

# ABIDING PRESENCE PRESCHOOL



## RE-OPENING SAFETY PLAN 2021 – 2022

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**Preschool Director: Julia McLaughlin**

*Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. -Joshua 1:9*

### **Introduction and Message from Abiding Presence Preschool:**

As COVID-19 lingers on, Abiding Presence Preschool is implementing new procedures and protocols to our school structure for the 2021-2022 school year. With all the adjustments and accommodations we are applying, we feel very secure that we will be providing our APLC Preschool faculty, staff, students, and families with a safe and healthy environment which remains our first priority. We ask that our APLC Preschool families remain positive, patient, and flexible as we begin a new school year with many new and revised procedures in place, so very unlike what we have had in years past.

We feel that the plans we are implementing and putting into practice are in the best interest of all involved in our preschool. These policies and procedures are based on the guidelines and information presented to us from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Department of Health (DOH) and Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). Along with the mandated guidelines we are following, APLC Preschool is also following recommended best practices which are suggested by the CDC, DOH and OCFS.

### **Guiding Principles:**

The AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) strongly advocates that all considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. The importance of in person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the adverse impacts on children due to school closures in the spring of 2020.

It is the intent of Abiding Presence Preschool to follow this recommendation. As we prepare for in person learning, we present you with the Abiding Presence Preschool COVID-19 Re-Opening Safety Plan. Please note that the contents of this packet are subject to change as needed in accordance with CDC, DOH and OCFS guidelines.

### **Quality Assurance:**

The responsibility of ensuring adherence to all Covid-19 related policies and procedures will reside with the Site Safety Monitor, Julia McLaughlin. Compliance inspections/reviews will be performed daily. Faculty and staff will be informed of any compliance issues that need to be corrected.

\*In Julia McLaughlin's absence, Karen Schifellite will assume the role of Site Safety Monitor.

### **Social Distancing Strategies:**

All classes will remain separate for the entirety of the school day. Each group of students will be in separate rooms and teachers will be responsible for ensuring that students from different classes do not co-mingle in any common areas, such as hallways.

We will maintain a staffing plan that does not require employees to "float" between different classrooms or groups of students, unless a rotation is necessary to safely supervise the students. A playground and outdoor schedule will be put in place to prevent more than one class in an area at one time. Travel in hallways will be limited to one class at a time.

Each grade level will arrive and be dismissed through its own designated door to prevent more than one grade level in the same hallway at the same time. We ask that only one care taker per family accompany

the student at arrival and dismissal. We also encourage having the same person dropping off and picking up the student whenever possible. Reminders (distance markers) to maintain social distancing will be in place throughout the Education Building.

At times, Abiding Presence Preschool shares space with Abiding Presence Lutheran Church. Therefore, all church personnel will be required to remain separated from the preschool during school hours. COVID -19 screening will take place if church employees must enter the Education Building. All visitors will sign in and be added to our Child Care Program Tracker.

All students will remain in steady, stagnate groups within their classrooms. Students will have assigned seats at classroom tables.

#### **Face Coverings:**

The CDC states that Covid-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know that they are infected. Therefore, it is important to wear face coverings in public settings and practice social distancing. All APLC Preschool faculty and staff are always required to wear a face covering when they are in the presence of the students or other employees. Abiding Presence will provide additional face masks for those in need of one and supply employees with protective personnel equipment (PPE), such as gloves, smocks, hair ties, etc. as necessary.

Students at this time are not required to wear a face covering but may do so upon the request of their parent/guardian. If this is the wish of a student's parent for their child to wear a face mask, we will need written permission from the parent and the student will be required to be able to put on and remove their face covering without help from others.

#### **Faculty and Staff Clearance to Work and Attend Abiding Presence Preschool:**

All APLC Preschool faculty and staff will be asked to have COVID-19 testing performed prior to the start of the school year, and whenever necessary thereafter. Faculty and staff will be advised to avoid all unnecessary travel to maintain a healthy environment at our school. Faculty and staff will also be asked to always practice social distancing and wear a face covering as per NYS recommendations.

To repeat, Julia McLaughlin will serve as the Abiding Presence Preschool COVID-19 Site Safety Monitor and will be responsible for overseeing that all safety precautions are being followed during the school year.

#### **Access to Abiding Presence Preschool Education Building:**

APLC Preschool faculty, staff, students, and essential visitors will be allowed access to the Education Building during school hours. SEITs, special education service providers and OCFS licensors are considered essential visitors and will be screened upon arrival at our preschool and prior to entering the building. Parents needing to enter the preschool will be required to make an appointment before entering the building and undergo screening. Payments for tuition can be mailed in, placed in your child's home/school folder or handed to a staff member at Arrival or Dismissal.

\*All visitors **MUST** wear a face covering to enter the building.

#### **Arrival and Dismissal**

**Toddler Class:** Arrival 9:00am: Students and 1 parent/adult will wait outside the Toddler Entrance (6 feet apart). A staff member will come outside to Health Screen (a series of questions will be asked and temperatures will be taken using non-contact thermometers) both students and parents. Once all screening questions have been answered "no", and both student and parent have a normal temperature (under 100 degrees), you and your child will enter through the Lower entrance in the hallway adjacent to the Toddler classroom in the building. You will then escort your child to the bathroom to wash their

hands and drop them off at their classroom doors. Please exit through the same door you entered the building through.

Dismissal 11:30 for mini day, 1:00 for half day: Please form a line with your cars outside the Toddler Classroom door. Parents may get out of the car and wait (socially distanced, 6feet apart from each other) outside the Toddler classroom. Your child will be brought outside to you by one of our staff members.

*\*Please note: Parents will be coming in the building for arrival, but not for dismissal.*

**Pre-K Class:** Arrival 9:00am: Students and one parent/adult will wait outside the Pre-K Entrance (6 feet apart). A staff member will come outside to Health Screen both students and parents (a series of questions will be asked and temperatures will be taken using non-contact thermometers). Once all screening questions have been answered “no”, and both student and parent have a normal temperature (under 100 degrees), you and your child will enter through the entrance adjacent to the Preschool Office. This entrance has steps and a sign that reads “Abiding Presence Parish Center”. You will then escort your child to their classroom where they will wash their hands with their teachers. Please exit through the same door you entered the building through.

Dismissal 1:00 pm: Please park your car in the Preschool Parking Lot and line up (socially distanced, 6feet apart from each other) at the same door you used for arrival. Your child will be brought outside to you by one of our staff members.

*\*Please note: Parents will be coming in the building for arrival, but not for dismissal.*

**Nursery Classes:** Arrival a 9:00am: Students and one parent/adult will wait outside the Nursery Entrance (6 feet apart). A staff member will come outside to Health Screen both students and parents (a series of questions will be asked and temperatures will be taken using non-contact thermometers). Once all screening questions have been answered “no”, and both student and parent have a normal temperature (under 100 degrees), you and your child will enter through the main entrance (this is entrance has double doors with crayon pillars). You will then escort your child to their classroom where they will wash their hands with their teachers. Please exit through the same door you entered the building through.

Dismissal 1:00 pm: Please park your car in the Preschool Parking Lot and line up (socially distanced, 6 feet apart from each other) at the same door you used for arrival. Your child will be brought outside to you by one of our staff members.

*\*Please note: Parents will be coming in the building for arrival, but not for dismissal.*

**\*If your child will be arriving more than 10 minutes past the class arrival time, please call the preschool office so someone can meet you at the entrance.**

#### **Health Screening:**

All students, parents, staff, and visitors must participate in a Health Screening which consists of answering a series of questions and temperature taking with a non-contact thermometer before permitted to enter the school. Daily health checks, including non-contact temperature measurement on the forehead or wrist, and a visual inspection for signs of illness will take place for all children, faculty, staff, and visitors throughout the day. The CDC states that using a non-contact temperature measurement device may help reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19 infections. All parents, staff and persons visiting APLC Preschool will also complete a Covid-19 attestation form that will be kept on file in

the preschool office. Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the school building. Symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Fever of 100 degrees F or above
- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent Cough
- Loss of taste or smell
- Frequent nasal discharge
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches

Symptoms usually occur 2-3 days after a person has been infected.

If Abiding Presence Preschool learns that a faculty member, student or household member of a faculty member or student has tested positive for COVID-19, we will immediately consult with the Suffolk County DOH and this Safety Plan for guidance with management of potential exposure to staff and students and to determine appropriate steps to be taken by APLC Preschool. OCFS will also be notified of the guidance provided to us by the SCDOH.

Parents must be on alert for signs of illness in their children and must keep them home when they are sick. Abiding Presence Preschool has the right to deny the child's attendance for the day or the days thereafter if the student appears sick. Clearance from a doctor will be expected upon the student's return. Staff conducting the daily health screenings will wear appropriate PPE such as gloves, face covering, and smocks. Staff members will escort children to their classrooms where they will immediately wash their hands for the first time of the day at school.

Screening responses and temperature checks will be documented daily.

#### **Students or Employees who Become Sick at School:**

The American Academy of Pediatrics states that "although many questions remain, the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from Covid-19 infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and spread infection."

If a student becomes ill while at school:

APLC Preschool will provide an isolated space for the un-well student to rest while waiting for the arrival of parent/guardian. This space will be designed with the intent to keep the child comfortable during isolation.

We will contact the student's parent/guardian to pick up the student as quickly as possible. The student will be monitored by a staff member while waiting to be picked up. Please have a plan in place prior to school starting in case it is necessary for you to pick up your child.

The parent/guardian will meet staff and child at the main entrance of the Education Building and not be allowed in the building when picking up.

Sick children and staff will not be allowed to return to school until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation. Those with a fever will not be allowed to return to school for 72 hours, they must be fever free without the aid of medication and we will need written clearance from a doctor.

If it is found that a child or member of a child's family has COVID-19, the parent/guardian will notify the preschool director immediately. APLC Preschool will then contact the Suffolk County Dept. of Health

(SCDOH) at 631-854-0000 and the NYS DOH COVID-19 hotline @ 1-888-364-3065 for guidance and instruction.

Measures taken after calls to these agencies may result in closing the entire school or a classroom for in person learning for 24 hours while the health department investigates and sets forth a plan. Should we need to close while waiting for directing from the SCDOH, we will move to our Remote Learning Model until the return to in person learning date given to us by the SCDOH.

During this time, the building will be disinfected and sanitized in accordance with guidelines from the CDC and NYS DOH with approved cleaners.

Additional closure of the school beyond the 24 hours may be made by the CDC and DOH on a case-by-case basis.

### **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette:**

“Hand hygiene is an important part of the U.S. response to the international emergence of COVID-19. Practicing hand hygiene, which includes the use of alcohol-based hand rub or hand washing, is a simple yet effective way to prevent the spread of pathogens and infections in healthcare settings. CDC recommendations reflect this important role.” (CDC)

Faculty and staff will wash hands with soap and water for at least 30 seconds and will assist children in doing the same. Alcohol- based hand sanitizers will be available at the entrance of each classroom. Students will be supervised if they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion. Children under the age of 2 are regulated against using hand sanitizer. Posters describing correct hand washing steps will be posted by each school sink.

All students and staff will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival and dismissal time and after breaks.
- Before and after preparing and/or consuming food and/or drinks.
- After using the toilet.
- After encountering bodily fluid.
- After playing outdoors.
- After handling garbage.
- When switching activities.

To ensure that proper hand hygiene is enforced, APLC Preschool will:

- Teach and reinforce the washing of hands among students and staff.
- Provide frequent hand washing and advise students and staff to avoid touching their face.
- Have adequate supplies available throughout the building restrooms, classrooms, building entrances, etc.) to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 % alcohol, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- Students will be instructed in the proper way to catch a cough or sneeze in their elbow.

### **Recommendations for Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sanitizing:**

The following will be disinfected at least daily:

All classrooms will be disinfected and sanitized using cleaning mists at the end of the day.

The playground will also be disinfected and sanitized after use by each class with OCFS and SCDOH approved cleaning solutions.

All high traffic, high-touch areas, such as doorknobs and handrails, will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day.

All shared items will be cleaned and disinfected between use. Staff will not share toys and other supplies with other classrooms unless they are washed and sanitized. Any toys and objects that cannot be cleaned and disinfected easily, will be stored away and may not be used this school year. Children's books and other paper-based materials such as mail and envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfecting other than the daily treatment with our misters. Abiding Presence Preschool will continue to have a nightly cleaning crew clean the Education Building.

**Limit Sharing:**

Each student will have a separate cubby assigned to them where they will store their belongings. Each student will have their individual supplies, such as glue sticks, crayons, scissors, etc., kept in a separate storage container. Your child's teacher may be asking you to send in a decorated shoe box clearly marked with your child's first and last name for this purpose.

Staff will ensure that adequate materials are available for each classroom each day. Under no circumstances will teachers from other classrooms be permitted to enter another classroom during the school day while class is in session for the purpose of sharing materials.

**Playground and Outside Schedules:**

Abiding Presence Preschool has a schedule in place for classroom use of the playground and in door recreation space to ensure that no two classes will be sharing the playground or indoor common areas at the same time. The playground, including the climbing structures and equipment, will be disinfected, and sanitized in between classroom use.

**Chapel:**

Chapel will not be held in the church, as it has in the past. Pastor Schoepflin or Karen Schifellite, Abiding Presence Christian Education Director, will provide chapel lessons for each individual class in their classroom. Pastor and Karen will be screened and cleared before providing these lessons for the children.

**Rest Time:**

Rest time is only offered in the Full Day programs. As per CDC and DOH guidelines, these students will be assigned their own mat which will be marked with their name. Mats will be placed head to toe and spaced out as much as possible.

**Enrichment:**

During previous school years, enrichment classes were offered for our 3 and 4-year-old students at the end of the school day. Since only essential personnel will be allowed in the Education Building and we must maintain a staffing plan that does not require employees to visit between classrooms or groups of children, enrichment classes will be taught by classroom Teachers and Teacher Assistants and held in each classroom. We will not have Enrichment Programs provided by any outside organizations at this time.

**Field Trips:**

Unfortunately, field trips will be suspended for the 2021-2022 school year until further notice.

**Training:**

Faculty and staff will be trained on specific COVID -19 training at the staff retreat held over the summer and at the monthly staff meetings held throughout the school year. Our health care consultant through the Child Care Counsel of Suffolk is on call throughout the year as needed. This specialized training is in addition to the OCFS required 30 credits per 2 years of professional development.

**Clearance to Work at and Attend School:**

If a faculty, staff, student, essential worker or anyone else have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID -19, they must be medically cleared to return to work/school by their doctor and /or according to SCDOH guidelines.

**In Closing:**

The administration at Abiding Presence Preschool has worked tirelessly over the summer to prepare our preschool for our hopefully temporary new normal. Our safety plan is in place and we are confident that everyone will do their part to adhere to the new policies and procedures, thus helping to keep our Abiding Presence Preschool community safe and healthy. Please reach out to the preschool office if you have any concerns or questions regarding this Re-opening Policy. We are looking forward to an amazing year with you and your children. Together, with God's love we can accomplish anything! May God continue to bless our Preschool Family and their loved ones with health and Happiness, always!



