



Covid-19 Update: May 13, 2020

Dear BrightPath Families,

As we prepare to reopen our centres, I write to let you know how excited we are to reconnect with our families, our educators and our children. As we finalize the details to launch our restart journey, we want to assure you that the safety of both our children and our team of educators is our top priority. We gained solid understanding of how to implement and maintain safety measures when we reopened for essential services workers and are very confident of our ability to implement a safe environment for your children. We have worked, and will continue to work, very closely with both Children's Services and Alberta Health Services as we enter the Province's Phase One opening.

We appreciate the anxiety you may be facing as we experience yet another change. As such, we want to advise you in advance regarding what you should expect prior to your return to the centre on May 14, 2020 so that your family's restart with us is as fluid and stress free as possible. There will be some necessary changes within our practices and routines. A detailed breakdown of these changes follows. We hope this provides you with not only an update of our enhanced procedures, but also reassures you that we remain focused on the health and safety of the children, you as parents and our teams.

Physical Distancing

While we are thrilled to be able to see our families again, we are bound to maintain a level of physical distancing where possible. This begins right at arrival time. Unfortunately, we do need to save our hugs and handshakes for a safer time but will be full of smiles and excited waves! Each educator will aim to connect with our children through eye level, personalized and joyful greetings. We will forge unique forms of connecting without physical contact as we continue down this new path.

We will work with our families to plan arrival times as we proceed, but please note that when there is more than one family arriving at the same time, we do need to implement a 2-metre separation. We will provide markings, both inside and outside, to help implement this. This may require that families wait outside should a family already be present in the lobby of the centre. Finally, we also ask that only one family member, and ideally the same family member, assist with the drop off and pick up of your children.

We ask that you wait for a centre representative to bring children to their classrooms.

Our classrooms may have no more than 10 individuals, including educators, within them. As such, your child's prior classroom may be changed. Please note that we will be minimizing movement between classrooms to ensure reduced contact with others within the centre. As our enrollment increases, we may be required to revisit room allocations and configurations. We anticipate that things will continue to change, and we will evolve and adapt as they do.

We will not allow non-essential visitors or tours within our centres at this time.

Access to the Centre

Hand sanitizer will be available at the entrance and we ask that you use it when entering the building. We are also required to take the temperatures of all our family members, children, and staff who enter each day. We are required to ask that all people entering our facilities answer a short screening questionnaire provided by Alberta Health. Any evidence of symptoms will prohibit you from entering the centre, and you will be advised to contact Health Link for further direction.

Classroom

Our classrooms have been re-organized to allow for multiple small group interactions. Activities that were traditionally entire group activities, like circle time and mealtimes, will be replaced with small group activities to enforce physical distancing. Lesson plans and visual cues will be provided to help our children understand what physical distancing looks like. Our educators have also been empowered to program those activities that provide quality learning and engagement while ensuring space between the children.

Sensory tables and sensory activities that involve shared mediums have been removed and replaced with materials that promote individual experiences. Materials that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected, such as soft toys and porous materials, have been removed from the classrooms. The only exception we can make to this is a comfort item for napping where necessary, and these will be stored within a closed bin or bag within each child's cubby. Sleeping mats and cots will be placed further apart and we will practice head to toe placement. In addition, we will space cubbies apart to ensure the 2-metre physical distancing is achieved when placing and retrieving items for or with your children.

We must prohibit items brought from home at this time including toys, homework and tablets. Show and Share times will involve telling stories and sharing memorable experiences.

Outside Activities

Only one classroom will use the outdoor play area or gym at a time. Transitions to outside or to the gym will also be staggered to eliminate waiting or congestion times, and to limit interaction between the classrooms. We will have set toys for each group outside or in the gym. Where this is not possible, we will clean and disinfect toys between groups. Community playgrounds will not be used.

Lunch

During this phase of reopening, at the request of Licensing, we ask you to provide lunch and two snacks for your children. Using icepacks and an insulated lunch bag would be very helpful.

Family style dining will be eliminated at this time. We will limit the number of children per table at mealtimes by leaving an empty space between them.

While these changes are necessary, our educators will continue to facilitate engaging conversations and interactions throughout mealtime, especially reflecting on the morning learning activities.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces will take place throughout the entire day. Regular and frequent handwashing by our staff members will be role-modelled for the children and encouraged throughout the day. Children will be required to wash their hands at multiple times throughout the day, including arrival time, after outside time, before and after eating, and after toileting. Any toys that are mouthed by young children will be removed, cleaned and disinfected before being put back into use.

We may ask you to take bedding home each day to be washed if it is not feasible to do this at the centre, but we will attempt to do so. We will ask you to bring water bottles home for cleaning each night.

Symptom Monitoring and Suspected Illness

We will also have a designated room set-up within each of our centres that will be able to safely house a child who should exhibit symptoms of illness while at the centre. If your child becomes symptomatic with any illness throughout the day, we will call you to come and pick them up. Should your child engage in behaviour that is significantly atypical as to perhaps indicate that they are unwell, we will also contact you.

Before closing, I wish to thank our staff who continue to ensure that your children receive the best care possible during these difficult times. We appreciate their dedication, effort and their exceptional commitment and determination to give every child the best start in life! And we continue to appreciate your faith in us to care for your children.

Joe Williams

Director of Operations, Western Canada