

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - PARENTS

PURPOSE

This document includes the roles and responsibilities of the Parents; whose children are in the setting:

The purpose of this document is to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each nursery stakeholder in implementing the Nursery Reopening Operational Guidelines. It is the responsibility of each member of the nursery community to ensure that the guidelines are adhered to and properly implemented in the nursery to ensure safe day-to-day operations, to maintain health and safety standards, and to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The basic principles are the underpinning ideas that must be prevalent in implementing the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. When preparing for and transitioning into reopening post-COVID-19, nurseries must follow all recommendations from MOHAP to try to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community. The following Basic Principles must be incorporated into each stakeholders' daily interactions within the nursery community:

- ➔ **Social/ Physical Distancing & Hand Washing** – Practicing social/ physical distancing and frequent hand washing is the best tools we have to stop the spread of COVID-19. These strategies must be used together to become a part of the day-to-day operations within the nursery. Nursery staff and children must avoid shaking hands or coming into close contact with other staff or parents by making sure at least 2 meters is kept between individuals. Children must be taught to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth and to wash their hands often throughout the day.
- ➔ **Staying home if they are ill** - Requiring parents to keep their children at home if are ill must be adopted into the nursery culture. Additionally, children and staff who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 are required to work and learn from home.
- ➔ **Identifying Symptoms** – Conducting health checks are necessary to identify any nursery staff or children with COVID-19 symptoms. If nursery staff or children develop any symptoms such as a mild cough, fever of more than 37.5 degrees, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, they must stay at home.
- ➔ **Hygiene and Safety** - Establishing routines and procedures that ensure hygienic and safe practices are followed by all stakeholders to ensure a feeling of confidence and security when attending the nursery.
- ➔ **Wellbeing** - Ensuring the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of all nursery staff, children and parents is embedded into the culture of the nursery as well as in the daily operations.
- ➔ **Support and Respect** - Establishing a culture that is supportive and respectful of all stakeholders and takes into consideration personal circumstances.
- ➔ **Transparency** - Establishing open and clear communication so that all nursery staff and parents feel comfortable and confident disclosing personal information related to health and circumstances.



GUIDELINE 1: KNOW THE LATEST FACTS

During the COVID-19 pandemic and post pandemic, it is critical that nurseries remain informed of current information to ensure the safety and wellbeing of nursery staff, children and parents. As facts and knowledge about the virus continue to change and improve, procedures and practices in the nursery will need to be updated. Nurseries are an integral part of all communities and have a duty to ensure all stakeholders understand the latest information about COVID-19, including its symptoms, complications, transmission and prevention and most importantly the impact this has on the nursery provision.

Nursery staff must stay informed, share current information and implement new knowledge of COVID-19 into existing policies and procedures.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must follow any updated nursery policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 and how to minimize the risk of the spread of the virus.
2. Parents must keep up to date with information from organizations that provide reliable information such as MOH and WHO.
3. Parents must refer to the principal if there are any questions or concerns regarding updated information or changes to existing policies/ procedures.
4. Parents are encouraged to attend remote training and/or information sessions conducted by the nursery to explain updated policies and procedures.



GUIDELINE 2: HYGIENE AWARENESS

It is critical that a nursery's hygiene policies, practices and procedures are strictly adhered to such as hand washing, sanitizing facilities and resources, daily cleaning and disinfecting and the inclusion of hygiene education into the curriculum and daily routines.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must be aware of policies related to hygiene.
2. Parents must ensure that their child/children do/does not bring any unnecessary items from home, such as toys, to the nursery.
3. Parents must ensure that their child/children brings their lunch in a hard plastic easy to clean bag that is only used for home and to the nursery. The external surface will be wiped down on lunch box.
4. Parents must ensure that one set of bedding is provided to the nursery if the nursery does not provide their own bedding. This bedding will not be returned home daily as it will be the responsibility of the nursery to wash the items on site each day.
5. Parents are encouraged to give their child/children opportunities to become increasingly independent with hygiene procedures such as hand washing, using the bathroom and feeding themselves as per developmentally appropriate under the supervision of an adult.
6. Parents are encouraged to send food items for snack and meals that children can manage independently (removing from bags, opening containers, independent feeding) as per their developmental stage; this will minimize contact for support at snack and mealtime.
7. Parents are encouraged to remain connected with the nursery via their communication channels to ensure that they are aware of information pertaining to hygiene and how it can be further reinforced and supported at home.



GUIDELINE 3: HANDWASHING

During the presence of COVID-19, hand washing is crucial to stopping the spread of the virus. It is critical that the nursery implement hand washing protocols for all nursery staff, parents and children.

According to the MOH, effective hand washing can be described as washing hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and warm water and then thoroughly drying hands afterwards with paper towel. Cloth hand towels must not be used to dry hands as they can spread germs. Hand washing is preferable to hand sanitizer. However, in instances where soap and water are not immediately available, hand sanitizer must be used but only for children between the ages of 2 to 4 years old.

Hand sanitizer units must be wall mounted, closely supervised and kept out of the reach of children.

It is critical that a nursery revises hand washing policies, practices and procedures in order to protect and safeguard children, staff and parents must recognize appropriateness of strategies for the relevant age-groups within the nursery.

It is imperative that staff teach and model hygiene practices with children in a fun manner and any reference made to the virus is neutral rather than negative to reduce children's anxiety surrounding the situation.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must ensure that they effectively wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before dropping off or collecting their child/children from the nursery.
2. Parents must model and teach their child/children how to effectively wash their hands at home.
3. Parents must give their child/children opportunities to become increasingly independent with hand washing as per developmentally appropriate under the supervision of an adult.



GUIDELINE 4: SOCIAL/ PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Social / Physical distancing is defined as keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. Keeping space between others is one of the best tools available to avoid exposure to COVID-19 as well as slowing the spread of the virus.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must be aware that children are placed into bubbles that will stay together for the entire day and with the same nursery staff.
2. Parents must be aware that nursery operations in the time of COVID-19 will be different. Some services and facilities will be restricted and may lack variety. If parents feel that home is more comfortable for children it is better that their child/children stay home and are cared for by family members.
3. Parents must support new procedures for dropping off and picking up children in which they will not enter the nursery building and that only 1 parent come at a time.
4. Parents must ensure that only children from the same family or same bubble are transported together to nursery.
5. Parents must maintain social distancing during drop off and pick up times.
6. Parents must contact the principal via telephone or the selected online platform for questions or in cases of concern.



GUIDELINE 5: STAFF AND CHILD SICK LEAVE AND ATTENDANCE

It is essential that nurseries adopt flexible attendance and clear sick leave policies. All nurseries must place great emphasis on monitoring attendance and sick leave. It also helps in identifying concerns regarding wellbeing if patterns for attendance and sick leave are monitored. The same is applied for nursery staff.

It is critical that the nurseries adopt an approach to sick leave and attendance that encourages both nursery staff and children to remain at home when they are sick. All staff and families must monitor their own health and stay at home if they are unwell.

Nurseries are encouraged to adopt policies for providing COVID-19 testing for staff as well as ensuring that staff have adequate insurance policies that cover illness.

The nurse must play a lead role in ensuring that daily health screenings are conducted, and that staff and parents have the latest information regarding the symptoms and spread of COVID-19.

Nurseries must create a context that encourages nursery staff, parents and children to monitor their own health and remain at home until they are well.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must keep their child/children at home if they are generally unwell. Children must not return to the nursery until they are healthy and/ or no longer exhibiting any symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours.
2. Parents must keep their child/children at home if they or any family members are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Children experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 must only return to the nursery after receiving approval from a doctor and a negative COVID-19 test result.
3. Parents must follow local health authority guidelines prior to sending their child/children who have been in direct exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case back to the nursery.
4. Parents must arrange to pick up their child/children within 1 hour, if they receive a call from the nursery stating that their child is unwell.
5. Parents must allow their child to have a daily health screening (temperature check) conducted by the nurse prior to their entry to the nursery.
6. Parents must inform the nursery of any upcoming travel plans and adhere to quarantine requirements upon returning to the U.A.E and the instruction from the ALHOSN application.
7. Parents must download the Al Hosn App to ensure traceability in the event of infection.
8. Parents must sign the weekly declaration in the form of a weekly letter or survey.



GUIDELINE 6: CRISIS MANAGEMENT

COVID-19 has highlighted the need for nurseries to update and/or develop a Crisis Management Plan that outlines steps to help protect all stakeholders and explore possible ways that a nursery can continue some aspects of their operations, specifically in the context of significant threats, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must ensure that they and their child/children follow the processes and procedures set out by the nursery to ensure the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is minimized, including when to keep their child at home and adhering to social distancing guidelines at all times.

2. Parents must ensure that they are aware of all policies related to financial matters, such as fee payment schedules, refund policies etc.
3. Parents must ensure that the principal is made aware of any financial concerns at their earliest opportunity so that amicable parent/nursery relationships are maintained.
4. Parents must ensure that emergency contact details, including parent names, place of work, contact phone numbers mobile number and office line of a working parent and the name and contact information address and phone numbers of an emergency contact in the event that a parent cannot be reached, are communicated to the principal. It is essential that this information is updated as the need arises.



GUIDELINE 7: POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

Given the current situation of COVID-19, relationships between nurseries and parents is more critical than ever. It is imperative that the principal and staff are empathetic toward parents, and work collaboratively to reach mutually beneficial agreements during this very challenging time.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must ensure that they understand all parent policies, guidelines and protocols communicated by the nursery to reduce the possible spread of COVID-19. Parents must communicate any questions regarding updates to the principal.
2. Parents must be aware of and follow any new recommendations from trusted government sources surrounding health and safety protocols.
3. Parents are encouraged to talk to their children about how to stay safe and well, using age appropriate language.
4. Parents should reach out to the nursery and seek support if and when needed.
5. Parents must be aware of the stress indicators that may present in their child during this time, and how they can alleviate stress in their child by playing and having fun as a family.



GUIDELINE 8: SUPPORTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

While COVID-19 has caused people to become ill around the globe, vulnerable populations are more at risk due to their health and/or socio-economic circumstances. Establishing protocols can help to minimize the risk to vulnerable populations contracting COVID-19.

- In the nursery context, vulnerable populations may include:
- Children of determination who have difficulty speaking, understanding or communicating;
- Nursery staff, children and family members with weakened immune systems due to chronic illness such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer;
- Nursery staff, children and family members with compromised immune systems from a medical condition or treatment such as chemotherapy;
- Nursery staff, children and family members experiencing economic barriers, living in remote communities, compromised housing conditions, shared living arrangements or travel arrangements.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents must communicate medical or educational needs of their child/ children to the principal.
2. Parents with children of low immunity/chronic disease are required to get a note from the doctor stating it is safe for their child/children to return to the nursery during COVID-19.
3. Parents are encouraged to work cooperatively with the principal and nursery staff in coordinating services with partner organizations that provide services for their child/children.
4. Parents must provide a letter from their doctor and directions for administration for any doctor prescribed medication their child is required to take.
5. Parents must communicate needs, questions or concerns regarding a child or family member from a vulnerable population to the principal.
6. Parents must read and understand hygiene, respiratory and hand washing procedures provided by the nursery and support them at home.



GUIDELINE 9: WELLBEING

The protection of children is paramount and precautions are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in nursery settings. However, care must also be taken to avoid stigmatizing children, families and nursery staff who may have been exposed to COVID-19. It is important to remember that the virus does not differentiate between race, age, gender or disability. Nurseries must continue to be warm and supportive environments to all staff, children and families and must ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum and all children and staff are protected from discrimination.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for each stakeholder.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents are encouraged to support their child/children through following a healthy balanced lifestyle that includes diet, nutrition, and exercise.
2. Parents must monitor their child/children for potential signs of stress or anxiety and implement strategies to try to alleviate this stress in the household (e.g. by playing or reading with their child/children, talking with their child/children about their feelings).
3. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns with nursery staff members about their child's wellbeing.