**First Friends Preschool Center**

**COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan**

**INTRODUCTION**

First Friends Preschool Center has always made the health and safety of children our top priority. With the presence of COVID-19 new health and safety protocols have been put into place in order to insure that children, families, and staff members are as safe as possible. The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) has provided guidance to licensed child care programs in the state of Michigan to create safe spaces for children to return to school. This Plan follows that guidance. As LARA receives updates on the best knowledge on how to fight this virus that information will be shared with licensed programs and this Plan will be updated to reflect that guidance. This Plan and any revisions of the Plan will be made available to parents via email and posted on our website.

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**1. Preparing our physical space**

* We will provide a space in the office to isolate children who develop symptoms during a school day. An ill child will remain in the area with a staff member until he/she can be picked up. The staff member will provide comfort and reassurance as needed.
* Toys and classroom material that children use on or near their face or that cannot be easily cleaned will be removed. These include: silverware from the Kitchen Center, play phones, walkie-talkies, and stethoscopes.
* Puppet, scarves, bean bags, streamers, and dress-up clothes will be removed.
* Library books will NOT go home.
* No personal items from home can be brought into the facility.
* We will rearrange seating to limit the number of children sitting/playing together, especially during snack tine.
* We will use touchless trash cans to provide a hands-free way to dispose of tissues etc.
* Contaminants will be disposed of in a special receptacle in the office.
* We will ensure that our ventilation system is operating properly and air is circulating throughout the day.

**2. Safety equipment (PPE)**

Since we maintain consistent groups/staff, children do not need to wear masks; however Staff will wear masks periodically throughout the day. If parents choose to have their child wear a face mask, the child must be able to put on and take off their mask by themselves.

**Masks**

* Staff will be required to wear a face mask during drop-off, pick-up, and when tending to a sick child,
* Staff will use strategies to prepare children for seeing their caregivers in masks--as part of the daily routine; Staff will show pictures of themselves with/without the mask.
* Staff will attend to children’s emotional responses to this new normal.

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**Gloves**

Staff will wear gloves in a manner consistent with licensing rules:

* When helping children in the bathroom.
* When handing contaminants.
* When cleaning.
* At snack time.
* When checking a student’s temperature.

**3. Social distancing**

There will be no parents/visitors in our classroom. Children/Staff will have NO contact with external adults, except during pick-up and drop-off.

**Pick-up and Drop-off:**

1. We will receive children at the classroom door and will bring the children to the parking lot at dismissal.
2. Only one adult can drop off/pick up a child (no siblings please).
3. For families with younger children, we will offer curbside drop off.
4. Parents will be asked to wear a face mask at drop off/pickup.
5. The staff member meeting the child at the door will wear a face mask.
6. Parents will be asked to NOT congregate in a large group, but rather form a line outside our door, using the floor markings to assure a safe six feet distance from one another and children are to stand with their parent.
7. In an effort to eliminate a large gathering, we ask that parents arrive promptly at 9:00 AM (please do not come early).
8. The Michigan Department of Education is offering flexibility on how parents sign children in/out, Staff will record attendance times and those will be confirmed by parents via email (Google Doc.) at the end of each week. Virtual signatures are required by Social Services each week in order for the children to attend school the following week.

* We will create smaller child use areas when using large spaces to keep children from gathering in large groups.
* Chairs will be spaced well apart at the tables and we will limit the number of students per table at play time and at snack time.
* We will have designated areas on the rug for the children to sit during story time, to ensure proper distancing.
* Students will have their own supply box which will include crayons, pencils, markers, scissors, and glue sticks.
* Parents wanting to donate materials to the classroom, i.e., glue sticks, paper towels, hand soap, will be asked to leave such items outside the classroom door or donations can be made via Amazon.

**4. How we will monitor symptoms of COVID-19**

Health screening will occur daily for students and staff.

**Staff**

*When Staff members arrive:*

* 1. We will perform temperature checks; we will use a body scan thermometer. Thermometers will be disinfected per the manufacturer’s instructions.
  2. We will screen for cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, change in smell / taste, and diarrhea.

*We will ask staff members:*

1. Have you been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19? If yes, that staff member will be sent home and asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.
2. Have you felt unwell for the last 3 days: (persistent cough, temperature, difficulty breathing, cold, diarrhea, and/or vomiting)? If yes, that staff member will be sent home and asked to self –quarantine for 14 days.

* Staff arriving with a fever above 100.4 degrees or other symptoms will be sent home and cannot return to work until they are fever free for 72 hours, without the use of medicine that reduces fevers.
* Staff will report contact with anyone outside of work who has had a documented case of COVID-19. Staff will be instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days if they have been exposed to COVID-19.
* If a Staff member is sent home for the day, we will have a substitute.
* The substitute will be screened when they arrive in the same manner as our regular staff.

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**Children**

*When children arrive:*

1. We will perform temperature checks; we will use a body scan thermometer. Thermometers will be disinfected per the manufacturer’s instructions.

*We will ask parents:*

1. Has your child been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19? If yes, the family should self-quarantine for 14 days.
2. Has your child felt unwell in the last 3 days? (persistent cough, temperature, difficulty breathing, cold, diarrhea and/or vomiting) If yes, the child cannot attend school, and the family should self-quarantine for 14 days.

* Children arriving with a fever above 100.4 will be sent home and cannot return to school until they are fever free for 72 hours, without the use of medicine that reduces fevers.
* We will visually check the child for signs of illness, including flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.
* We will continue to monitor symptoms throughout the day and monitor temperatures when children appear ill or ‘not themselves.’
* Children, who become sick at school, will be isolated in the office with a staff member and parents will be called for prompt pick up.

**5. Hygiene--Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.**

**Staff**

*Staff will wash their hands:*

* Before and after work shifts
* After blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing,
* After using the restroom
* After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings

**Children**

*Children will wash their hands: (We will NOT use hand sanitizer with the children)*

* Children will wash their hands with soap and water when they arrive, after putting their hands in the mouth, after coughing/sneezing, after going to the bathroom, before/after snack, and before they go home.
* We will teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
* There will be increased monitoring of handwashing to ensure adherence.
* Students and staff will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow.
* If a child ‘mouths’ a toy it will be removed, sanitized, and returned the next school day.
* Children will bring their own snack and beverage each day to school.
* There will be NO sharing of food.
* No outside food can be provided. (For a birthday celebration, we will NOT have any cupcakes, etc., but your child will get a birthday crown/badge and we will celebrate with some special activities for the birthday boy/girl.

**6. Cleaning and disinfecting**

* Common areas (sinks, bathroom, doorknobs, light switches and tabletops) will be cleaned and disinfected, according to CDC guidelines, throughout the day.
* Classroom toys and materials will be cleaned daily, per CDC guidelines

**7. Communication protocol for possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19**

* First Friends Director, Marrietta Mann will be responsible for handling questions and reporting COVID-19 cases/exposure.
* Parents/Staff are asked to contact Marrietta Mann immediately, by phone (248 650-0279) or via email, ([firstfriends@att.net](mailto:firstfriends@att.net)) if anyone in their household shows symptoms, or has tested positive for COVID-19.
* Parents and staff will be notified via email if there are any possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

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**Reporting Exposure**

* If a child, staff member, or family member has a COVID-19 exposure they need to contact Marrietta Mann immediately. They will be required to quarantine for 14 days before returning to school.
  + If during quarantine a child/staff member displays any COVID-19 symptoms, they **may not return to school until 10 days AFTER symptoms first appeared AND have been symptom and fever free, without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.**

**Reporting Positive COVID-19 Test for a Student/Staff Member**

* If a child or a staff member has a positive test result or displays any COVID-19 symptoms, they need to contact Marrietta Mann immediately. That individual will be required to quarantine for 14 days before returning to school.
* In addition Marrietta Mann will contact families, the local health department, and her licensing consultant for next steps.
* In the event that a student or staff member has a positive COVID test result, the Oakland County Health Department will begin contact tracing of anyone who came in contact with the child/staff member 2 days before they showed symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19.
* If a student / staff member is identified with a positive COVID-19 test, the Health Department will determine whether or not the classroom needs to be closed for 14 days.
* **Please note**: to respect the privacy of individuals in our care, we will NOT share any health information of a specific person.

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