

Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy

Pandemic Protocol

When Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy reopens to children and families during Governor Wolf's Yellow Phase of the COVID-19 pandemic on Monday, June 8, 2020, there are measures that our governing bodies require or recommends that we implement both at the city and state levels. This is a "living document" and changes to this pandemic protocol document will change as guidance changes. The more we learn about COVID-19, different recommendations or guidance will be issued, and we will have to update our pandemic protocol accordingly.

The pandemic protocol is **an addendum to the parent agreement and the family handbook**. My hope is that this document gives you confidence in knowing that we are planning to reopen safely and with the health and welfare of children and staff in mind.

The sources of guidance that we use as we plan for our reopening are:

Pennsylvania Office for Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Philadelphia Department of Health

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

We depend on the expertise of the authorities to guide us as we navigate through operating during the pandemic.

The purpose of this pandemic policy is intended to help reduce the risk of exposure to and spread of COVID-19 at Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy and to provide the healthiest and safest environment for our children, families, members and community. Our goal to prioritize the health and safety of all children, families, and staff while maintaining a developmentally appropriate learning environment for every child.

Every family plays a critical role in helping us reduce the exposure at Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy. It is important to follow the new policies and procedures in place that are outlined in this pandemic protocol. It is important to open communication with Administration during this time. Our expectation is that you will follow the directives in this pandemic policy to help ensure the health and safety of everyone (children, families and staff).

TRANSMISSION AND SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19:

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, prevention practices and environmental cleaning and disinfection are important principles that are covered below.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus.** People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
 - Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

All guidance below is strongly recommended in order to adhere to guidelines published by the CDC and DOH.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to prevent it from getting inside the facility.

Pandemic Policy Table of Contents

NEW POLICY: Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures 4

NEW POLICY: Daily Health Checks/Screening for Children and Staff:..... 4

NEW POLICY: Mask Wearing 5

NEW POLICY: Limiting Non-Essential Items in the Building..... 5

NEW POLICY: Sharing Toys and Cleaning of Toys 5

NEW POLICY: Cleaning/Sanitizing and Disinfecting..... 6

NEW POLICY: Cots/Naptime 6

NEW POLICY: Temporary exclusion of children if they become sick during the day 6

NEW POLICY: Return to the Center..... 7

NEW POLICY: Exposure to Covid-19 & Traveling 7

NEW POLICY: Infection control: 9

NEW POLICY: Visitors in the Building 9

Summary of Enhanced Protocols..... 9

NEW POLICY: Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

To reduce the risk of transmission we developed new drop-off and pick-up procedures so that we can control waiting times and close proximity issues.

- **All** Parents/guardians are required to wear a face mask that covers mouth and nose when dropping off and picking up their child(ren).
- A hand hygiene station will be set up in the vestibule of the facility so that families can sanitize their hands. Hand sanitizer will be next to the parent sign-in sheets. Please use it **before** picking up the pen to sign your child(ren) in/out. Hand sanitizer will be out of children's reach and staff will supervise use. Sanitary wipes for cleaning pens will be made available to be used between each use.
- Adults will need to maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet between families during drop-off and pick-up.
- Family members should not congregate at drop-off, pick-up or any other time
- When possible arrival and drop off times will be staggered and direct contact with families will be limited as much as possible.
 - A staff member will greet children at the entrance of the facility as they arrive. **However, as per DHS regulations, parent/guardian will not be prevented from entering the facility at any time. As a mitigation strategy, the program is suggesting, if at all possible, to use the vestibule as the drop-off and pickup points as we want to prevent the spread of the virus.**
 - Designated staff member will walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children back to their family.
- Ideally, the same family member or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. Older adults such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up the child, because they are more at risk for severe illness.

NEW POLICY: Daily Health Checks/Screening for Children and Staff:

- All children/families and staff will be screened for symptoms and exposure upon arrival by a designated staff person. The daily health check includes questions to see whether or not a fever is present and if you have any symptoms and exposure.
- Persons who have a fever $>$ or $= 100.4 (38.0^{\circ}\text{C})$ or other signs of illness will not be admitted into the facility. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. **Keep children home who display any signs of illness.**
- The program will implement the following screening procedures and precautions while conducting temperature screenings
 - The most protective method incorporated will be social distancing (the staff member will maintain a distance of 6 feet from the family) to eliminate and minimize exposure due to close contact.
 - Each child's temperature will be taken with non-touch thermometer at arrival, prior to nap and at dismissal. **If child's temperature is 100.4 or above at the time of drop-off, the child will not be able to enter the program.**

- The parent/guardian will be asked to confirm that the child does not have shortness of breath or cough and complete a screening questionnaire.
- Staff will do a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness. This list is not all inclusive and we understand that symptoms vary person to person.

NEW POLICY: Mask Wearing

- All adults must wear a mask or face covering that covers the nose and mouth at drop-off, pick-up.
- All teachers and administrative staff will wear a mask or face covering that covers the nose and mouth throughout the entire day.
- As of July 8, 2020, all children ages two and up are required to wear masks. All families should provide a clear plastic bag with their child's name on it to store the face mask when not in use. Please provide 3 masks.
- Children should not wear masks while eating, sleeping, or vigorously exercising.

NEW POLICY: Limiting Non-Essential Items in the Building

To minimize items coming into the building, we are making the following changes

- No Strollers to minimize non-essential items in the building, we are asking that you bring the stroller to work/school with you or back home
- No Backpacks – Our cubbies are very small and close together. Each child will have a clear storage bag to store their belongings.
- No large blankets, sleeping bags or pillows – Your child should have one crib or twin bottom sheet to cover the mattress. If you want to pack a small blanket, please fit it in with the sheet.
 - On the first day back, please bring a new sheet in a large plastic ZIPLOCK bag with your child's name on it. We will wipe down the bag, save it and send back the sheet on Fridays to be washed and returned on Monday.
 - If your child has sheets or blankets currently at the center, we will bag them and send them back home with you during pick up or (drop off).

NEW POLICY: Sharing Toys and Cleaning of Toys

- Sharing toys and other classroom items is another developmentally appropriate action of all young children. We reduced the number of toys in each classroom and rotate toys more frequently.
- We removed toys from the classroom that cannot be sanitized and easily washed.
- Toys will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected on a regular basis throughout the day. Toys that cannot be easily cleaned and sanitized will not be used.

- Toys that have been put in a child’s mouth will immediately be put into bins near the sink for cleaning and disinfecting. Toys that have been used by a small group of children will be rotated out of circulation and cleaned after use.

NEW POLICY: Cleaning/Sanitizing and Disinfecting

Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy already uses the national standard recommendations for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting in childcare centers, and will continue to follow those guidelines per the recommendation of the CDC. Our routine evening cleaning will continue as usual with the addition of:

- High touch surfaces will be disinfected multiple times throughout the day.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves.

NEW POLICY: Cots/Naptime

- Cots will be moved as far away from another as possible, when possible 6 feet and children will nap on cots head to toe to avoid prolonged exposure to germs through deep breathing.

NEW POLICY: Temporary exclusion of children if they become sick during the day

- An isolation area will be setup for sick child while they wait to get picked up.
- Staff will contact the parent/guardian immediately and ask that they pick up the ill child within one hour and to contact health provider. The staff member waiting with the child will wear mask, face shield, and also gloves.
- Routine cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfected will be implemented of the area.
- If children develop symptoms, they should be brought to a designated isolation room while waiting to be picked up. The staff member waiting with the child should wear a mask, face shield and gloves. While waiting for a sick child to be picked up, have a caregiver stay with the child in a place isolated from others. If the child has symptoms of COVID-19, the caregiver should remain as far away as safely possible from the child (preferably 6 feet) while maintaining supervision. The caregiver should wear a cloth face covering. If the child is over the age of 2 and can tolerate a face covering, the child should also wear a cloth face covering.
- If a separate room is not available, designate a cot or crib that can be kept at least 6 feet apart from all other children.
- A letter will be given to caregivers explaining why the child is being dismissed

and criteria for returning to the facility.

NEW POLICY: Return to the Center

- If a child in the classroom has COVID like illness:
 - They can return to the center if:
 - Initial Covid-19 testing is negative and they provide a note from the healthcare provider pediatrician verifying status.
 - A clinician has evaluated the child and documented an alternative diagnosis OR
 - For children who were not tested for COVID: All of the following are true:
 1. At least 10 days since the onset of symptoms AND
 2. Until fever free of anti-fever medications for 3 days AND
 3. Symptoms are improving
- Staff will follow-up with parent/guardian at the time the child is brought back to the facility to ensure that the condition which required exclusion has been resolved.
- Administration will inform all families in the sick child's classroom via KidReports (our electronic communication application) if a child or staff member is sent home for a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms. If a child or staff member is diagnosed with confirmed COVID-19, a follow-up message will be sent to the classroom from Administration. In this situation, all children and staff members in that classroom will need to self-quarantine at home for 14 days (with the first day being the last time that the child with COVID-19 was in contact with the other children/staff).
- Areas of Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy that were used by a child or adult with a confirmed COVID-19 positive test will be closed off for at least 48 hours and not used until after cleaning and disinfection.

NEW POLICY: Exposure to Covid-19 & Traveling

Exposure: Your child(ren) must remain out of the center for various times depending on the circumstance

- If your child has been exposed to a "suspected" case of COVID-19
 - Your child must remain at home, until testing results from the "suspected" individual comes back. If the suspected case is negative for Covid-19, the child may return to school
- If your child has been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 (NOT IN THE HOUSEHOLD – PLAYGROUND ETC)
 - Your child must remain home in quarantine for 14 days. If he/she has no symptoms they may return to school
- If your child has been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 (And that exposure is from someone living in the household with the child)
- If a child, family, or staff have been in close contact with someone who has a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the past 14 days; or with someone who is currently

undergoing testing for possible COVID-19 infection and results are pending **will not permitted on site.**

- **If you, your child, or a family member is diagnosed with COVID-19, contact Executive Director Unis Bey via email at unisb@graysferryela.org so that we can perform proper contact tracing and mitigation within our program. This information will be kept confidential.**
- **If a child or staff member has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19:**
 - **The Administrator will call the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (215) 685-6741 for further instructions about contact tracing and need for closure.**
 - **All children and staff in the same classroom or who have come in close contact with the individual who tested positive (defined as greater than 10 minutes of interaction less than 6 feet away) will quarantine at home for 14 days. Anyone who develops symptoms during that time should contact their healthcare provider to request testing.**
 - **In accordance with PDPH guidance, the COVID-19 positive individual should remain home until all of the following are true:**
 - **At least 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms AND**
 - **The individual has been fever-free without use of any fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)) for 3 days; AND**
 - **Other symptoms (e.g., cough, runny nose) are improving. Note: At this time, the COVID-19 positive individual does NOT need a repeat COVID-19 test or a doctor's note in order to return to the center.**
- **If a family member believes that they or their child has had an exposure to COVID-19 outside of Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy (within 6 feet or less for more than 10 minutes with a person confirmed to have COVID-19), but are not themselves sick, the individual should notify Executive Director Unis Bey (unisb@graysferryela.org) and:**
 - **Self-quarantine and not go to work, child care, school, or public places for 14 days (after the last day they were in close contact with the COVID-19 infected person).**
 - **Self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, body aches, loss of sense of smell or taste, or discoloration of the toes) for 14 days (after the last day they were in close contact with the COVID-19 infected person).**
 - **Upon receiving information about this potential exposure, Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy's administration will notify any potential contacts of this possible exposure through KidReports to families and an email to staff members. The impact of this information on Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy's operations will be determined on a case-by-case basis.**

Travel: If anyone in your household is traveling

o Internationally (or domestically to an area subject to travel restrictions) - If a household member travels, we are asking that parents notify us of any travel to these areas, and that they self-quarantine themselves for 14 days away from their children in case symptoms arise.

For the purpose of this document, the following definitions apply.

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS: include individuals who may not live in the household but may be staying there or are otherwise present in the household on a regular basis (e.g. nannies, caregivers, home health workers, contractors, etc.) and includes anyone with pick up or drop off privileges at the center.

CLOSE CONTACT: is defined by the CDC as (1) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time and can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case, or (2) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on). Considerations then assessing close contact include the duration of exposure and the clinical symptoms of the person with COVID-19.

NEW POLICY: Infection control:

- Strict hand hygiene will be done at all times.
- A sanitizing station will be located between the first two doors entering the facility.
- We will model and use strict respiratory etiquette. Cough or sneeze into a tissue and deposit into a waste receptacle, cough or sneeze into an elbow or shoulder, and avoid any touching of your eyes, nose, mouth, or face.
- Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces will be intensified. Continue to practice strict hand hygiene and other infection control practices as well.

NEW POLICY: Visitors in the Building

- For the foreseeable future, we will be severely limiting the number of visitors entering the building.
- For Early Intervention services, we encourage you to schedule teleservices at your home.
- Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy reserves the right to deny any non-essential visitors' access to the building.

Summary of Enhanced Protocols

We are continually updating our processes and protocols in accordance with the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, and the guidance from the PA and Philadelphia Dept of Health. We will maintain small group sizes to the best of our ability.

Some changes to remember for your first day back:

- 1. Items to bring / remember on first day**
 - a. Lunchbox (container type) – No heat ups or Prep of food with all containers and lids cleared labeled
 - b. One Crib or twin sheet and blanket in a large Ziplock Bag (Labeled w Name)
 - c. One Change of Clothes, in a Large zip lock bag (Labeled w Name)
- 2. Daily Health Check** – All children and staff will receive daily health check and temperature will be taken upon arrival daily.
- 3. Drop-offs/pick-ups** - Taking place in the vestibule with children escorted to their classroom by staff.
- 4. All adults and children two years of age and older are required to wear masks.**
- 5. No Strollers**
- 6. Mask/Cloth face coverings** worn by staff, families at drop off and pickup and children two years old and older.
- 7. Nonessential visitors** are not allowed into the center.
- 8. Hygiene/handwashing** emphasized daily in the center and the classrooms.
- 9. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting** of high touch surfaces, toys, etc.
- 10. Cleaning/Disinfecting after a COVID or COVID-like illness:**
 - a. Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
 - b. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
 - c. Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as classroom, offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
 - d. Clean and disinfect surfaces in your isolation room or area and in the classroom the sick child or staff members was in after the sick child or staff member has gone home.
 - e. Encourage staff and parents to talk to their own and their children's healthcare providers about their individual risk factors for COVID-19 and the risks of working at or attending a childcare facility.

Ensure facility has updated contact information for all staff and families and the ability to rapidly communicate information.

Promote Social Distancing:

- Increase the space between cribs and rest mats to maximize the space between children.
- The cribs and rest mats should be 6 feet apart if space permits. If closer than 6 feet, consider having children nap in head-to-feet positioning.
- All nonessential visitors and volunteers will be restricted.
- All fieldtrips and excursions including the use of public playgrounds are cancelled.
- As much as possible, the same teachers will be with the same children.

- Break and lunch hours for staff will be staggered in order to minimize interactions.
- Signs will be posted alerting employees to maintain distance and avoid eating near or across from each other.

Intensify Cleaning and Disinfection Efforts:

Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This should also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, toilets, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use the cleaners typically used at your facility. Guidance is available for the selection of appropriate sanitizers or disinfectants for childcare settings.

- Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered, fragrance-free household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-registered for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available.

If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

- All cleaning materials must be kept secure and out of reach of children per regulations.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.

Clean and Sanitize Toys:

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse thoroughly, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse thoroughly again, and air-dry. You may also clean in a mechanical dishwasher.
- Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time or should not be used at all. These toys should be laundered before being used by another child.
- Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for “soiled toys.” Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.

Clean and Disinfect Bedding:

- Use bedding that can be washed. Keep each child's bedding separate, and consider storing in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags. Cots and mats should be labeled for each child. Bedding that touches a child's skin should be cleaned weekly or before use by another child.

Face Masks:

- Childcare staff are required to wear cloth face coverings. Children 2 years old and older are required to wear a face covering as described in the Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Order for Universal Face Coverings, unless you fit one of the exceptions included in Section 3 of the Order.
- If a child is outdoors and able to consistently maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from individuals who are not a part of their household, they do not need to wear a mask. If a parent, guardian, or responsible person has been unable to place a face covering safely on the child's face, they should not do so.
- If a child 2 years old or older is unable to remove a face covering without assistance, the child is not required to wear one. The Department of Health recognizes that getting younger children to be comfortable wearing face coverings and to keep them on may create some difficulties.
- Under these circumstances, parents, guardians, licensed child care providers in community-based and school settings or responsible persons may consider prioritizing the wearing of face coverings to times when it is difficult for the child to maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from others who are not a part of their household (e.g., during carpool drop off or pick up, or when standing in line at school).
- Ensuring proper face covering size and fit and providing children with frequent reminders and education on the importance and proper wearing of cloth face coverings may help address these issues.