

CIRCULAR

Date: August 11, 2020

CIRCULAR NUMBER: COVID-19: 2020-122 (CORRECTION)

To: Directors/boards and owner/operators of Nursery Schools and Centres with Nursery School Programs, Early Learning and Child Care Program staff

Subject: Early Learning and Child Care – Nursery School Services

Type: Policy For Internal Reference Only
 Procedure Information Only

Effective Date: Immediately

Topic: Nursery School Services – CORRECTION in bold

During Manitoba's COVID-19 response, early learning and child care services have continued to evolve. As we move into Phase 4 of *Restoring Safe Services: Manitoba's Pandemic and Economic Roadmap for Recovery*, early learning and child care services remain essential for families returning to work, continuing education or looking for employment.

Over the past number of months, nursery schools were asked to re-open to provide temporary child care services as part of the COVID-19 response with expanded full-time operational hours, which could include providing part-time services, to help meet the needs of Manitoba families. Nursery schools that agreed to re-open with expanded services received increased operating grants for the increase in operations.

As part of our continued response to COVID-19, funded nursery schools can re-open **as they usually would in September, and receive their normal operating grants.**

Only nursery school programs that are operating with expanded hours as part of temporary child care services and receiving funding on this basis, are required to remain open over the lunch hour and provide supervision or sessions that are four hours or more in length. Funded nursery schools that choose to re-open under this model will **continue to** have their operating grants adjusted for the increase in service, based on preschool operating grants.

Nursery schools that re-open to provide expanded services should use the Temporary Licensed Child Care search tool at <https://eswchildcare.ca/> to list vacancies and fill spaces.

For help using this tool, refer to Circular: COVID#: 2020-56 online at https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/famcirculars/COVID-19_Circular_2020-56_-_Temporary_Licensed_Child_Care_Search_Tool_with_images_-_Updated.pdf.

As we continue to follow the advice of Manitoba's public health experts, changes to the current guidelines and future plans for child care services are possible at any time based on the situation in our province.

If you have questions about re-opening your nursery school program, please contact your Child Care Coordinator or email cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca.

Topic: Review of Funding for Nursery School Programs

Manitoba is currently reviewing the enhanced nursery school program introduced in 2006, which offers two tiers of nursery school funding in Manitoba, with a portion of nursery schools receiving enhanced operating grants to allow reduced fees, and others that do not.

There is no income test for enhanced nursery school services and no regulated requirements for enhanced programming.

The proposed regulatory changes reflect the Manitoba government's intention to move toward a fair funding model that supports all nursery school programs with equitable operating grants and parent fees.

There are no immediate plans to alter the enhanced nursery school operating grants or parent fees charged by the nursery schools receiving these grants. The proposed regulation can be passed without affecting the current program and, if passed, would provide the province with the legal foundation to make changes to improve the nursery school system for families. If a new funding model is determined, centres will be given advance notice and more information about how this would affect their facility.

Early Learning and Child Care Program