

HALE EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

2020-2021 – In-Person, Every Day

All safety procedures included in this document follow the requirements for all child care facilities (including license-exempt programs) to reduce the risk of spreading any infectious disease while operating during this public health emergency (*GUIDANCE FOR CHILD CARE During Covid-19* – from the Office of Early Childhood 5-29-20; updated 8/5/20). According to the document, “This guidance can also be found on the OEC Covid-19 Website in Memo #6 Revised and Memo #15. All guidance is based upon medical advice from the CDC, DPH, and the Governor’s Office.” This document is further updated to adhere to Coronavirus Memo #29 – Group Size and Mask Requirement as part of a system of protections against COVID-19 (issued 9/14/20).

The primary requirements of the OEC document include:

- ❖ All staff must wear face coverings at all times.
- ❖ Children 3 years of age and older are required to wear masks while in child care programs, effective September 21, 2020.
- ❖ Maintain groups of 16 or fewer per space.
 - NOTE: Children should stay in the same group each day so that, if an outbreak should happen to occur, only one classroom may need to be closed for 14 days, instead of the entire program.
- ❖ Temperatures of staff will be taken upon entry to the facility. Taking the temperatures of children is optional. HEEC will continue to do so by a non-contact device.
- ❖ Exercise enhanced cleaning and disinfection.
- ❖ All staff shall cover their mouths with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and encourage children to do the same; and dispose of soiled tissues immediately after use.
- ❖ Avoid touching the eyes, nose, or mouth with hands.
- ❖ Ensure anyone showing signs of sickness stays home.
- ❖ Implement social distancing

Procedures for the Hale Early Education Center

1. Mask Wearing

- All staff must wear a face covering at all times (unless outside and able to keep a distance of six feet)
- Children 3 years of age and older are required to wear masks while in child care programs. Child care programs must create a written policy for mask wearing and provide such policy to staff and families. Programs shall maintain this policy on site and provide it to the OEC upon request.
- Individuals will be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth while removing their face covering, and wash hands immediately after removing.

2. Social Distancing and Group Size

- Group size will be limited to no more than 16 children. As many adults as needed are permitted. The ratio for preschool remains one 1 adult to 10 children.
- Classrooms will include the same group each day, and the same teachers will remain with the same group each day to the extent possible.
- Spaces utilized and number of students allowed in the space (per the OEC guideline of 35 square feet per child) will include the following:
 - Purple Classroom – 16 students and 2 staff

- Orange Classroom – 16 students and 2 staff
- Green Classroom – 11 students and 2 staff in a.m. and 11 students and 2 staff in p.m.
- Red Classroom – 11 students and 2 staff in a.m. and 11 students and 2 staff in p.m.
- Yellow Classroom – 16 students and 2 staff
- Blue Classroom – 16 students and 2 staff
- Rainbow Classroom – 8-12 students and 1-2 staff
- Silver classroom – 12 students and 2 staff
- The space allocations accommodate 114 children, which is the typical HEEC capacity
- Playground times will be staggered so that only one group at a time accesses the playground.
- During nap time, cots will be spaced out as much as possible, ideally six feet apart, and children will be placed head to toe.
- Children will be spaced six feet apart during meal and snack times.
- Before and After Care
 - Children will be grouped in Before Care and After Care so that they remain with the same group of children throughout their time at the center.
- Holiday events and performances will be cancelled or postponed.
- Family Conferences will be conducted virtually.
- Pupil Planning Team (PPT) and B-3 Transition meetings will be conducted virtually.
- Staff meetings and teacher team meetings will be conducted virtually.

3. Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- No family member will enter the building.
 - Sign in and sign out will occur outside of the building.
 - Staff will greet children outside as they arrive.
 - Parents/guardians/designated adults must wear a mask, and will maintain six feet of space between them and staff whenever possible.
 - To assist with drop off and pick up, we encourage parents/guardians to maintain a consistent pattern of adults who drop off and pick up.
- A staff member wearing a mask will hold a clipboard and sign students in, noting the time parents/ guardians or designated adults drop-off and when they pick-up.
- Classes will have scheduled drop-off and pick-up times. Drop-off and pick-up outside of the allotted time will not be permitted unless prior notice is given to the office (call or email Liz Murphy) and a later drop-off time or an early or late pick-up is arranged. This modification should only be used for emergency or appointment situations.
- Children will wash their hands immediately upon entering the classroom. They will either be supervised using hand sanitizer and then directed to the sink to wash their hands with soap and water, or sent directly to the sink to wash with soap and water.

4. Health Screening:

- Health Promotion Communication will include:
 - Parents/guardians and staff will be informed of the symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the start of school. This information will be communicated via newsletter and emails. COVID-19 symptoms include: fever (temperature greater than 100°f) or chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or a new loss of smell/taste.
 - HEEC will stress the importance of parents/guardians actively monitoring symptoms of their children and all family members each day prior to sending children to school. Should anyone in the household be symptomatic, parents/guardians should keep children home and notify HEEC.

- If anyone in the household has been exposed to someone with a known case of COVID-19, students should stay home from school and notify the HEEC administrator. The expectation is all household members will be quarantined for 14 days.
- Parents/guardians must call HEEC on the morning of their child's absence indicating the reason prior to the start of each school day.
- All staff and children will be screened for any observable illness, including cough, respiratory distress, or signs of illness (flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing, fatigue, extreme fussiness), and to confirm temperature below 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Screening includes assessing health by taking temperature.
- Parents/guardians/designated adults will be asked the following questions:
 - Is there anyone in the child's home who is Covid-19 positive?
 - Has the child been exposed to anyone with Covid-19 within the past 14 days?
 - Is the child experiencing any fever, cough, or any other symptoms of illness?
 - Has the child or anyone in the home visited any high-risk areas within the last two weeks?
- Procedures for taking temperatures:
 - Student temperatures will be taken by a lead staff member wearing PPE (face shield, mask, and gloves) using a Non-Contact Infrared Thermometer or
 - Staff temperatures will be taken utilizing a Non-Contact Infrared Thermometer or the TAURI Temperature-Check Tablet (1-Second, No-Contact, Temperature Scan from 3 feet)
 - Staff or children who have a temperature greater than 100 degrees will not be permitted into the program. Staff may return to the program once they are fever-free for 24 hours.
 - If a child has a FEVER (100 degree F or 37.7 degree C), sore throat or cough, the CDC recommends that the student remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications.

5. Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Deep cleaning of the facility will occur nightly. This will involve cleaning of doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, counter-tops, lids of garbage cans, cots, tables, chairs, cubbies, and playground structure surfaces made of plastic or metal.
- Cleaning products will not be used near children, and staff will ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.
- All cleaning materials will be kept secure and out of reach of children.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used
- Toys will be rotated and cleaned daily. Students will wash their hands before moving from one area in the classroom to another during center time.
- Toys to be used by multiple students that cannot be cleaned and sanitized, will not be used.
- Any toy that a child touches to their mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by bodily secretions or excretions will be immediately put in a separate bin and cleaned thoroughly by hand before being put back into use (clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered product, rinse again, and air-dry)
- Machine washable cloth toys and other items likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food dishes, utensils, will be used by one child at a time or not used at all. These toys will be laundered/cleaned and sanitized if possible before being used by another child.
- Toys will not be shared between classes, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one class to another.
- Books and other paper-based materials are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning procedures.

- Each child will have a personal bin of common items (e.g., scissors, crayons, markers, glue stick, playdough). Other items will also be labeled for individual student use (e.g., smocks). This will discourage sharing of items between students.
- All personal items of the students will be housed in individual cubbies or bins within the classroom
 - Each child's bedding will be kept separate. Cots will be labeled for each child.
 - Bedding that touches a child's skin will be cleaned weekly. All bedding will be sent home for cleaning on the last day of each school week.
- Playground
 - Individual classrooms will use the playground at separate times.
 - All hard surfaces of the playground will be disinfected between uses by different groups or when bodily secretions get on surfaces.
 - Children will wash hands before and after using the playground
 - Hand sanitizer will be available outside if a child sneezes, blows their nose, etc.
 - A trash receptacle for disposal of soiled tissues, gloves used for sanitizing, etc. will be placed on the playground
 - Sandboxes will be closed/covered
- Travel in the common areas (hallways, lobby):
 - Groups of children will travel in the hallway one at a time. A clear schedule for movement through the center will be established.
 - A paraeducator or the administrator will be stationed in the upper hallway at all times. This paraeducator and the administrator will have a walkie-talkie. All spaces that have groups of children will also have walkie-talkies. If children need to use the bathroom or otherwise travel in the hallway during a non-scheduled time, the group teacher will radio the hallway monitor or administrator to determine if it is clear to enter the hallway.
- Hand Hygiene will be implemented as follows:
 - Staff and children will be reminded daily that regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:
 - Before coming in contact with any child;
 - Before and after eating;
 - After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing;
 - After using the rest room;
 - Before handling food;
 - After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated; and
 - After using any shared equipment like toys, computer keyboards, mouse.
 If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be used. Any use of the sanitizer by a child will be supervised by an adult.
- Respiratory Hygiene will include:
 - All staff will cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the corner of the elbow;
 - All children will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow; and
 - Soiled tissues will be disposed of immediately after use.

6. Washing, Feeding, Diapering, or Holding a Child

- Staff can protect themselves by wearing an overly-large button-down, long-sleeved shirt; and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- When diapering a child, assisting with changing a pull-up, assisting with a change of clothes, or otherwise assisting a child in the bathroom, staff will wash their hands (and any other area touched by the child's secretions) before assisting, and wear gloves in addition. After assisting,

staff will wash their hands again (even if he/she was wearing gloves), and wash and disinfect the changing area if needed.

- Contaminated clothes will be placed in a plastic bag.
- HEEC will follow current HEEC food policies in regard to provision of food for children or food brought from home.

7. Sick Procedures

- HEEC will communicate to parents/guardians the importance of keeping children home when they are sick as noted above.
- The HEEC administrator will communicate to staff the importance of being vigilant for symptoms, and staying in touch with the administrator if or when they start to feel sick.
- If a child develops an elevated temperature or becomes ill during the school day, that child will be brought to a separate room. The administrator, administrative assistant, or designee will contact the parent/guardian. An adult wearing a mask, shield, gown, and gloves will remain with that child until a parent/guardian or designated adult is able to pick the child up from the program. The back “staff” room will be designated for this purpose. This room will be cleaned and surfaces disinfected after the sick child has gone home.

8. If Covid-19 is Diagnosed in a Child or Staff Member

- If a child or staff member who has been present in the program is diagnosed with COVID-19, HEEC will notify families and staff of the program about the exposure.
- The superintendent of schools and nurse supervisor for the district will also be contacted.
- Return to school if the illness is believed or confirmed to be COVID-19:
 - 3 days with no fever (without medication) **and**
 - Respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) **and**
 - 10 days since symptoms first appeared **or**
 - Two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart

*All safeguards and procedures adhere to and extend beyond the *Guidance for Child Care During Covid-19* document distributed by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood on May 29, 2020, the update of Memo 15 issued by Beth Bye on June 25th, 2020, and Addendum 2 – *Covid Guidance and Considerations for Preschool Located in Public Schools* – (July 27, 2020) of the *Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together* issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education on June 29, 2020.