff as per the mandated adult: child ratios to a single bubble of children.

4.1.8 The nursery principal must allocate all staff, including cleaners, to specific bubbles and ensure staff do not rotate or change bubbles.





- 4.1.9 The nursery principal must allocate at least 1 extra designated staff member per bubble in the case of emergencies or absence.
- 4.1.10 The nursery principal must encourage nursery staff who are able to carry out their job remotely without negatively impacting productivity to continue working from home (e.g. accountant).
- 4.1.11 The nursery principal must modify the timings of the operational day to stagger children and staff arrivals and dismissals.
- 4.1.12 The nursery principal must ensure that staff do not leave the nursery property during the working day and until their duty is completed, or in the event of having to leave the nursery for an emergency that they do not return until the following day.
- 4.1.13 The nursery principal must revise the drop off and pick up protocol for children so that parents do not enter the building. The additional staff member allocated to each bubble must act as runner to take children to and from the classroom during pick up and drop off times.
- 4.1.14 The nursery principal must encourage nursery staff to remain a minimum of 1.5 meters apart throughout the work day, including during meals, meetings, and breaks.
- 4.1.15 The nursery principal must support staff and parents in social distancing by placing signs and floor markings so that they stay 1.5 meters apart. Floor markings must be placed outside for child pickup, at entrances, on stairways, near bathrooms, in hallways and in common areas.
- 4.1.16 The nursery principal must stagger staff timings so that large numbers of staff are not congregating in mornings or afternoons. Staff members are only allowed to socialize with other staff that are in the same bubbles.
- 4.1.17 The nursery principal must revise schedules so that bubbles of children do not share any common areas. Bubbles must remain in allocated classrooms and only share common areas on a 24 hour rotating schedule and after disinfecting and cleaning of the common area. The minimum space of 3.5 meters per child must be adhered to.
- 4.1.18 The nursery principal must ensure that children from different bubbles do not share the same sleeping space. Each bubble must have its own sleeping space and cots/cribs.
- 4.1.19 The nursery principal must stagger staff breaks so that social distancing protocols can be maintained. Only staff members from the same bubble must congregate in the staff room together, otherwise breaks are to be taken within the classroom.



- 4.1.20 The nursery principal must ensure that meetings are kept to a minimum and that social distancing requirements are maintained. Whole nursery training sessions must be conducted remotely through a selected online platform (i.e. Microsoft TEAMS, Google Classrooms).
- 4.1.21 The nursery principal must ensure that no large gatherings take place in the nursery where nursery staff or children from different bubbles gather together and/or share food (e.g. birthday parties or celebrations).
- 4.1.22 The nursery principal must ensure visitors do not enter the nursery. Meetings can be organized through a selected online platform.
- 4.1.23 The nursery principal must schedule deliveries to occur at times when there are no parents or children outside of the nursery.
- 4.1.24 The nursery principal must not share staff amongst nursery branches in the event that a nursery has multiple branches.
- 4.1.25 The nursery principal must ensure that outsourced staff/providers such as music, art or sports staff continue to be suspended until further notice.
- 4.1.26 The nursery principal must suspend bus transportation until further notice and instruct parents to transport their own children.
- 4.1.27 The nursery principal must establish a contact tracing register to record the date, time, name, Emirates ID number and contact details of every person who is on site at the nursery each day. This includes but is not limited to parents, caregivers, nursery staff, visitors, delivery drivers and tradespeople.

## 4.2 Nursery Staff

- 4.2.1 Nursery staff must ensure that their bubbles of children remain together within the same bubble every day and at all times.
- 4.2.2 Nursery staff must ensure that their bubbles of children do not inter-mingle.
- 4.2.3 Nursery staff must remain with their bubble of children throughout the day. Staff must not rotate between bubbles.
- 4.2.4 Nursery staff must support new drop off and pick up procedures so that parents do not enter the building.
- 4.2.5 Nursery staff must support parents to maintain social distance when dropping off and picking up children.



4.2.6 Nursery staff must support social distancing throughout the nursery day including during transitions and when moving bubbles from one area of the nursery to another up and down stairways, in common areas, and in the bathroom areas.

4.2.7 Nursery staff must maintain new schedules that stagger break times and only congregate with other staff members in their own bubble.

4.2.8 Nursery staff must adhere to class schedules and not rotate bubbles to common areas except on a 24 hour basis and after sanitization and cleaning has been conducted.

4.2.9 Nursery staff must attend online training and information sessions conducted by the nursery principal and all required trainings from regulatory bodies as required.

4.2.10 Teaching staff must refrain from meeting with parents in person and must schedule online meetings using the selected online platform.

### 4.3 Parents

4.3.1 Parents must be aware that children are placed into bubbles that will stay together for the entire day and with the same nursery staff.

4.3.2 Parents must be aware that nursery operations in the time of Covid-19 will be different. Some services and facilities will be restricted and may lack variety. If parents feel that home is more comfortable for children it is better that their child/children stay home and are cared for by family members.

4.3.3 Parents must support new procedures for dropping off and picking up children in which they will not enter the nursery building and have only 1 parent at a time.

4.3.4 Parents must ensure that only children from the same family or same bubble are transported together to nursery.

4.3.5 Parents must maintain social distancing during drop off and pick up times.

4.3.6 Parents must contact the principal via telephone or the selected online platform for questions or in cases of concern.

### 4.4 Cleaners

4.4.1 Cleaners are to adhere to their assigned bubbles and not rotate between bubbles.



## **Guideline 5: Staff and Child Sick Leave and Attendance**

It is essential that nurseries adopt flexible attendance and clear sick leave policies. All nurseries must place great emphasis on monitoring attendance and sick leave. It also helps in identifying concerns regarding children's wellbeing if patterns for attendance and sick leave are monitored. The same is applied for nursery staff.

It is critical that the nurseries adopt an approach to sick leave and attendance that encourages both nursery staff and children to remain at home when they are sick. All staff and families must monitor their own health and stay at home if they are unwell.

Nurseries are encouraged to adopt policies for providing COVID-19 testing for staff as well as ensuring that staff have adequate insurance policies that cover illness.

The nurse must play a lead role in ensuring that daily health screenings are conducted, and that staff and parents have the latest information regarding the symptoms and spread of COVID-19.

Nurseries must create a context that encourages nursery staff, parents and children to monitor their own health and remain at home until they are well. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Nursery Principal**

5.1.1 The nursery principal must develop Staff Sick Leave and Attendance Policies or revise the existing policies in order to meet the needs of post COVID-19 reopening. The policies must allow flexibility for nursery staff to stay at home when they are sick. The policy must also outline the number of paid sick days nursery staff are entitled to. Nursery staff who are at risk, who are taking care of family members who are at risk, or who have school age children as schools remain closed, must have the flexibility to stay at home during this time.

5.1.2 The nursery principal must develop a new Child Attendance Policy or revise the existing policy in order to meet the needs of post COVID-19 reopening. The policy must outline the instances where children will be required to stay home.



5.1.3 The nursery principal must share the new/updated Sick Leave and Attendance Policies with all key stakeholders and ensure there is a thorough understanding of the procedures to be implemented and/or followed.

5.1.4 The nursery principal must avoid offering incentives for perfect attendance for nursery staff and children.

5.1.5 The nursery principal must ensure that nursery staff are not penalized if they don't meet the criteria for physically returning to work.

5.1.6 The nursery principal must follow a safe protocol for isolating children and staff showing symptoms of COVID-19. If a child/staff begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at the nursery, they must be instantly isolated together with a familiar adult instantly. The parent/guardian/emergency contact of the patient to be notified immediately and the patient must be referred to the hospital to take the necessary action. The patient must not return to the nursery until the PCR result is obtained.

- If the result is negative and there is a clinical assessment of a probable COVID-19 case, the patient must complete a 14-day quarantine. If the result is negative and there is no clinical assessment for a probable case, the child/staff can resume nursery so long as they are symptom-free.

- If the result is positive, the nursery is to be closed immediately. The traced contacts of the patient, including other staff members along with the classmates of a child, or colleagues are all considered close contacts (Anyone who spent more than 15 minutes in a proximity of 1.5 meters with the positive case, from the day of symptoms onset, or the day of the positive PCR test). They must all commence the 14-day quarantine counted from the day of the positive test, or from the day of the onset of symptoms if ascertained by the clinician. They are not to return unless they are granted a clearance certificate by MOHAP stating that they are discharged from isolation.

- In cases of COVID-19 emergency, the nursery must follow their endorsed guidelines for emergencies by the nursery's qualified nurse/ doctor while wearing adequate personal protection equipment. Also, the health and safety in-charge must ensure that the child is accompanied by an adult wearing the full PPE when transported to home or to the hospital.

5.1.7 The nursery principal must ensure that any nursery staff or child exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 has visited a doctor and received approval to return to the nursery.

5.1.8 The nursery principal must ensure that children are symptom-less for a minimum amount of time as recommended by MOHAP.



5.1.9 The nursery principal must ensure that any nursery staff or child that has been in direct exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case, tests negatively for COVID-19 and receives a return to work/nursery letter from a doctor before returning to the nursery. The principal must also follow current MOHAP protocols in regards to employees or children returning to the nursery after direct exposure.

5.1.10 The nursery principal must report to the MOHAP if nursery staff or a child exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 including a fever or noticeable respiratory symptoms and/or have been in direct exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case.

5.1.11 The nursery principal must follow instructions from MOHAP if any staff or child tests positive for COVID-19 and abide by contact tracing procedures, by providing MOHAP with all records needed to trace potential contacts of the confirmed COVID-19 cases.

5.1.12 The nursery principal must consider monitoring both nursery staff and child absences and compare against usual absenteeism. If patterns emerge, in which there are large increases in nursery staff and child absences due to respiratory illnesses, the principal must contact the MOHAP.

5.1.13 The nursery principal must support the nurse in creating a safe protocol for isolating children and staff in the event that they are showing symptoms of COVID-19. This must include designating an area to be used as an isolation room while children / staff are waiting to leave. The isolation room must be separated from all other parts of the nursery and contain a cot for children.

5.1.14 The nursery principal must ensure that staff or children who travel abroad must adhere to any UAE authority requirements, including any self-isolation and testing requirements and that Travel declaration forms are required for all those who travel; these must be submitted to the nursery prior to travel occurring and re-confirmed before returning to the nursery. The principal must also ensure that anyone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms when returning from travel must not come to the nursery, ensure they notify the nursery immediately and self-isolate.

5.1.15 The nursery principal must ensure that the nurse implements a health screening for every nursery staff, child and visitor that enters the nursery. The health screening must include a temperature check with a non-contact thermometer to ensure no fever is present or noticeable respiratory symptoms or flu-like symptoms. Any nursery staff, child or visitor that exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever, will not be permitted entry to the nursery.



5.1.16 The nursery principal must ensure that each bubble has the same nursery staff available to cover absences and not to share rotating staff amongst bubbles.

5.1.17 The nursery principal must ensure that all nursery staff and parents have downloaded the ALHOSN App to ensure traceability in the event of infection.

5.1.18 The nursery principal must ensure that nursery staff have signed letters of declaration regarding age, health, living arrangements on a weekly basis. These letters can be sent electronically.

## 5.2 Nursery Staff

5.2.1 Nursery staff must regularly check their temperature and stay at home if they are experiencing a fever over 37.5 C

5.2.2 Nursery staff must adhere to the daily health screening (temperature check) prior to entering the nursery.

5.2.3 Nursery staff must stay at home if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or any flu-like symptoms.

5.2.4 Nursery staff experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 must only report to work after being given approval from a doctor.

5.2.5 Nursery staff must not attend work if they have been in direct exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case and notify the principal by email or telephone call.

5.2.6 Nursery staff that have been in direct exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case must follow local health authority guidelines prior to reporting to work. This may include quarantining and/or testing negatively for COVID-19.

5.2.7 Nursery staff must communicate with the principal and return home if they become unwell while working in the nursery. Nursery staff must isolate themselves until they leave the nursery.

5.2.8 Nursery staff must stay at home if they are unwell and only return to work once they are healthy.

5.2.9 Nursery staff must inform the principal of any upcoming travel plans, be aware of the possibility of travel restrictions and adhere to quarantine requirements upon returning to the U.A.E.

5.2.10 Nursery staff must monitor the health of children and report any child that appears unwell or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 to the nurse.

5.2.11 Nursery staff must download the ALHOSN App to ensure traceability in the event of infection.



5.2.12 Nursery staff must sign the declaration on a weekly basis. This can be done electronically.

### 5.3 Nurse

5.3.1 The nurse must self quarantine as regulated by the MOHAP if she has been working at a hospital prior to starting work at the nursery.

5.3.2 The nurse is required to undergo a COVID-19 test 6 days prior to starting work at the nursery.

5.3.3 The nurse must take the lead role in monitoring the health of all nursery staff and children and implement all processes and procedures related to health and in the event that a staff member or child becomes ill while at the nursery.

5.3.4 The nurse must conduct a daily health check of each nursery staff member, child and visitor prior to their entrance to the nursery. A non-contact thermometer must be used. Any person with a fever or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must be isolated in a designated isolation area until they are able to leave the nursery and be sent home.

5.3.5 The nurse must immediately call the parent, following a discussion with the principal, of any child who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or is generally unwell, requesting they pick the child up as soon as possible, within 1 hour.

5.3.6 The nurse must follow a safe protocol for isolating children and staff showing symptoms of COVID-19. If a child/staff begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at nursery, they must be isolated instantly, and the parent/guardian/emergency contact of the patient to be notified immediately and the patient must be referred to the hospital to take the necessary action. The patient must not return to the nursery until the PCR result is obtained.

- If the result is negative and there is a clinical assessment of a probable COVID-19 case, the patient must complete a 14-day quarantine. If the result is negative and there is no clinical assessment for a probable case, the child/staff can return to the nursery so long as they are symptom-free.
- If the result is positive, the nursery is to be closed immediately. The traced contacts of the patient, including other staff members along with the classmates of a child, or colleagues are all considered close contacts (Anyone who spent more than 15 minutes in a proximity of 1.5 meters with the positive case, from the day of symptoms onset, or the day of the positive PCR test). They must all commence the 14-day quarantine counted PCR from the day of the positive test, or from the day of the onset of symptoms if ascertained by





the clinician. They are not to return unless they are granted a clearance certificate by MOHAP stating that they are discharged from isolation.

- In cases of COVID-19 emergency, the nursery must follow their endorsed guidelines for emergencies by the school's qualified nurse/doctor while wearing adequate personal protection equipment. Also, the health and safety in-charge must ensure that the child is accompanied by an adult wearing the full PPE when transported to home or to the hospital.

5.3.7 The nurse must follow strict procedures in monitoring the health of nursery staff and children. Any nursery staff or child that is generally unwell must be isolated from other staff and children until they leave the nursery. Any nursery staff or child that is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must be isolated in a separate designated isolation area until they are able to leave the nursery. The isolation room must be separate from the nursery clinic. The nurse must ensure that a deep cleaning and disinfection takes place following its use. In the event that the isolation room is being used, a backup room must be designated. Staff members or children from different bubbles must not use the isolation room at the same time.

## 5.4 Parents

5.4.1 Parents must keep their child/children at home if they are generally unwell. Children must not return to the nursery until they are healthy and/or no longer exhibiting any symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours.

5.4.2 Parents must keep their child/children at home if they or any family members are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Children experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 must only return to the nursery after receiving approval from a doctor and a negative COVID-19 test result.

5.4.3 Parents must follow local health authority guidelines prior to sending their child/children who have been in direct exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case back to the nursery.

5.4.4 Parents must arrange to pick up their child/children within 1 hour, if they receive a call from the nursery stating that their child is unwell.

5.4.5 Parents must allow their child to have a daily health screening (temperature check) conducted by the nurse prior to their entry to the nursery.

5.4.6 Parents must download the ALHOSN App to ensure traceability in the event of infection.



5.4.7 Parents must inform the nursery of any upcoming travel plans and adhere to quarantine requirements upon returning to the U.A.E and the instruction from the ALHOSN application.

5.4.8 Parents must sign the weekly declaration in the form of a weekly letter or survey.

## **Guideline 6: Crisis Management**

COVID-19 has highlighted the need for nurseries to update and/or develop a Crisis Management Plan that outlines steps to help protect all stakeholders and explore possible ways that a nursery can continue some aspects of their operations, specifically in the context of significant threats, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **6.1 Nursery Owner and Principal**

6.1.1 The nursery owner and principal must suspend operations of services immediately if a positive case of COVID-19 is confirmed in a staff member or child attending the nursery.

6.1.2 The nursery owner and principal must send home any staff member or child if a first degree family member tests positive for COVID-19. The staff or child must be sent home to self isolate for a minimum of 14 days and submit a negative COVID-19 test before return.

6.1.3 The nursery owner and principal must develop a Crisis Management Plan or update the existing plan in order to prepare for a potential suspension of typical services resulting from a crisis such as COVID-19.

6.1.4 The nursery owner and principal must share the Crisis Management Plan and accompanying procedures with all key stakeholders and ensure there is a thorough understanding of the procedures to be implemented and/or followed.

6.1.5 The nursery principal must communicate all circulars and information from regulatory bodies such as MOE, MOHAP and MOHAPRE that may impact the Crisis Management Plan, and update it accordingly.

6.1.6 The nursery owner and principal must appoint a Crisis Management Team that includes designated persons to: communicate with parents; communicate with staff;



communicate with authorities; manage finances; and manage health and safety in the event of a crisis. The principal must work closely alongside the team.

6.1.7 The nursery principal must ensure that there is a procedure for separating sick children and staff from those who are well – without creating a stigma – and a process for informing parents/caregivers, and consulting with health care providers/health authorities wherever possible. Children/staff may need to be referred directly to a health facility, depending on the situation/context, or sent home. The principal must establish a system for how to work with families and communicate with them in the event of a crisis, with the main intention being to maintain family connections.

6.1.8 The nursery principal must ensure emergency contact lists are updated and accessible from a remote location, in the event that the nursery cannot be physically accessed. Emergency contact numbers must be monitored weekly by the nursery to ensure parents respond and numbers are valid. The principal must make regular risk assessments and continuously review whether the work processes or risk controls are effective as per the OSHAD guidelines to minimize the risk of a crisis developing in the nursery.

6.1.9 The nursery principal must evaluate the feasibility of establishing alternative solutions for providing services to families in the event that working conditions change and nurseries are not able to operate typically due to a suspension caused by a crisis, such as COVID-19. This may include but not be limited to: distance-learning options, parent support, resource supplements to be used in a different learning environment etc.

6.1.10 The nursery principal must, in the event that alternative services be deemed feasible, develop processes and procedures for offering these services to families.

6.1.11 The nursery principal must, in the event that alternative services be feasible, ensure that all nursery staff are aware of how working conditions may alter and affect their roles and responsibilities (e.g. explain the roles and responsibilities of staff if they are tasked with remote curriculum development and planning, development and distribution of e-resources for families, engaging in or conducting e-training and professional development and completing administrative procedures remotely).

6.1.12 The nursery principal must ensure transparency with staff in relation to their roles and responsibilities and expectations in the event of a crisis, and keep staff regularly updated with accurate information.

6.1.13 The nursery principal must be mindful of the impact that sudden change can have on the wellbeing of all stakeholders.



6.1.14 The nursery principal must ensure that all nursery data and information is stored in a system that can be accessed remotely, such as a secure cloud based system, or an application that ensures nursery staff have access to important documents that are related to their work.

6.1.15 The nursery principal must ensure that financial policies are updated to include statements regarding actions taken in the event of a crisis including a transparent Refund Policy that addresses the needs of parents/families. All financial policies must follow guidelines set by the relevant government authorities.

6.1.16 The nursery owner and principal must revise budgets to ensure that they: cater for essential supplies required to operate during a crisis such as COVID-19 (e.g. cleaning supplies, protective equipment, hygiene products); and address contingency plans in preparation for potential crisis situations that have an impact on typical operations and finances.

6.1.17 The nursery owner and principal must establish sample fee structures that could be implemented in the event that the operations of the nursery are not in accordance with the typical functioning and plan for flexibility to build confidence in parents to return to the nursery (e.g. a fee structure that accommodates distance-learning, reduced days/hours, prolonged absences due to illness.)

6.1.18 The nursery owner and principal is encouraged to take a sympathetic and pragmatic approach to parents and families finding difficulties paying nursery fees. Consideration may be given to individual situations.

6.1.19 The nursery owner and principal must revisit terms and conditions of medical insurance policies provided for staff and consider the level of coverage offered to frontline staff and that they are at increased risk. They must ensure that insurance companies are aware of staff roles and responsibilities.

## 6.2 Nursery Staff

6.2.1 Nursery staff must be aware of processes and procedures outlined in the Crisis Management Plan.

6.2.2 Nursery staff must provide the principal with the correct updated personal information, including their emergency contact details and living arrangements.

6.2.3 Nursery staff must be aware of the expectation set by the nursery regarding the possibility of working remotely and be adequately prepared to do so if the need arises.



6.2.4 Nursery staff must ensure that they have access to digital systems off-site as instructed by the principal in the event that working remotely is required (e.g. access to apps, online management system etc.).

6.2.5 Nursery staff must be aware of the communication system utilized in the event that on-site operations cease (e.g. online management system such as Google or MS Teams, emails, nursery application etc.)

6.2.6 Nursery staff must work in partnership with the principal and their allocated working groups within the nursery structure to take responsibility for some aspects of the Crisis Management Plan, to update and amend policies, plans and procedures in the nursery as required and must inform the principal if, during the course of their work, any areas outlined in the Crisis Management Plan or compliance checklist are missing or need addressing.

### 6.3 Parents

6.3.1 Parents must ensure that they and their child/children follow the processes and procedures set out by the nursery to ensure the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is minimized, including when to keep their child at home and adhering to social distancing guidelines at all times.

6.3.2 Parents must ensure that they are aware of all policies related to financial matters, such as fee payment schedules, refund policies etc.

6.3.3 Parents must ensure that the principal is made aware of any financial concerns at their earliest opportunity so that amicable parent/nursery relationships are maintained.

6.3.4 Parents must ensure that emergency contact details, including parent names, place of work, contact phone numbers (mobile number and office line if a working parent) and the name and contact information (address and phone numbers) of an emergency contact in the event that a parent cannot be reached, are communicated to the principal. It is essential that this information is updated as the need arises.

## Guideline 7: Positive Relationships with Parents

Given the current situation of COVID-19, relationships between nurseries and parents is more critical than ever. It is imperative that the principal and staff are empathetic towards



parents, and work collaboratively to reach mutually beneficial agreements during this very challenging time. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### 7.1 Nursery Principal

7.1.1 The nursery principal must treat parents and families empathetically at all times.

7.1.2 The nursery principal must implement protocols to meet with parents virtually to answer questions, concerns or suggestions using an online application (e.g. MS Teams, Google, or other secured video conferencing platforms).

7.1.3 The nursery principal must ensure that there are clear expectations of staff regarding parent outreach and communication, especially in the event that they have to inform parents that their child is presenting COVID-19 symptoms and when to keep their child at home.

7.1.4 The nursery principal must clearly communicate any new methods of communication and procedures with parents and explain how they are designed to safeguard children, parents and staff. For example, impromptu meetings with staff and the principal will now need to be scheduled online in order to meet social / physical distancing requirements.

7.1.5 The nursery principal must convey important messages and establish communication through various mediums, including on the nursery website, appropriate social media platforms and on leaflets/posters displayed outside the nursery setting.

7.1.6 The nursery principal is encouraged to provide virtual training sessions for parents to develop and maintain communication and a sense of community.

7.1.7 The nursery principal is encouraged to develop or maintain a means of sharing child work and achievements through an online forum (e.g. emails, apps, appropriate social media platforms), with the consent of parents.

7.1.8 The nursery principal must work in partnership with parents at all times to ensure all protocols are maintained. If parents are struggling to accept any of the new protocols, principals must communicate with parents empathetically and remind them of the need to keep all nursery staff, parents and children safe.

7.1.9 The nursery principal is encouraged to provide parents with links to organizations which may be able to support parents with further information such as MOE, MOHAP and WHO.



7.1.10 The nursery principal is encouraged to appoint a staff member as a parent liaison leader, in addition to the principal, if this is deemed necessary. The SENCO specialist may be appointed as the lead parent liaison.

## 7.2 Nursery Staff

7.2.1 Nursery staff must treat parents and families empathetically at all times.

7.2.2 Nursery staff must follow the nursery policies and procedures regarding parent outreach and communication, especially in the event that they are to inform parents that their child is presenting COVID-19 symptoms and when to keep their child at home.

7.2.3 Nursery staff must, with sensitivity, remind parents of the hygiene protocols as and when necessary through all communication channels determined by the nursery.

7.2.4 Nursery staff must work in partnership with parents at all times to ensure all policies and procedures are maintained.

7.2.5 Nursery staff must attend all training sessions deemed necessary by the principal, that are specifically dedicated to parent relations prior to the re-opening of the nursery.

7.2.6 Teaching staff are encouraged to update the selected platform with child work and achievements to provide parents with a link to their child's experience at nursery. Sending physical copies of child work home is discouraged.

7.2.7 Teaching staff are encouraged to utilize the selected online platform to meet with parents to discuss their child's achievements and any concerns or questions they may have.

7.2.8 Teaching staff are encouraged to consult the parent liaison leader, in addition to the principal, when dealing with any parent-related issues.

7.2.9 Teachers must ask the principals's advice prior to informing parents of issues related to stress indicators that may present in their child/children during this time, and before giving advice on how they can alleviate stress in their child/children by playing and having fun as a family.

7.2.10 Teachers may consider helping parents by providing them with strategies to help reduce stress and by providing proactive information which is shared with all parents by the nursery and follow up with specific parent/children as necessary. Teachers must notify the principal in the event of a suspected concern as stipulated in the child protection policy.



## 7.3 Parents

7.3.1 Parents must ensure that they understand all parent policies, guidelines and protocols communicated by the nursery to reduce the possible spread of COVID-19.

Parents must communicate any questions regarding updates to the principal.

7.3.2 Parents must be aware of and follow any new recommendations from trusted government sources surrounding health and safety protocols.

7.3.3 Parents are encouraged to talk to their children about how to stay safe and well, using age appropriate language.

7.3.4 Parents should reach out to the nursery and seek support if and when needed.

7.3.5 Parents must be aware of the stress indicators that may present in their child during this time, and how they can alleviate stress in their child by playing and having fun as a family.

## Guideline 8: Supporting Vulnerable Populations

While COVID-19 has caused people to become ill around the globe, vulnerable populations are more at risk due to their health and/or socio-economic circumstances. Establishing protocols can help to minimize the risk to vulnerable populations contracting COVID-19.

In the nursery context, vulnerable populations may include:

- Children of determination who have difficulty speaking, understanding or communicating;
- Nursery staff, children and family members with weakened immune systems due to chronic illness such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer;
- Nursery staff, children and family members with compromised immune systems from a medical condition or treatment such as chemotherapy;
- Nursery staff, children and family members experiencing economic barriers, living in remote communities, compromised housing conditions, shared living arrangements or travel arrangements.

The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.





## Roles and Responsibilities

### 8.1 Nursery Principal

8.1.1 The nursery principal in collaboration with the nurse, must identify those staff members who may be from a vulnerable population and any adult categorized as being medically 'At Risk' does not work within the nursery environment.

8.1.2 The nursery principal must identify any child identified as being within any of the medical 'At Risk' categories and ensure that these children are not enrolled in the nursery.

8.1.3 The nursery principal in collaboration with the nurse, must request a doctor's letter stating that it is safe for any children with medical conditions to attend the nursery.

8.1.4 The nursery principal in collaboration with the nurse, must develop a plan to continue providing services and therapies for children from vulnerable populations. Principals are encouraged to collaborate with organizations that can support with this.

8.1.5 The nursery principal must provide posters in common areas and bathrooms that outline how to effectively handwash and cover coughs and sneezes. Posters should use age appropriate language and simple steps with visuals. Braille posters should be provided if required.

### 8.2 Nursery Staff

8.2.1 Nursery staff must report any pre-existing medical conditions, which may classify them as 'vulnerable' given the COVID-19 context.

8.2.2 Nursery staff must implement all sanitary, hygiene and handwashing protocols to ensure that risk to children and staff from vulnerable populations is minimized.

8.2.3 Nursery staff must monitor and identify children from vulnerable populations needing services relating to learning and/or occupational therapies.

8.2.4 Nursery staff must report to the principal any signs of potential needs of children and/or families from vulnerable populations.

8.2.5 Nursery staff must coordinate with specialist providers who can support children from vulnerable populations.

8.2.6 Nursery staff must provide clear instruction to children on how to wash hands and cover coughs and sneezes.

8.2.7 Nursery staff must wash the hands of children that are not able to do so by themselves.



### 8.3 Nurse

8.3.1 The nurse must monitor staff and children who are from vulnerable populations, have health risks, or who are taking care of a vulnerable person at home.

8.3.2 The nurse must monitor all doctor's letters stating that it is safe for children with weakened immune systems or chronic illnesses to attend the nursery.

8.3.3 The nurse must implement a plan to continue providing services and therapies for children from vulnerable populations. Principals are encouraged to collaborate with organizations that can support with this.

### 8.4 Parents

8.4.1 Parents must communicate medical or educational needs of their child/children to the principal.

8.4.2 Parents with children of low immunity/chronic disease are required to get a note from the doctor stating it is safe for their child/children to return to the nursery during COVID-19.

8.4.3 Parents is encouraged to work cooperatively with the principal and nursery staff in coordinating services with partner organizations that provide services for their child/children.

8.4.4 Parents must provide a letter from their doctor and directions for administration for any doctor prescribed medication their child is required to take.

8.4.5 Parents must communicate needs, questions or concerns regarding a child or family member from a vulnerable population to the principal.

8.4.6 Parents must read and understand hygiene, respiratory and handwashing procedures provided by the nursery and support them at home.

## Guideline 9: Wellbeing

The protection of children is paramount and precautions are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in nursery settings. However, care must also be taken to avoid stigmatizing children, families and nursery staff who may have been exposed to COVID-19. It is important to remember that the virus does not differentiate between race, age, gender or disability. Nurseries must continue to be warm and supportive environments to all staff, children and families and must ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum and all children



and staff are protected from discrimination. The roles and responsibilities for all staff members are outlined below.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### 9.1 Nursery Principal

9.1.1 The nursery principal must ensure that there is a whole nursery approach to wellbeing that addresses nursery staff, parents and children. The approach must address: establishing strategies to feel socially connected despite the requirements of social distancing, establishing a clear sense of purpose for staff, and creating a sense of belonging for all stakeholders.

9.1.2 The nursery principal must provide nursery staff with training and advice on how to support children who have been emotionally affected by recent events.

9.1.3 The nursery principal is encouraged to give nursery staff individualized support in times of difficulty or during a personal crisis.

9.1.4 The nursery principal is encouraged to create an inclusive and supportive environment in the nursery and develop strategies that ensure the wellbeing of staff.

9.1.5 The nursery principal is encouraged to ensure that all nursery staff, parents and children that have been affected by the virus are protected from discrimination.

9.1.6 The nursery principal is encouraged to ensure that staff teach and model hygiene practices with children in a fun manner to reduce any anxiety associated with the virus.

9.1.7 The nursery principal is encouraged to work in partnership with parents to ensure children are supported if they are affected by recent events (e.g. impact of a family member being very sick or being in the hospital).

9.1.8 The nursery principal is encouraged to reach out to families to provide support for those who are experiencing stress (e.g. provide guidance about how to alleviate stress through playing with children, enjoying simple activities together as a family, talking with friends on the phone about your feelings).

9.1.9 The nursery principal is encouraged to provide parents with suggestions about how they can talk to their child/children about how to stay safe and well, using age appropriate language.

9.1.10 The nursery principal may encourage nursery staff to include wellbeing topics in lesson plans (e.g. teach children how to keep their bodies healthy to avoid getting ill such



as eating healthy foods, being physically active, getting adequate sleep and maintaining emotional wellbeing).

9.1.11 The nursery principal may encourage nursery staff to develop age-appropriate resources and experiences to encourage child awareness of wellbeing

## 9.2 Nursery Staff

9.2.1 Nursery staff are to engage in activities that promote social connections (while taking into account social /physical distancing guidelines) and a sense of belonging (e.g. virtual staff and parent meetings).

9.2.2 Nursery staff must recognize that recent events have been stressful for other staff members and that the nursery is a supportive community that can help alleviate any difficulties they may be experiencing.

9.2.3 Nursery staff are encouraged to be mindful of the fact that parents may have increased feelings of stress during this time and must interact accordingly.

9.2.4 Nursery staff must attend training and advice sessions provided by the principal on how to support children who have been affected by recent events.

9.2.5 Teaching staff are encouraged to communicate with parents (according to the social /physical distancing policy) in order to gain insight into experiences and situations that may have an impact on the child/children and to provide information about the child's progress at nursery.

9.2.6 Teaching staff are encouraged to develop age-appropriate activities to promote the physical, social and emotional competence of children to enhance their overall wellbeing (e.g. teach children how to keep their bodies healthy to avoid getting ill such as eating healthy foods, getting adequate sleep, being physically active and maintaining emotional wellbeing).

9.2.7 Teaching staff are encouraged to discuss feelings with children as they arise to help alleviate stress and anxiety.

9.2.8 Teaching staff must create an inclusive environment in the classroom that ensures all children that have been affected by the virus are protected from discrimination.

9.2.9 Teaching staff must teach and model hygiene practices with children in a fun manner to reduce any anxiety associated with the virus.

## 9.3 Parents



9.3.1 Parents are encouraged to support their child/children through following a healthy balanced lifestyle that includes diet, nutrition, and exercise.

9.3.2 Parents must monitor their child/children for potential signs of stress or anxiety and implement strategies to try to alleviate this stress in the household (e.g. by playing or reading with their child/children, talking with their child/children about their feelings).

9.3.3 Parents are encouraged to share any concerns with nursery staff members about their child's wellbeing.