



COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

As at 2 February 2022

Lefroy Road Childcare Centre
Beaconsfield, Fremantle

Guiding Principles

1. Lefroy Road remains committed to the safety and wellbeing of its families and staff. The Centre and families both have an important role to play in ensuring that we can mitigate the impact and spread of COVID-19 within the Centre.
2. This plan is key to ensuring that the Centre can to the best of its ability remain open even during periods of considerable local transmission of the Omicron variant. Our enduring mission of providing a safe and nurturing environment for our children remains the number one priority.
3. We recognise that consistent and clear communication with families is extremely important.
4. We acknowledge that this plan is subject to change based on evolving health guidance provided by State & Commonwealth agencies. We will always act based on the regulatory advice of these agencies.
5. Despite the Centres commitment to a COVID-safe environment, it's important to understand that childcare centres both in terms of resources and the age of our children means that there are limitations in relation to how far we are able to mitigate the spread of infection.
6. All Centre staff are COVID vaccinated as per the requirements of the WA Governments mandatory vaccination direction for the Early Childhood sector.

Mitigation Strategies

Note: all strategies within this plan will be used on a temporary basis during widespread periods of COVID-19 spread in the Perth area. Given the unpredictable nature of this virus at this stage we are unable to advise when these requirements will be implemented and the period for which they will remain active.

1. All staff will wear N95/P2 masks when undertaking activities that do not include direct contact with the children (e.g. when in the staff room, setting up rooms and preparing food. The recommendation from WA Health is that masks are not required to be worn by staff when they are directly interacting with the children. Parents and carers must wear masks at all times when inside the building. All staff will be trained to ensure they are wearing masks correctly.
2. Commercial air purifiers have been installed in each of the three rooms where the children are cared for. These machines filter the air in an enclosed space and clinical

evidence from early-stage studies shows that they can significantly mitigate the spread of Omicron given its nature as an aerosol spread virus.

Where possible, natural ventilation will be encouraged with the use of open windows and doors.

3. If a child or another member of their household is suspected of COVID-19 symptoms, they are asked not to attend the Centre until the individual who is symptomatic has returned a negative test. The same requirement applies to Centre staff. Whether this is a PCR or RAT will depend on what is recognised by health authorities.
4. If a child or another member of their household tests positive for COVID-19, they must not attend the Centre until they complete the relevant number of isolation days as prescribed by the WA Government is completed and are no longer symptomatic. The same requirement applies to Centre staff.
5. The Centre will establish a temporary “kiss & drop” procedure for all drop off and collections. Parents are asked to take their children to the entrance of the toddler room where they will be collected by a staff member. The same procedure will be in effect for pickup. This will limit the risk of infection spread inside the building and is aligned with advice by WA health.
6. Hygiene practices already in place will continue to be practiced by staff and visitors. The Centre will continue to be cleaned on a daily basis.
7. The Centre will ensure that emergency contact details and sign and out records are accurate and up to date on the NAQITS as this may be used by WA Health for contact tracing.
8. The Centre will to the best of its ability keep child interactions between the three rooms limited.

FAQS

Should I notify the Centre if my child or someone in our household contracts COVID?

Yes. Families must contact the Centre as soon as possible. The Centre is then required to immediately notify the Public Health Operations Centre (PHEOC) and the WA Education and Care Regulatory Unit (ECRU).



Should I notify the Centre if my child or someone in our household is a close contact?

Yes. Families must contact the Centre as soon as possible. The Centre is then required to immediately notify the Public Health Operations Centre (PHEOC) and the WA Education and Care Regulatory Unit (ECRU).

Will the Centre notify families if another child, staff member and or their household tests positive for COVID?

The Centre is required to seek permission from WA Health before notifying families of a reported infection. It is envisaged that either the Centre or WA Health will notify all staff and families as soon as possible.

Should my child and members of our household be tested if another child or staff member at the Centre tests positive to COVID?

If this were to arise WA Health will work with the Centre to identify who is a close contact and whether they should be tested.

Will the Centre close if there is infection by someone who has attended the Centre?

The PHEOC will determine whether the service needs to temporarily close whilst public health measures take place to trace contacts and undertake appropriate cleaning. Where possible the Centre will strive to remain open.

Will the Centre remain open if there are periods where there are staff shortages due to illness from COVID?

All early childhood centres have strict staff to children ratio requirements as a condition of its license regardless of the circumstances. If there is a situation where the Centre is unable to meet those ratios due to higher than normal staff absences due to COVID, the Centre will prioritise remaining open for families of essential workers as defined by the WA Government. This is consistent with the direction agreed to by Federal and State Governments in January 2022.

We expect to remain open unless directed to close by WA health authorities or if the Centre does not have the staffing capacity to care for the children.

Do I still have to pay fees for any days that my child is absent from the Centre if they or a member of the household tests positive with COVID?

Yes. Like in any situation where a child is absent because they are unwell and or are at risk of making another child unwell, fees are charged. The childcare subsidy will continue to apply.



It is important to be mindful that the Centre has fixed overheads regardless of child attendance and in the absence of additional Federal Government assistance the Centre has no choice but to continue to charge fees in order to remain open in the long term.

Do I still have to pay fees if the Centre is required to temporarily close due to staff shortages or at the direction of WA Health?

The Centre will waive out of pocket fees paid by the family whilst continuing to collect the Childcare Subsidy (CCS).

If my child is absent due to COVID when can they return to the Centre?

Children may return to the Centre following the conclusion of the isolation period set by the WA Government and are no longer symptomatic. As of 18 January 2022 the isolation period is 14 days. Additional requirements may be stipulated by regulatory agencies in the future.

I would like to temporarily withdraw my child due to concerns about the spread of COVID once infection rates rise, is this possible?

It is important to be mindful that the Centre has fixed overheads regardless of child attendance and therefore any parent who wishes to have their child's place held they will continue to incur the standards fees.

Please note that if you wish to withdraw your child from the Centre there is a two week notice period where fees will be charged.

How we will communicate with families

When enacting elements of this plan or additional requirement set by regulatory bodies, the Centre will endeavour to communicate these messages via email as a matter of urgency. Where there is infection within the Centre community or if the Centre must make urgent changes to its operations that will have an impact on families the Centre will work with ECRU to determine most suitable way of communicating with families and staff as soon as possible.

It is noted that the Centre must have approval from WA Health before notifying families of infection in the Centre.



Need assistance?

If a family member has a question or concern about anything in the above plan they are encouraged to discuss this with the Centre Director.

Information about the Childcare Subsidy during COVID can be found [here](#).

[Starting Blocks](#) provides information on supporting children, families and carers to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

This plan was last reviewed by the Management Committee on 31 January 2022.