

# BUILDING BLOCKS DEVELOPMENTAL PRESCHOOL

## Recovering, Rebuilding and Renewing: Reopening Plan 7/31/2020

**Agency Name:** Building Blocks Developmental Preschool

**BEDS Code:** 580410880236

**Administrative Address:** 29 Pinewood Drive, Commack, New York 11725

**Program Site Address:** 29 Pinewood Drive, Commack, New York 11725

**4410 Programs provided at this site:**

- Special Class
- Special Class in an Integrated Setting
- Multidisciplinary Evaluations
- Related Services Only

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Website where this plan and any plan updates will be posted: [www.bbdps.com](http://www.bbdps.com)

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool is an accredited special education preschool dedicated to enhancing the development of all children, birth through age five for over 36 years. Building Blocks is approved by the New York State Department of Health to perform evaluations and provide early intervention services for children, birth to 3 years of age. At the preschool level, Building Blocks derives its approval as a special education facility and evaluation site for children ages 3-5 years from the New York State Education Department. Building Blocks likewise possesses and maintains current, its day care license in accordance with regulations set forth by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Federal, state and county governments fund our special education programs and evaluation services. On March 18, 2020 New York schools were closed as a result of the COVID-19 national and state emergency. On June 5, 2020 Executive Order 202.37 allowed for the provision of special education during the summer session 2020. Since that time Building Blocks Developmental Preschool has begun providing CPSE approved special education evaluations in person, on-site (reference: *Building Blocks Evaluation Procedures during COVID-1 Public Health Emergency*). On July 13, 2020, Governor Cuomo outlined the requirements necessary for schools in a region to reopen stating if a “region is in Phase IV of reopening and if its daily infection rate of 5 percent or lower using a 14-day average since unPAUSE was lifted, a school may reopen for in person instruction. Schools will close if the regional infection rate rises above 9 percent, using a 7-day average, after August 1”. Schools were directed to design reopening plans that encompass an all-in-person model, a hybrid model combining distance and in-person learning and a model reflecting all distance learning. The need for all options is so that should the need arise, and schools be once again directed

to close due to a public emergency, we will be ready and able to provide learning opportunities through a variety of modalities.

### **Policies and Procedures to Reopen Building Blocks Developmental Preschool for the School Year 20-21**

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will offer a variety of options to our families to meet the needs of our school community while implementing mandated Individual Education Plans. Building Blocks Developmental Preschool is dedicated to creating the safest, most appropriate environment that will meet the educational and social emotional needs of our young population. We are keenly aware that our school serves general education children and special needs children and, as such, we are charged with creating a unique educational community with very specific challenges. This is only possible because of the expertise and caring of a very dedicated staff and a very supportive family network. We do believe that, together, this can be accomplished.

In the implementation of IEPs Building Blocks is cognizant of and grateful for the guidance provided by NYS Department of Health and NYS Education Department: [INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY \(NYS DOH – July 13, 2020\)](#) and [Reopening Schools Guidance \(NYSED – July 16, 2020\)](#). In particular, the flexibility provided through the following component will allow special education programs the ability to provide the necessary services to our preschoolers with special needs while creating a safe, healthy environment for our students and our staff.

“Until schools return to normal operating conditions, the same flexibility with respect to IEP implementation for delivery of services during school closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak continues to apply to the programs and services whether delivered in-person and/or remotely (e.g., flexibility with respect to the mode and/or manner; group or individual sessions; specific group size for related services, frequency, duration and location of related services, and special class size ratio etc.).”

Aside from personnel employed to maintain the general operations of the school (i.e. general education teachers, gym teacher, clerical staff, etc.) and implement mandated IEPs (i.e. special education teachers, therapists, etc.), Building Blocks Developmental Preschool employs the following professionals that will be available for staff training and to address specific needs of our children, families and staff, and enhance social & emotional programs as we move towards a re-imagined school opening:

School Psychologists

Social Worker

Safety Personnel

Security Personnel

Registered School Nurses

Nurse Practitioner

## **General Guidelines**

### **I. PEOPLE:**

#### **A. SOCIAL DISTANCING AND FACE COVERING**

##### ***Social Distancing***

All individuals must maintain at least six feet between each other whenever this parameter does not interfere with the safety or instruction of the children. For example, follow floor markers distanced at six feet when completing morning health assessments and signing in for the day; in the classrooms, whenever possible teachers should assign aides activity locations that maintain social distance; unused rooms may be used for staff lunch but number of occupants will be limited to allow for required social distancing.

Since it is recommended that social distances of 12 ft or more be observed during singing activities, music class, which combines groups, will be suspended until further notice. Additionally, teachers and therapists are advised to limit singing activities to areas where adequate distance can be achieved.

Social distancing must be maintained during all adult activities. When performing clerical duties within small areas limit staff to one when space is not adequate for distancing of 6 ft.

Social distancing in the classroom is difficult with young children. Staff is encouraged to keep long hair up off the collar and wear long sleeve shirts or smocks. Staff is encouraged to keep a change of clothing for themselves and parents are required to provide additional clothing for children. The nurses will also have additional clothing for children when necessary. Contaminated clothing must be placed in a plastic bag and sent home for laundering.

##### ***Face Covering***

All personnel, visitors, and anyone entering the building (i.e. repair personnel, etc.) must wear acceptable face coverings (except when in private offices, or when behind barriers). Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the nose and the mouth. A staff member in any location must be able to put on a face covering at any moment when a situation arises that social distancing cannot be maintained. Staff and visitors are encouraged to wear their own face coverings. If there are circumstances where this is not possible, a face covering will be provided. Face shields and barriers will be available in certain locations for the protection of children and staff and when necessary to implement learning strategies and address IEP goals.

While face masks are encouraged, children will not be required to wear face coverings while at Building Blocks. Children do not need to wear face coverings when they are in a childcare program and Building Blocks Developmental Preschool is a licensed childcare program (reference: [Interim Guidance on Executive Orders 202.17 and 202.18 Requiring Face Coverings in Public During the COVID-19 Outbreak – April 17, 2020](#); [INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR CHILD CARE AND DAY CAMP PROGRAMS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY - June 26, 2020](#)). In addition, the outdoor space that belongs exclusively to the childcare program is not considered a public place.

Staff will support any parent's decision to have their child wear a face covering when in school.

### ***Space Configurations***

Only three staff members will be allowed at one time in the computer room to allow the staff to sit at socially distanced spacing. Each staff member must disinfect touch surfaces before and after use and use hand sanitizer stations or wash hands before and after use. Approved disinfectant supplies will be available.

Staff is encouraged to use laptops and computers in their own rooms whenever possible.

Traffic in hallways will move in a "bear right" direction unless specifically marked by social distancing decals (high volume hallways).

Children will be encouraged to walk with outstretched arms spacing (flying like a plane) whenever possible. Therapists and teachers may hold children's hands to ensure safety and when there is a risk of elopement. Staff supervising children at greater risk of elopement should use hand sanitizers, wash hands frequently and wear masks and face shields, if necessary, to limit face touching. Gloves may be used following all OSHA guidelines for use and disposal.

Outdoor playgrounds will be closed until further notice.

Adult bathrooms will be single entry only. It is expected that all staff will practice appropriate hygiene. Staff is advised to wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water upon entry and exiting of the restrooms. No outside visitors (grandparents, babysitters, bus drivers) will be allowed to use the bathrooms.

As is our policy, an adult will escort young children to the bathroom. No more than two children can be taken at a time to allow for distancing in the hallways and between toileting and washing of hands.

All bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected routinely by the custodial staff.

### ***Schedules***

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool has staggered times of arrival and dismissal. Please see the section on Entering and Exiting the Building.

### ***Signage***

Building Blocks employs three registered nurses and a licensed nurse practitioner. Nurses will be responsible for updates and reminders to staff regarding healthy hygiene and stopping the spread of COVID-19. The nurses will send parents through email (and US Postal Service if a family does not have access to email) periodic reminders of slowing the spread of COVID-19 and they will inform parents of any updates released by the DOH. Prior to the opening of school and subsequently on a monthly basis the nurse practitioner will provide training to the staff incorporating but not limited to the following:

Staying home when you feel sick and identifying what symptoms should be medically evaluated;

The importance of covering nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering;

Use of face shields with and without masks;

Properly storing, maintaining and, when necessary, discarding PPE;

Adhering to social distancing instructions;

Reporting symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19, and how they should do so; following hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines;  
And following respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

Signs are posted throughout the building reminding individuals to follow guidelines to slow the spread of COVID-19.

## **B. GATHERINGS**

### ***Meals***

The lunchroom is no longer available as a common space break room. Staff is encouraged to eat in their own classrooms, personal vehicles or when weather permits, on the outdoor tables and benches. Staff is expected to maintain proper social distance when using these outdoor options.

### ***Small Spaces***

File rooms and supply closets will have limited access by specified personnel. Desk partitions will be installed in offices that are considered high traffic spaces or where social distancing is not possible. Number of personnel will be limited when in file rooms. Private office bathrooms are off limits to the general staff.

### ***Faculty, Staff and Parent Meetings***

Staff Conference days and all staff development and training will be via videoing or teleconferencing. Parent/teacher conferences will be held through virtual or telephonic meetings with parents. On occasion, meetings may be held in the gymnasium or outdoor spaces with proper spacing (consistent with social distance guidelines). Masks will also be required in these public spaces.

Small groups such as team meetings necessary for the implementation of IEPs may occur in empty classrooms or private offices as long as no more than 6 persons are present, proper social distancing is maintained, those present are staff members only (i.e. no outside providers, parents, etc) AND participants are part of the same cohort (teacher, teacher aide, speech therapist, team psychologist).

Departmental meetings such as speech meetings, teacher meetings, and staff meetings with more than 6 persons will be virtual. To limit persons entering the building, all parent meetings will be virtual or telephonic.

### ***Ventilation***

Teachers and office staff are encouraged to open windows and doors to increase ventilation whenever possible while maintaining the safety of the children. Given the young age of our student population and the need for security, exterior doors are never to be maintained in an open position.

Where possible, filtration will be upgraded to MERV 13; ventilation will be closely monitored during the school year and will be immediately repaired as needed.

### ***Common Areas***

All social gatherings within the school are suspended until further notice. Staff may not gather in common areas such as offices, classrooms, hallways, gymnasium, etc. for any purpose. As noted, the lunch/break room is no longer available.

Equipment used to enhance the curriculum, such as the bookbinding machine and the laminator, can be used according to a specified schedule to avoid groups of people congregating to use them. Only one person at a time will be allowed in those areas.

Please wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before and after using any of this equipment or machines.

### **C. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY**

Parents of special education children enrolled at Building Blocks Developmental Preschool were surveyed to obtain their thoughts on returning children to in person school. As of the writing of this reopening plan over 85% of parents indicated that they would send their child to school given appropriate safeguards in light of the current public health emergency.

General education students at Building Blocks come under the regulatory guidelines of the Office of Children and Family Services and, as such, in person instruction and care is not subject to approval of this plan and will open in the Fall. Additionally, all precautions and guidelines implemented through this guidance and through guidance provided by OCFS will be equally applied to all children attending Building Blocks Developmental Preschool.

### **OPTION #1: In Person Instruction**

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will provide in person instruction and delivery of related services for all students enrolled for September. In this plan, all students will attend school 5 days a week for the hours specified for their stated classes or on their IEPs and receive all related services at the school. Some components will be virtual, such as parent meetings, to be able to limit the number of persons entering the building. The building has 16 child-dedicated classrooms. Classes will run according to the following schedules allowing for staggered arrival and dismissal and time to clean and disinfect rooms between groups.

4410 Program	Session Time	Number of Children at Capacity
Self Contained in an Integrated Setting - SCIS	9:00-11:30 AM Session	13 children maximum per class
	12:30-3:00 PM Session	
	12:00-4:00 PM Session	
Self Contained -SC	8:30-11:00 AM Session	8-13 children maximum per class
	1:30-4:00 PM Session	
	8:30-1:30 AM Session	
	11:00-4 PM Session	
Nursery & Pre-K Classes	9-11:30 AM Session	15 children maximum per class
	12:30-3:00 PM Session	

Classes and providers will be grouped as cohorts with teachers, coordinators, supervisors, school psychologists and related service providers remaining room dedicated whenever possible.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will operate under all current applicable laws relating to general and special education parameters. No group will exceed the OCFS guideline of “no more than 15 children” in our 3 and 4 year old Nursery/Pre-K classes coming under the regulatory guidance of Office of Children and Family Services (reference: [INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR CHILD CARE AND DAY CAMP PROGRAMS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY](#)). Special education classes are either 12:1:2 or 8:1:2 ratios and, as such, are within the required ratio as well. Average square footage of classrooms is 825 square feet for special education classes allowing for a range of 63 to 103 square foot per child. This exceeds the required 50 square feet per child.

#### Classrooms:

Classes will remain static during much of the school day. Each classroom will be considered a “cohort” with limited exposure to other groups. Classroom windows will be opened whenever weather permits to allow for additional air circulation.

Classrooms will be set up to maximize space and allow for social distancing as much as possible. Activities within the classroom will be scheduled so as to allow for smaller group instruction and whenever possible children will be spread out within the classroom.

Classrooms will use visual cues to demonstrate physical spacing (i.e., butterfly wings and helicopter arms). Teachers will adapt practices to allow physical distancing of at least 6 feet as much as possible. Each classroom “team” will also develop strategies for maintaining physical distancing in the classroom.

Visual aids (i.e. painters tape, stickers) will help to illustrate traffic flow and spacing (i.e. path to speech room).

#### Areas of Learning in the Classroom:

During circle time children will be 6 feet from the teacher and assistants. Children in a designated cohort will be distanced as much as is feasible (i.e. helicopter arms and butterfly wings visuals will be incorporated). Circle time will include routine activities (i.e., calendar, weather,) as well as a featured whole group activity/lesson (i.e. language and literacy, math concepts including patterns, counting, number recognition). Whenever possible, teachers will hold class lessons and story time outside.

Barriers will be used during all tabletop activities.

#### Learning/Skills Centers:

Multiple bins will be used to contain specific play activities such as blocks, play food, vehicles, dolls, furniture and dollhouses. These bins will be used as children rotate centers so as not to have more than 2-3 children sharing the same items. Materials will be disinfected after each class has ended.

#### Dramatic Play Area

Children will engage in pretend play with no more than 2-3 students by taking on roles using non-material props. Toys and props that cannot be sanitized will not be used in the classroom (i.e., puppets, dress up clothes, doll clothes).

#### Library/Reading Center

No more than 2 children will be seated, socially distanced, in this area. (*Children's books are not considered a high risk for transmission.*) Once again, books will be replaced as children rotate centers.

#### Creative Arts/ Writing Center

Each child will have their own box of materials and supplies including scissors, pencils, crayons, and glue. Dedicated cans of play dough will be included for each child if appropriate.

#### Science/Sensory Center

Individual bins containing sensory and science materials will be cleaned and disinfected after use.

#### Snack/Lunch

Children will eat any snacks and/or lunch in their own classrooms. Parents or guardians will be directed to send lunch or snacks packed in disposable paper bags. Lunchboxes traveling back and forth from home are discouraged. Tables will be placed 6 feet apart and only 3 to 4 children will be at each table separated by plastic barriers. Tables and chairs will be cleaned and sanitized between groups of children.

Specials such as gym and yoga will be brought into the classroom.

#### Related Services:

In this model all mandated IEP services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and psychological counseling services are provided on-site. An attempt will be made to keep therapists room-dedicated or in limited cohorts whenever possible.

Speech therapy will be provided in individual speech therapists' offices. Occupational therapists will provide services as a push-in to the child's classroom. Psychological services will also be provided as a push-in to the child's class whenever possible. Group therapy will be limited to groups that can be arranged with children within the same classroom or static group. If this is not possible IEP goals requiring groups of children will be addressed as a push in model, once again within the same class. Physical therapy will be provided in the PT room, as there are only two-three physical therapists in a space that can easily accommodate social distancing. PTs will clean and disinfect any equipment that must be used for more than one child in-between sessions. However, every effort will be made to schedule children each day that will not have to share equipment so that all equipment can be cleaned and disinfected once at the end of the day.

All therapists will end sessions so that there will be a few minutes in between to allow for cleaning and disinfecting of commonly used surfaces such as tabletops and chairs. Equipment that cannot be disinfected in-between use will be put aside and disinfected at the end of the day. Therapists will create a child-dedicated materials and supply box so as to decrease the use of shared objects.



## **OPTION #2: Hybrid Model**

As per guidance provided in [INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY \(NYS DOH - July 13, 2020\)](#) and based on the dynamic nature of community transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, a hybrid model combining in-person instruction and remote learning may be necessary during the 2020-2021 school year. This model will be used should the need arise to decrease the number of persons in the school building.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will provide special education instruction and delivery of related services for all students enrolled by their school district by Individual Education Plans according to a hybrid model. Classes will be divided into two groups – Group A and Group B. General education classes coming under the regulatory jurisdiction of OCFS will remain open for five days unless specifically directed to close or, if need be, will close to ensure the health & safety of the children and staff.

Group A will attend school in-person on Wednesdays and Fridays. Group B will attend school in-person on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All children will attend school through distance learning on Mondays. In person instruction will follow the above outlined procedures for in school learning. On days when children are not in school classes will meet virtually and the following will be provided through distance learning:

- During the regularly scheduled class time teachers will provide a live circle-time lesson through distance learning.
- Teachers will meet virtually for learning sessions with small groups of children each week during regular class time and according to a prearranged schedule.
- Pre-recorded gym classes will be posted in Google classrooms.
- Instructional packets reflecting daily lessons and goals will be posted on each distance-learning day.
- Related services will be provided by a prearranged schedule and will be a combination of in person and teletherapy sessions or all teletherapy sessions depending on schedule.

For example, for Group A, children will be in the building on Wednesday & Friday; distance learning will be on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday; follow-up lessons will be posted in Google classrooms; and the teacher will meet with small groups of children for additional instruction once a week on distance learning days. Related therapy sessions mandated by the child's IEP will be provided in a combination of in person therapy and teletherapy according to the predetermined schedule. As an example, a child receiving 3 individual Speech sessions and 2 individual Occupational Therapy sessions as mandated by their IEP, could receive one therapy session each day if that was the schedule set up for in-person school. However, in this hybrid model 3 sessions would be via teletherapy and 2 sessions would be at school.

In this model only the teachers and aides whose classes would be on site would be in the building at the same time. Related service providers will be in the building every day and would provide teletherapy from their therapy rooms.

**GROUP A**

In-Person Wednesday-Friday Distance Learning Monday-Tuesday-Thursday

	Program/Ratio	Time/Session	Room #
El Special Instruction	El Grp	11-1:00PM	18
Toddler Group	El Grp	9-11:00	17
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	8:30-11:00	7
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:30-3:00	7
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	8:30-11:00	1
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	11:00-4:00	1
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	1:30-4:00	3
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	11:00-4:00	5
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	8:30-1:30	2
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	13
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:00-4:00	13
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	15
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:00-4:00	15
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	9
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:30-3:00	9

**GROUP B**

In-Person Tuesday-Thursday Distance Learning Monday-Wednesday -Friday

	Program/Ratio	Time/Session	Room #
Preschool Class	SC 8:1:2	11:00-4:00	17
Preschool Class	SC 8:1:2	8:30-1:30	4
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	1:30-4:00	4
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	8:30-11:00	5
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	1:30-4:00	2
Preschool Class	SC 12:1:2	8:30-1:30	3
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	6
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:30-3:00	6
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	8
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12-4:00	8
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	16
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:00-4:00	16
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	9-11:30	14
Preschool Class	SCIS 12:1:2	12:30-3:00	14

**Option #3: Distance Learning**

If necessitated by closure of school facilities Building Blocks Developmental Preschool is prepared to provide distance learning to the children in our school.

Distance Learning will be provided in accordance with the guidance published in the [Reopening Schools Guidance \(NYSED – July 16, 2020\)](#). Building Blocks will provide support and flexibility in providing a fully virtual learning model. The following outlines a distance learning option for all children at Building Blocks Developmental Preschool should the need arise:

- Live circle time lessons
- Live individual or small group session with teacher
- Live or pre-recorded gym class
- Live teletherapy sessions per IEP mandates for related services
- Instructional packets via Google classroom
- Yoga classes

During remote learning components to teaching, the staff will develop activities that encourage experiential hands-on learning to balance screen-time. Live and pre-recorded lessons include activities such as “treasure hunts”, age-appropriate cooking lessons, and building with common everyday objects such as cans, plastic ware, etc.

Through outreach by our social worker and school psychologists families with limited resources will be identified. Resources such as materials and supplies to complete instructional packets will be provided when necessary. Options for having to print activity sheets will be available such as pre-prepared instructional packets that can be sent home via mail, picked up by parents or dropped off to families in need.

Should we be able to open school, the teaching staff and therapists are advised to prepare supply boxes and instructional packets ahead of time so that these can be distributed to families needing them ahead of any possible public health emergency closure.

Once again, in implementing any learning model during the COVID-19 public health emergency, Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will abide by the guidance provided allowing for “flexibility with respect to the mode and/or manner; group or individual sessions; specific group size for related services, frequency, duration and location of related services, and special class size ratio etc.” (reference: [Reopening Schools Guidance \(NYSED – July 16, 2020\)](#)).

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool’s Educational Coordinator will continue to ensure that a well enhanced curriculum is presented to our children regardless of the mode of delivery. The curriculum includes:

1. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that promotes exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills;
2. Learning Without Tears: Readiness, Writing and Math Curriculum is a program that teaches body awareness, cooperation, turn-taking, listening, crayon grip, drawing, letter recognition, number concepts, patterns, geometry, measurements and uses music, movement and multisensory manipulative items;
3. Frog Street Press Literacy Program is a program that reinforces basic pre-academic skills, including alphabet, numbers, colors, themes and shapes.

Additionally, our school psychologists have developed a curriculum to help children accept changes that they are experiencing as a result of this public health emergency and to help them feel comfortable and safe in school again.

Our school psychologists will have opportunities to review behavior management strategies and will discuss possible modifications with staff as needed related to the current public health emergency. They will plan and update existing procedures to include mental health strategies including but not limited to mindfulness techniques adapted for preschoolers, training for teachers and other school personnel which may include videos, books, worksheets and activities to address feelings and coping skills during this pandemic. Parent support will be provided with teachers acting as the initial point of contact if the parent does not contact the psychologist directly. Teachers will share parents' concerns with school psychologists who will then further determine steps to be taken. School psychologists will have continuous availability to school staff, students and their families via routine classroom visits within individual cohorts, telephonic contact, video chats, etc. in order to provide mental health support.

Building Block's social worker will supplement this curriculum providing additional support and resources to families in need.

At the start of the school year, the school psychologists will introduce themselves via a welcome letter that includes contact and their availability. Parents are strongly encouraged to access the school psychologist as needed during this pandemic to discuss emotional concerns related to their child and family. Further referrals will be provided as warranted. During weekly team meetings, teachers will apprise school psychologists of students and families who are demonstrating emotional needs during this pandemic. School psychologists will contact families through email or phone to address family's concerns.

During staff orientation, school psychologists will meet with entire staff in small groups, and adequately socially distanced, to review social and emotional content addressing Covid19 pandemic concerns including delivering mindfulness strategies for classroom and individual use. Teachers are to place an emphasis on reducing anxiety and promoting positive mental health and resiliency via books, videos and other materials.

During monthly parent support groups conducted virtually, families will be able to address new concerns as well as ongoing concerns regarding social well-being for their family such as anxiety and ways to build resiliency. Teachers and school psychologists will share activities that promote positive social emotional well-being. School psychologists will guide staff with recommendations of materials and will be available to address classroom needs. This information will also be disseminated to parents to build emotional resilience during this unpredictable time.

Teachers and therapists will record performance data on task sheets and in session notes documenting progress toward goals and development regardless of the method of learning used. Any changes that may need to be implemented will be discussed at weekly team meetings that will be held in small groups allowing for social distancing or through virtual modalities. Procedures currently in place to amend IEPs or implement additional supports will continue through any mode of learning. Teachers and therapists will complete quarterly updates and reports to parents on children's progress; and Parent Teacher Conferences will

be held virtually in the fall and in the spring. Parents and staff can request team meetings as needed. Annual reviews of children's progress are scheduled by school district CPSEs and will be attended virtually by Building Blocks team members.

During all learning modes, Building Blocks will continue to provide supervision and monitoring of staff. The educational coordinator, the clinical coordinator, the lead teacher, the lead therapists and quality assurance personnel will monitor teaching sessions through direct observation of their assigned cohort classes whether in person classroom lessons or remote sessions. Lesson plans will be submitted weekly for approval to the educational coordinator. Lead therapists and quality personnel perform a review of children's record (i.e. daily task sheets, session notes) on a monthly basis. Written and verbal feedback is provided contemporaneously.

Every effort will be made to communicate with non-English speaking families. The school routinely translates documents for Spanish-speaking families and provides translation services via school staff members. For families who speak languages other than Spanish, Building Blocks contacts their respective school district for support. Children requiring bi-lingual therapies or instruction according to their IEP are only placed at Building Blocks through their CPSE should that option be available.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool's Executive Director maintains routine communication with all CPSE chairpersons, keeping them informed of our reopening plan during its formation. Contact with CPSE Chairpersons is maintained throughout all aspects of delivery of service including recent distance learning models and will continue to be maintained via direct phone calls, e-mails and US mail transmissions. Additionally, while visitors will be limited, district personnel are encouraged to visit the children placed here through their CPSE, once Building Blocks is re-opened.

All in-school attendance will be taken by the school nurse and recorded by each classroom teacher on specified attendance forms. For other models, attendance will be determined by the teacher by student participation in in-person school and in zoom classes, group learning sessions or acceptance of posted instructional packets. Attendance will be reported to the school nurse and clerical personnel for recordkeeping. Clerical personnel record attendance in the school's operating platform and submit attendance records to Nassau or Suffolk County Department of Health on a monthly basis. As is our current procedure, children are reported absent by their parents or guardian. If no report is made the school nurse contacts the family after two consecutive days of absence. During distance learning the teacher reports absences to the clerical staff and alerts the school psychologists and social worker of any extended absences. Additionally, administrative staff is available to contact families to determine the cause of absenteeism. Extended absences of ten days or more, regardless of parent contact, are reported to the Department of Health Division of Services for Children with Special Needs in the county where the child resides and are reported to the child's school district.

All “travel to” school trips are cancelled until further notice. Teachers are encouraged to plan virtual field trips to supplement the school curriculum. All “Arts-in-Education” activities are also cancelled until further notice (i.e Dentist Visit, Otto the Auto, etc.).

Parents must send snacks and lunches in individually marked paper bags. Lunchboxes are discouraged. No sharing of food items is allowed. Any snacks served in the classroom will be individually wrapped items. Prior approval from parents for participation in any food item not provided by the parent or guardian must be obtained. Children’s birthday parties that include parents and siblings are suspended until further notice. Parents or guardians may send in prepackaged items for a class-only celebration.

Parent participation days are cancelled until further notice; parent observations of classes and therapies will not be allowed until further notice; music class is cancelled until further notice.

Whenever possible, staff will discourage children from bringing toys from home. As such, show and tell must be “re-imagined.” Perhaps children can find a special item in the classroom; perhaps children can work on a mystery project in class throughout the week to be revealed on Show ‘n Tell day.

Snack & Lunch times will be staggered to allow for social distancing. Tables will be at least six feet apart. Plastic barriers will be used whenever appropriate. As is current procedure, children with food allergies will sit at specifically designated “free” tables and social distancing and barriers will be employed as needed.

Trash receptacles with covers are located throughout the building and can be used for the disposal of PPE when necessary.

All teachers and therapists must wear face coverings at all times. Plastic barriers between children will be used during tabletop activities whenever appropriate.

Children will be taught about hand washing and hand hygiene. Children will wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds upon entry into class, after each activity, before and after lunch and/or snack times, after using the bathroom and before they go home. Each classroom and therapy area is equipped with its own sink and will have soap, water and paper towels available for staff and children’s use.

All safety drills such as evacuation drills (fire drills), shelter in place, lockdown and lockout drills will continue to be conducted. Evacuation Drills will continue as previously done but each cohort will be instructed to group in outdoor meet areas six feet apart. Lock down drills will continue according to previously established policy but as a drill, children will not be required to hide in tight groups, in small spaces but rather practice sitting quietly around the perimeter of the room. In instances of an imminent emergency, staff will be instructed to follow previously established protocols to ensure the safety of the children and themselves in light of a graver presenting danger.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool supports professional development to enhance skills and to keep abreast of new, research-based educational and therapeutic methodologies. Given the national pandemic, Building Blocks will redirect some of these resources and instruct staff development and quality assurance personnel to include COVID related topics designed to maintain a positive school environment and help staff and students to develop coping skills during and after the public health emergency.

All service providers hold a valid certification/license appropriate to their discipline. Validity of licenses and certifications is monitored by the assistant to the Executive Director, as is current school procedure. It is anticipated that Building Blocks will need to reassign some personnel to meet the operational demands during the COVID emergency especially during child drop off and pick up times.

Staffing during the COVID emergency has been reviewed through department meetings and email surveys. Building Blocks will undertake vigorous recruitment efforts to appropriately implement IEPs and maintain required staffing ratios. Given that enrollment is not at capacity, if need be, personnel can be reassigned where needed.

Budget and fiscal implications are noteworthy in light of the current public health emergency. Our current accounting records and procedures allow for the tracking of COVID-19 related expenses. COVID related expenses are significant and as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, meeting those costs will be challenging. While there are no additional revenue sources available, Building Blocks will, to the extent necessary, access our line of credit and other available borrowings as the need to expand for COVID-19 related amounts occur. As tuition reimbursement may be insufficient to meet the additional costs of providing services during the COVID-19 emergency, we are reviewing every expense line of the budget to see where we might be able to generate savings to offset the permanent impact of insufficient tuition reimbursement. As noted, we will consider all available financing options.

Further impacting the fiscal implications is the difficulty in maintaining high levels of enrollment. Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will continue to provide a quality special education to ensure the confidence of school districts throughout Suffolk and Nassau Counties to refer their preschool children with special needs to this program. Building Blocks will continue to work closely with our surrounding communities committing to provide the highest quality education in the safest possible environment to encourage their participation in our programs.

#### **D. MOVEMENT AND COMMERCE**

##### ***Student Arrival and Dismissal***

Entry into the building by staff, parents and visitors will be significantly limited and will require additional protocols pursuant to COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

**Parents and Children:**

Parents will no longer be allowed to enter the building to observe classes or therapy sessions.

**Child Drop Off** – Only one parent or guardian will be allowed to accompany the child into school. Parent and child will enter the building through the front Main Entrance and show the current year's issued security pass to the Front Door Security personnel. The parent and child will proceed down the front hallway in a west to east direction towards the Gymnasium doors. Parents will follow clearly marked social distancing floor decals to maintain 6 ft. between other parents and children. Building Blocks staff will greet each child at the gym door and take the child's temperature. The parent (wearing a face covering) will maintain a social distance from the staff member as the child's temperature is taken). The staff member will be wearing appropriate PPE including face covering and face shield. A staff member will ask the parent to respond to the posted health assessment questions. If the response to the health assessment questions are affirmative or if the child's temperature registers >100 degrees F the child will not be allowed to attend school and the parent and the child will continue walking west to east exiting the school through the side door.

If the child passes the health assessment a teacher assistant will escort the child to their classroom door. Children will walk through the hallways holding the assistant's hand when necessary given the age and developmental ability of the child. When developmentally appropriate and not considered to be an elopement risk children will be encouraged to walk with outstretched arms to maintain some social distancing from other children in transit.

**Child Pick-Up** – Children to be picked up from school will be brought to the gym in staggered times and remain as an assigned "cohort circle". Cohort circles are appropriately socially distanced throughout the gym. A teacher will supervise these groups of children as they wait to be picked up.

Parents picking up their children from school must enter the building through the front main entrance and show the required ID or security pass to the front hall security personnel. Only one parent or guardian may pick up their child. The parent or guardian will walk down the front hallway from west to east and stop at the gymnasium door. A teacher assistant will bring the child to the parent and the parent will continue walking west to east with the child to the exit door. Children will be encouraged not to dawdle in the hallway as they exit. Parents will be encouraged to maintain proper social distancing when exiting. If school personnel do not readily know the person picking up the child, the child will remain with their group in the gym and the person picking up will be directed to the main office. This person will complete the health screening. If they pass the health screening previously established protocols will be followed to ensure safe release of the child. If the person does not pass the health screening they must leave the building and the child's parent will be called to pick up.

**Children Arriving and Leaving Via County Provided Bus Transportation:**

(PLEASE NOTE: bus transportation is provided by contract with the Suffolk or Nassau County Department of Health and is not under the jurisdiction of Building Blocks Developmental Preschool)

For children being transported via bus teacher aides will escort them off the bus and bring them to the bus each day. Aides will only take two children at a time from the bus – one child



on each side holding the aides' hand. These children will enter the school via the doorway in the Sesame Street Hallway. Each child's temperature will be taken at the classroom door. If they pass the daily health screening they can enter the classroom. If they have a temperature >100 degrees F or are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms the child will be escorted to the nurses' office. Once the child has entered the classroom he or she will be directed to wash their hands. It is understood that arrival and dismissal will take longer than previously.

Students who do not pass the health screening will wait in a separate room dedicated to keeping high-risk persons away from the general population.

### ***Faculty/Staff Entrances and Exits***

All staff members will continue to use school distributed security swipe cards to enter the building. All entry to the building for staff will be through the back hallway doors. All personnel must pass a daily health screening including temperature check and questionnaire (reference: [INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY](#)). If there is a line waiting to have temperature taken staff must follow clearly designated floor marking to maintain appropriate social distancing requirements. The following questions must be answered daily:

1. Have you or anyone in your household tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
2. Have you or anyone in your household experienced symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? (symptoms include but are not limited to: cough, fever, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting, diarrhea)
3. Have you or anyone in your household been told by a healthcare provider or by the DOH to remain home due to COVID-19 exposure?
4. Have you been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
5. Are you required to quarantine based on NYS COVID-19 Travel Advisory 14 days or have you traveled internationally within the past 14 days?

Staff registering temperatures of >100 degrees F will not be allowed to remain at school. An affirmative response to any of the above questions will necessitate meeting with the nurse to determine if the staff member must be sent home.

Those who pass the daily health assessment will be issued a sticker with the color of the day. Throughout the day, supervisors and administrative staff will perform random checks to make sure personnel in attendance have passed the health screening.

It is strongly advised that all staff conduct the above health screening prior to leaving their home.

All visitors must enter the building through the front door and sign in at security. All visitors will immediately have their temperature checked and will be required to pass a health assessment including the temperature check and questionnaire. If a person does not pass the health screening they will not be allowed to enter the school.

### ***Shared Objects***

There is one closet per classroom for the staff to store personal belongings. Specific cohorts only will use these designated closets (i.e. that specific classroom's staff). Other staff members will keep items locked in their desk drawers or on hooks within their own offices.

Each classroom has its own computer and will be used by that cohort only. Staff is encouraged to use that room's specific computer. If that is not possible, the computer room will be limited to three staff members at a time. Use of other equipment such as the laminating machine is also limited to one person at a time. In all these instances staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer both before and after use. Contact surfaces such as buttons and handles must also be wiped before and after each use.

Item sharing by children, described in detail above, is summarized here. Each child will have a dedicated supply box containing crayons, markers, scissors, playdough, and any other material or supply deemed necessary by that child's classroom teacher. If a child receives therapy, the assigned therapist will either add necessary supplies to a child's box or will create their own child-dedicated therapy box. Play areas, such as the kitchen corner and block building, will only be used by a designated cohort. All cloth or plush toys such as stuffed animals, dolls, dress-up outfits, puppets, etc. will be removed from classrooms

### ***Deliveries***

All deliveries come through the custodian's office. If a delivery person must enter the school they must wear a mask and complete the health screening.

## **II. PLACES**

### **A. PERSONAL AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Acceptable face covering include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and surgical masks that cover both the nose and the mouth. Face coverings that are transparent at the mouth may also be worn during instruction that might require the visualization of the mouth, lips and teeth. Face shields worn alone are not sufficient coverings for adequate protection.

As per OSHA guidelines, the nurses and anyone else requiring a higher degree of protection will be required to wear respirator N-95 masks or other PPE considered adequate under current industry guidelines.

Pursuant to Executive Order 202.16 staff members are encouraged to wear their own face coverings as long as the face covering meets current stated guidelines. Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will have PPE equipment available for all staff members at no cost should it be needed. PPE (personal protective equipment) available includes barriers and dividers, face shields, masks, (N95 Masks will be available for the nurses), gloves, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, disposable robes, etc.

As noted previously, face coverings must be worn by adults at all times in the building except when adequate social distancing can be maintained or when in your own private office. It is important to note that face coverings **MUST** always be worn when moving through the hallways, entering or exiting a classroom and when picking up and dismissing children.

Children attending school at Building Blocks are not required to wear masks per guidance provided by the Office of Children & Family Services. If a parent requests that their child wear a face mask, Building Blocks personnel will support that request and work with the family and child to achieve this goal.

School nurses and/or the nurse practitioner will train staff on the proper method of cleaning and/or disposing of PPE.

## **B. HYGIENE, CLEANING AND DISINFECTION (Health & Safety)**

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool leases its facility from the Commack School District and, as such, they employ the custodial staff. Per our contract with Commack School District, Building Blocks Developmental Preschool has two full time custodial staff members. Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will expand the current duties of the Safety Officer to include increased monitoring of disinfecting and cleaning of the school's facility. An additional staff member will be assigned if needed to help in this task.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will work closely with any personnel at high risk or living with persons at high risk requiring special accommodations. Accommodations that can be made include but are not limited to additional desk barriers; ability to work remotely if job responsibilities allow; and reconfiguring job responsibilities.

For children who are at high risk, meetings with medical personnel, school nurses, administrative staff, child's Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE), parents, teachers, therapists will be conducted to determine how and if Building Blocks can accommodate the child's specific special need. If need be, an alternate program with the ability to accommodate the particular need will be chosen by the CPSE.

Staff will be allowed to take "mask breaks" whenever necessary as long as their supervisory function is covered.

Since Building Blocks derives its licensing authority from NYS OCFS, children in this age group are not required to wear masks. However, if a parent requests that their child does wear a mask children will be allowed to take mask breaks whenever needed. For children who struggle with communication skills, scheduled breaks will be offered and or provided by the child's treatment team.

Hand Sanitizers are available through the hallways in the school building. The custodial staff will check them routinely to ensure that they are full and operational.

Each classroom has its own sink and will continue to have an adequate supply of soap and paper towels

### ***Training***

The school nurses and the nurse practitioner will provide specific training to all school personnel regarding proper hygiene including hand washing, use of sanitizers, maintaining and cleaning of and disposal of PPE.

Staff members will be trained on specific training days prior to school opening and subsequently thereafter. Training will be conducted by qualified personnel on health and hygiene, how to deter the spread of communicable diseases, the use of PPE, repurposed building spaces, and protocols for coming to work. Points to be noted include - Stay home if you feel sick; Cover nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering; Properly store and,

when necessary, discard PPE; Adhere to social distancing instructions; Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19 to the school nurse; Follow hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection guidelines; Follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

School staff will also be trained on the symptoms of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) associated with COVID-19 which is a condition associated with COVID-19 in children and youth. As is current procedure, the school nurse will notify the parent/guardian if their child shows any of the symptoms and recommend the child be referred for immediate follow up with a healthcare provider.

Through our Parent Orientation Program the school nurses will instruct parents on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and other childhood illnesses. This year Parent Orientation will be virtual and will include live zoom meeting with the classroom teacher and parents of children in the class, as well as a variety of video presentations including a presentation by the school nurse to address symptoms of and screenings for COVID; actions to be taken by parents; description of Building Blocks' guidelines for attending school and when a child is too sick for school. Parents will also receive a welcome packet mailed to all families prior to the start of school including this information. Also, policies for "when a child is too sick for school" are included in a letter to parents that is typically sent out twice a school year. Given the national health emergency this letter will be distributed to parents quarterly.

The nurses, in conjunction with the Clinical Coordinator and Educational Coordinator will inventory PPE on a weekly basis to ensure sufficient supplies.

### ***Cleaning & Disinfecting***

The cleaning & disinfecting of the school building is the responsibility of the custodial staff (cleaning protocols are described below). However, the general staff has access to disinfectant wipes, soap & paper towels, cleaning disinfectant spray, hand sanitizing stations, soap & water and touch-free water bottle refilling stations. The staff is encouraged to use disinfectant wipes on all high touch surfaces within their classrooms, such as doorknobs & keyboards.

According to current policy, tabletop surfaces must be washed after each activity and before and after snack/lunch times. The staff will have access to hospital grade disinfectant that has been approved for use in a school setting. Surfaces will be cleaned frequently and staff will be instructed to wash their hands often.

All water fountains have been reconfigured to be water bottle refilling stations.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool's building is maintained by Commack School District's custodial staff. Commack School District provides their staff with any required PPE necessitated by the cleaning agent being used. Restrooms and high-touch surfaces such as door knobs will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Bathrooms and classrooms will be thoroughly disinfected nightly.

The disinfectant products used are Diversey Oxivir, Diversey Virex, Diversey Alpha HP and they will be applied according to the manufacturer's instructions.

As noted above, teachers and office staff are encouraged to open windows and doors to increase ventilation whenever possible while maintaining the safety of the children. Given the young age of our student population and the need for security, exterior doors are never to be maintained in an open position.

Where possible, filtration will be upgraded to MERV 13; ventilation will be closely monitored during the school year and will be immediately repaired as needed.

### ***Cleaning & Disinfecting Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case***

When confronted with someone who is confirmed positive for COVID-19 the school will follow guidance provided by Suffolk County Department of Health and Office of Children and Family Services and may include closing of the school to allow for additional cleaning and disinfecting of all exposed areas.

If a person (adult or child) has a suspected case of COVID-19 Building Blocks will, likewise, follow the guidance provided by the above regulatory agencies and may include the closing of a particular classroom or the school for additional cleaning and disinfecting of exposed areas. Once areas have been cleaned and disinfected they can be opened for use.

Whenever possible, staff will be encouraged to keep windows open to increase air circulation.

The current safety coordinator is the school's Educational Coordinator, Debbie Rauseo. Her contact information is [draiseo@bbdps.com](mailto:draiseo@bbdps.com) or call 631 499-1237. Together with the custodial staff, she conducts a weekly building safety check. Given the additional safety measures instituted as a result of the public health emergency, additional staff will be assigned to this task if needed.

## **C. COORDINATION AND PHASED REOPENING**

Building Blocks has designated the Assistant Director to monitor compliance with this reopening plan under the supervision of the Executive Director and with the support of the school's Board of Directors. Assisting in this task will be the school's Coordinators and Lead Teacher and Lead Therapists. They can be reached at [dcharbonneau@bbdps.com](mailto:dcharbonneau@bbdps.com) or [daversano@bbdps.com](mailto:daversano@bbdps.com), respectively, or at 631 499-1237. Having been primary developers of this reopening plan they are familiar with and vested in its success. All school personnel are directed to contact them should there be any questions or concerns regarding this plan.

## **D. COMMUNICATION PLAN**

The Executive Director will affirm the understanding of the State-issued industry guidelines and will submit reopening plans as instructed prior to the July 31<sup>st</sup> deadline and after receiving BBDPS' School Board approval.

Protocols related to COVID-19 re-opening will be posted on the school's web site and will be disseminated to all families.

Additionally, an email will be sent to all families of children attending school in September describing the expectations of the parents, the children and the staff during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Prior to school starting, parents will receive an initial packet of information and forms required before their child can enter school. Forms related to COVID-19 include: an updated medical, an emergency contact request including at least three contacts, parental consent for distance learning, parent consent for use of e-mail as a form of communication and a COVID-related health screening.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool's Executive Director will send this plan, once submitted to NYSED, to the following additional stakeholders: all school district Committees on Preschool Special Education chairpersons that have approved children for our program; and to Suffolk and Nassau County Department of Health Bureau Chiefs of the Division of Students with Disabilities.

Communication will be maintained with staff via email, phone and small in-person meetings that respect social distancing protocols. Staff will be initially trained prior to the start of in-person education and ongoing as procedures are updated.

Parents will receive our PARENT Handbook that is updated to include new procedures put in place as a result of the COVID-19 health emergency. Parents and guardians will be required to return a signed attestation indicating that they understand all procedures and agree to follow all protocols.

Teachers and therapists will maintain Google classrooms to allow for contactless communication and transfer of materials between providers and families. (If a family is unable to access the Internet an alternative contactless drop-off or pick up of materials and supplies will be arranged) and daily communication will be through a communication notebook. (Building Blocks Developmental Preschool has successfully used this method of daily communication previously with our preschool population.)

A daily communication through the Google classroom will keep parents abreast of new information. Teachers are required to call parents at least once a month and more frequently if needed.

Therapists also maintain Google classrooms and can provide contactless communication with parents. Telephonic communication is also available and encouraged.

A daily log is completed for anyone visiting the building. The log includes specific information regarding whom the visitor is there to see. In addition to the required COVID prevention questions and temperature check, all visitors will be given contact information for the clinical coordinator and will be instructed to call the clinical coordinator if they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 in the subsequent 2 weeks. Conversely, if a person the visitor was in to see tests positive or shows symptoms of COVID-19 within two weeks of the visit, the clinical coordinator will contact the visitor. The current Clinical Coordinator is Mary Rousseau and she can be reached at [mrousseau@bbdps.com](mailto:mrousseau@bbdps.com) or by calling (631) 499-1237.

All staff, parents and visitors will be instructed through signage, video training, e-mail, etc. that they must follow all CDC and DOH guidelines regarding the use of PPE, especially face coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained. Specific training will be provided to staff prior to the school opening.

Children will be instructed in proper hand washing protocols and supervised during these activities. Instruction will also be provided to staff and children on social distancing for preschoolers. Visual cues such as floor stickers and tape will help children to follow social distancing guidelines. Pictorial stories and lists are used for all children and are posted at hand washing stations and in classrooms. Protocols for proper hygiene, such as "coughing in your elbow", will be encouraged and explained through children's books and games. Picture Exchange Communication (PECs) program and visual and auditory social stories will be implemented for our more challenged children.

The Executive Director of Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will be the designated coordinator and main contact for information upon the identification of a positive COVID-19 case. All subsequent communication will be through this designee including answering questions from staff, faculty, parents or legal guardians regarding a COVID-19 public health emergency and plans implemented by the school. The designee will also work closely with the local Department of Health and school district stakeholders. The Executive Director at Building Blocks Developmental Preschool is Donna Charbonneau. She can be reached at [dcharbonneau@bbdps.com](mailto:dcharbonneau@bbdps.com) or by phone at (631) 499-1237.

Through meetings and research the following participants have contributed to the development of this reopening plan:

Executive Director  
Assistant Executive Director  
Clinical Coordinator  
Educational Coordinator  
Office Manager  
Teachers and Therapists  
Safety Personnel  
Security Personnel  
School Nurses  
School Psychologists  
Parent Survey  
Commack School District – Building and Grounds Supervisor  
Building Blocks Custodial Staff

As we move into our reopening, Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will also involve the current years' Parents' Organization to fortify our plans and better meet the needs of the school community. Building Blocks Developmental Preschool accepts children into our special education program from Suffolk and Nassau County. As such, we will work closely with each school district assigning children to our program to maintain a healthy and secure environment.

### **III. PROCESSES**

#### **A. SCREENING AND TESTING**

##### ***Health Screening and Temperature Checks***

All staff, students and visitors will have temperatures taken daily and be required to pass a health screening. Ideally, staff should take their own temperature at home prior to coming to school. If anyone presents with a temperature greater than 100 degrees F, the individual will be denied entry into the building, brought to a designated area waiting to be picked up or otherwise sent home.

Staff will be required to answer specific questions designed to deter the spread of COVID-19 before signing in each day. Parents/guardians of children will be sent a health questionnaire prior to the start of school. Parents/guardians who drive their children to

school will be asked daily if the results of that screening have changed. Parents or guardians of children who are transported by County bus will be required to agree to conduct daily health screenings before their child boards the county bus. If the answer to any of the health check questions is yes or if the child has a temperature of >100 degrees F, the child must stay home from school and the parent should contact the school nurse.

### ***Positive Screen Protocols***

Anyone, staff or student, who presents with any symptoms related to COVID-19 or has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 as determined through the health screening will be sent home immediately and instructed to contact their health care provider for further assessment.

Staff members will be instructed to notify the school nurses if they develop any symptoms related to COVID-19 during the workday.

Children/students who develop symptoms during the school day will be assessed by the school nurse and situated in a separate area until the child can be picked up. Since the person picking up the child may have had close proximal contact with the child he/she will not be allowed into the building but rather the child will be brought to the person outside the school building. Information regarding healthcare and testing sites will be provided.

If any incident results in a positive test result, the nurse will notify Suffolk or Nassau County Department of Health.

Anyone sent home for a positive COVID-19 screening may not return to school or work without documentation from a healthcare provider evaluation, negative COVID-19 testing and symptom resolution, or if COVID positive, a release from isolation.

If a member of the school community tests positive, the school director, in consultation with the administrative staff, the school nurse, Suffolk County DOH and OCFS will determine the actions necessary to contain possible further exposure. Actions can include partial closing of affected areas or full school closure for disinfection and cleaning.

As noted previously, the contact person for all positive COVID-19 cases is Donna Charbonneau – [dcharbonneau@bbdps.com](mailto:dcharbonneau@bbdps.com); (631) 499-1237.

### ***In-Person Training***

Personnel performing in-person screenings will be trained by the school nurses and will be appropriately protected from exposure to any infectious disease. Screening personnel will be required to wear face covering and shields. Gloves will be available as needed.

## **B. SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICES**

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool always has a school nurse on premises. There is a room dedicated Health Care Office. Additionally, a separate room has been identified within the school to be used when an individual has exhibited COVID-19 symptoms.

PPE requirements for school nurses or persons supervising possible transmission-based patients include medical gowns, gloves, N-95 respirator, if available or face mask and shield.

Any area used by a patient identified as exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be closed and properly cleaned and disinfected prior to being used again.



## **C. TRACING AND TRACKING**

### ***Metrics***

If it has been determined through data collected by the school nurse or the designated contact person that cases of COVID-19 positive individuals are on the rise, whether it be students, families of students or staff members, additional actions to mitigate the spread will be taken. The local Department of Health will be contacted for guidance. Further action could include closing a particular class or the entire school if need be.

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will rely on our local oversight regulatory agencies (Suffolk County Department of Health, Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Department of Education) to track and report COVID-19 daily metrics that serve as early warning signs in our area. Per directive by Governor Cuomo on July 13, 2020 the criteria for school to be open include: “the school must be in a region that is in Phase IV of reopening; and its daily infection rate remains 5% or lower using a 14-day average since unPAUSE was lifted. Schools will close if the regional infection rate rises above 9 percent, using a 7-day average, after August 1”. The local Department of Health and OFCS will guide us should we need to close the school.

### ***Notification***

The local department of health will also be notified of any positive COVID-19 cases reported to Building Blocks Developmental Preschool.

### ***Tracing Support***

Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will support the local health department in tracing and tracking efforts pursuant to the [New York State Contact Tracing | Department of Health](#), as well as isolation and quarantine procedures. In this effort, be assured that Building Blocks Development Preschool will always maintain the confidentiality and privacy of the families we serve in accordance with federal and state law.

### ***Quarantine, Isolation and Return to School***

State and local health departments will monitor COVID-19 infected or exposed persons. Building Blocks Developmental Preschool will notify any persons who have come in “close or proximate contact” with a person with COVID-19. The New York State Department of Health considers a close contact to be someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the person was isolated.

Diagnostic testing will be required for anyone who, after consultation with the school nurse and other medical personnel, it has been determined has symptoms or exposure to COVID-19 possibilities that warrant testing. Testing must be completed before returning to in-person school. All staff and families must notify Building Blocks Developmental Preschool of the results of testing.

If an employee is symptomatic upon arrival at work or becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms while at the workplace, the employee will be sent home immediately and may

return to work upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms OR upon receipt of a negative COVID-19 test result.

If an employee has had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time AND is experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the employee may return to work upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms.

If an employee has had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time AND is not experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the employee may return to work upon completing 14 days of self-quarantine.

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether the employee is symptomatic or asymptomatic, the employee may return to work upon completing at least 10 days of isolation from the onset of symptoms or 10 days of isolation after the first positive test if they remain asymptomatic.

Reference: [Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure.](#)

In the event that a parent/guardian of a child must be isolated because they have tested positive for, or exhibited symptoms of, COVID-19, the parent/guardian must be advised that they cannot enter the site for any reason, including picking up their child. (The parent can have an emergency contact authorized by them pick up the child but it cannot be someone from the same household.) As a close contact, the child must not return to school for 14 days from last time they were in close contact with the person with COVID-19.

If the parent/guardian - who is a member of the same household as the child - is being quarantined as a precautionary measure, without symptoms or a positive test, staff will walk out or drop off the child to the parent/guardian at the boundary of, or outside, the school premises.

If a child has symptoms of COVID-19 or has a positive diagnostic test, the child must isolate and may not attend school until: It has been at least 10 days from symptom onset, with the last three days fever-free (without use of fever-reducing medicine) and an overall reduction in symptoms; If no symptoms, 10 days from the date the child was tested; a negative diagnostic test and documentation of an evaluation by healthcare provider.

If there is a case of COVID-19 within the school community Building Blocks will identify all close contacts. This includes all adults and children in the same static classroom group and cohort as the person with COVID-19 and any other person who has been within 6 feet of the person diagnosed with COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes. All close contacts must stay home for 14 days from the last contact with the individual who has COVID-19.

Please note that it is now Building Blocks Developmental Preschool's health policy that a child must be fever free for two days without the use of fever reducing medications regardless of other symptoms before they can return to school.

#### IV SUBMISSION OF THIS PLAN

The plan reflects Building Blocks Developmental Preschool's commitment to quality education and service to young children and their families encompassing the special needs of all children, with the goal of providing a safe and nurturing environment.

This plan has been developed in accordance with the guidance provided by the following:

[INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY \(NYS DOH – July 13, 2020\)](#)

[Reopening Schools Guidance \(NYSED – July 16, 2020\)](#)

[NY Forward / New York Forward](#) New York Forward Reopening Guidelines

[Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure \(NYS DOH - May 31, 2020\)](#)

[INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR CHILD CARE AND DAY CAMP PROGRAMS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY- June 26, 2020](#)

[Interim Guidance on Executive Orders 202.17 and 202.18 Requiring Face Coverings in Public During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)

This plan will be posted on the Building Blocks website, emailed to all enrolled students, disseminated through Building Blocks' Parents Group and will be available in print if needed.

DA- 7/2020