

COVID19 Policies: Staying Safe at School

Health Check:

As required by the Virginia Department of Social Services, families are required to inform the school if they have symptoms of any illness. COVID19 symptoms will require us to report it to the Virginia Health Department to receive next step instructions on possible exclusions or temporary closures.

Children will receive a health check daily before leaving their car. Their temperature will be taken with a touchless thermometer, and they will be excluded with a temperature of over 99.5. The baseline temperature for admittance is specifically without the aid of medication.

Parents will be asked if their child has had a runny nose, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell. If any of these are present, the child will be denied entry until these symptoms have been resolved and/or the child is under a physician's care with adequate documentation to provide proof of care and eligibility to return to school.

Children who show signs of COVID19, or any other illness, while at school will be isolated and parents must pick up from school immediately and/or appoint an emergency contact person to pick the child up if they are not able to do so. Parents must keep the school informed of the progression of the illness and if the symptoms develop into a positive diagnosis of COVID19. The Virginia Department of Health is requiring us to contact them for further instructions on management at the school level.

The same procedures will be applied to the adults in the environment, including health checks and exclusion for symptoms. Our main goal is to keep our school community a safe and healthy place to be.

Drop-off and Pick-up:

Drop Off: We will institute a temporary car-pool drop-off from the parking lot between the hours of 8:15 and 8:45. If you arrive within these times and no one is visible to take your child, please call the school for someone to come and get your child from your car. If you need to drop off between 8:00 and 8:15, please call the school and someone will come up to get your child. You are asked to drive past the entrance, turn around, and pull up to the walkway that leads to the west front door. Someone will be there to take

your child's temperature (using a contactless thermometer) and the parent/guardian will be asked about any potential health symptoms within the child's family and close contacts as discussed in Health Check above. This information will be necessary BEFORE a child will be taken into school.

When all checks are performed and the child is confirmed to be fever free, they will be taken from the back left side of the car, along with their school bag, lunch and snacks, and walked into the school, They will be signed in, asked to wash hands, and moved to their classroom. Please be patient as this process may take some time to coordinate.

Students must arrive by 9:00 as by this point the instructional day has started. If you arrive after 9:00 due to a prearranged absence, please call the school for someone to come upstairs and go through this procedure with you.

Pick-up Part Day: Pick-up for Part-Day before lunch and after lunch students will be 11:15 or 12:30. The process is similar to our full day pick-up procedures below. Please call the office when you arrive in the parking lot for upstairs pick-up arrangements if no one is waiting for you. Please do not come into the school.

Pick-up School Day: Pick-up for school day students is 3:00. Please follow the procedures below listed under full day pick-up below.

Pick-up Full Day: Pick-up for full day students will be from 4:00 – 5:00. Parents will be required to pull up outside the building in the same manner as morning drop-off and stay in their car. Please call the school if you arrive before 4:50 and someone will bring your child to you. Between 4:50 and 5:00 children will be waiting upstairs for a smooth pick-up procedure.

Due to state safety laws, parents will need to get out of their car, put their child into the back seat, and buckle their child into their car seats. In order to avoid either children or adults stepping into oncoming traffic, we ask that you place your child's car seat on the left side of the back seat behind the driver. Staff members are NOT allowed to buckle children in. Please be patient as this process may take some time.

Our intention is to minimize the number of adults that come into the building. If you need to pick up at any other time, such as for a doctor's appointment, please call the office to make arrangements for someone to bring your child to you in the parking lot.

Cubbie Bags/Backpacks/Toys from Home:

Children should bring a bag full of extra clothes on their first day of school. These clothes will stay at school, and we will inform you when additional clothing is needed. In order to minimize exchange of germs, backpacks will not be allowed to come in and out of the building each day.

You will be given a plastic grocery store bag that will go home daily with your child's work, thus avoiding cloth cubbie bags going back and forth. You will also receive a plastic snap folder for classroom work and correspondence between you and the office. Please check the bag and the folder daily. Both of these items are plastic so they can be wiped down in the evening ready to come back the next day.

Please do not bring toys from home as this encourages sharing of toys and germs.

Social Distancing /Masks:

Even though the principles of social distancing are in direct contrast to the Montessori philosophy, our teachers are ready to do what it takes to keep children safe in our environment.

Our main goal with social distancing is to minimize the transfer of bodily fluids from one person to another, as much as possible. Our plan to accomplish this, as recommended by the Department of Social Services, is for each child to bring their own supplies such as crayons and scissors, so no one will share supplies with anyone else. The supply list follows these policies. The children will store their supplies in their cubbies and work at a designated space in the classroom.

All teachers and children are required to wear masks. We know we will have a learning curve with this and will work with the children to be successful. Please start practicing mask wearing at home several weeks before your child starts for a smooth transition when school starts. Please provide several spare masks that will stay at school if a change is needed. Here is a website that might be helpful.

https://schoolmaskpack.com/?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=FBPaidBitly&utm_campaign=SMP-HomePageJun02

Hygiene:

Hand washing will take place multiple times a day, when entering the environment, after toileting, before and after eating snacks and lunch, after playing outside, when leaving to go home, and many times in between. Children will be required to take care of all bodily functions and cleanliness needs, including how to cover their mouth (ideally cough into their sleeve or a tissue) when they cough, how to blow and properly wipe their nose, and wash their hands after, as well as taking care of their bathroom routines and properly washing their hands. Our licensing regulations state that children entering our program be fully potty trained, in underwear, be able to understand their own needs as to when to use the bathroom and be able to wipe independently as best they can. Again, these are things that should be practiced at home starting as soon as possible.

Disinfecting/Cleaning:

Recent studies from the CDC show that the COVID 19 virus does not spread by touched surfaces. However, we continue to clean and sanitized tables, chairs, sinks, and shelves, door handles and light switches daily. The materials the children use in the classroom will be washed with soap and water on a regular basis. Filters on our air purifiers and HVAC system will be changed on a regular basis as well. During appropriate weather, windows can be opened from the top to allow for ventilation.

Testing:

The CDC has determined that testing should be used for contact tracing and case investigation, but not to determine if children are allowed to go to school. Therefore, testing prior to school starting will not be required. Testing related to a COVID exposure is covered in our Policy for Detecting COVID Illness.

Closures/Outbreaks:

If outbreaks occur in our community, we will follow the guidelines of the Fairfax County Health Department. Our understanding, however, is that the school must close for a 14 day quarantine.

Parents should prepare for these occurrences and, to the best of our ability, we will move to an online format in order to continue academic lessons and foster connection

with children and teachers. While we understand this is not the ideal method, until the CDC and the Health Department say otherwise, this “School at Home” format may occasionally need to be used in times of closure.

Please understand that tuition is expected to be paid regardless of whether we are in school or online. We still have all of our financial responsibilities regardless of where we interact with the children.

Lunch/Snacks/Nap:

Children will bring their own lunch, packed in an insulated bag. Uneaten food will be sent home. Please help your child be independent by preparing the lunch items for easy opening. Even three-year-olds need to be able to open all their items by themselves. For example, if your child has difficulty opening a cheese stick wrapper, please take it out of the original plastic wrapping and put it in a baggie. This way, teachers can avoid touching any containers and food.

For drinks, please only send flip top thermos water bottles with water. Children may use the sink to refill throughout the day and we will send them home each day for you to wash. If you forget to bring a thermos of water the children will be offered water from school. However, we urge you to send a bottle each day for children to have with them.

Teachers will not be able to keep special drinks or other food items in the fridge. Please make all preparations for your child to be as independent as possible.

Your child will also bring a snack for mid-morning, and if your child stays all day, they should bring a second snack to be eaten at 2:30. These snacks must be packed completely disposable, so a few crackers in a baggie and a piece of fruit for each snack will work well.

Please prepare the fruit so your child can be as independent as possible. Slice the apples, peel the oranges, cut the grapes, etc. If you label each snack as “snack 1” and “snack 2” this eliminates any confusion for the children.

If your child will be taking a nap, their SMALL blanket must be able to fit into a small box that we will provide. This way the children can manage their own belongings and keep them separate from the others in the nap room. Blankets

will be sent home once a month for washing. We will forgo sleepy toys for now in the interest of not spreading germs.

Updated
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Supply List:

One of the recommendations from the CDC concerning stopping the spread of germs is for each child to have their own supplies to use in the classroom. In order for us to accomplish this, we are asking you to supply the following the first day your child attends school. We will not be able to admit your child without these items. A pencil box or two to keep the small items in is very helpful.

3 writing pencils

1 eraser

1 box 24 colored pencils

1 hand-held pencil sharpener with holder at the bottom

1 box 24 crayons

1 box 10 or 12 markers

1 pair scissors

2 glue sticks

1 water bottle with flip top lid

Your child should come to school with a mask on.

We will need **TWO COMPLETE PAIR** of change of clothes to keep in a bag that stays at school. This includes an extra pair of closed toe shoes! We will probably need to change clothes more often to keep control of bodily fluids. We will let you know when the supply gets low.

8/1/2021