

What to Know & What to Send 7/20/2022

Health Check

As required by the Virginia Department of Education (our licensing agency), families are required to inform the school if they have symptoms of any illness. A positive diagnosis of 3 or more cases of COVID19 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 upon arrival at school. They will be checked for the following signs of illness: 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 isolated and the parent called to pick up their child. Parents must keep the school informed of the progression of the illness and if the symptoms develop into a positive diagnosis of COVID19. The child will be denied entry back into school until these symptoms have been resolved and/or the child is under a physician's care with adequate documentation (either a negative Covid home test and/or other official physician letter) to provide proof of care and eligibility to return to school.

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: Parents will be bringing their children into the building in the mornings. Drop-off time is from 8:00 – 9:00. School starts at 9:00 and all children should be in class by 9:00am. Only park in spaces not designated for UUR staff or handicapped spaces. Please drive slowly and watch for children crossing the parking lot. Come to the right (west) side of the building and up the ramp. Punch in the code to get in the door. Come down the stairs, down the long hallway, and into the foyer to sign your child in at the sign-in desk next to Ms. Cinthia's office. Be sure to look at the bulletin board for important information and sign-ups.

In order to have the least amount of congestion in the hallway, please follow this procedure.

- Pack your child's snack separately from the lunch container for easy access to the snack in their go-home bag.
- Your child should first put their coat and go-home bag on their hook in the Sunshine Room.

- Their snack should then be removed from their go-home bag and put in their cubbie.
- Wash their hands and say goodbye at the classroom door so they can go into their classroom.
- If your child can do these things on their own, please encourage their independence and say goodbye after signing them in and allow them to do the rest.
- This may seem overly specific, but the goal is to have 40+ children enter the classrooms within the space of an hour with the least amount of congestion in the hallway. This routine will help!
- Please remember that class has already begun for many of the children and the teachers so please be respectful of their need for a calm and peaceful classroom. Cinthia is available if you have any questions. You can give her a message to pass along to your child's teacher.

If you arrive between 8:00 and 8:30, all children will go into the Sunrise Room, the larger classroom. If your child is in the Sunset Room, the smaller room, they will transition to that room at 8:30.

Students must arrive by 9:00 as by this point the instructional day has started. Please call the office number to be admitted into the school after 9:00am. We ask that you do not disrupt the classrooms unless you are unable to reach someone on the office phone. This causes the least amount of disruption to the learning process already in place in the classrooms. We appreciate your adherence to arrival before 9am. We would like to keep disruptions to a minimum.

Pick-up: You are asked to drive past the front entrance, turn around, and pull up to the walkway that leads to the west front door. Do not get out of your car and walk up to the school. This causes confusion and presents a safety concern.

Pick-up Part Day: Pick-up for Part-Day after lunch students will be 12:30 PM. 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 PM. 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 4:30 – 5:00. We ask that you try to stay within these stated pick-up times as it is easier for staff to keep track of children leaving at these set times. A sign with your child's name will be issued to you at the beginning of the year for you to hold up to indicate to the staff who you are here to pick up. There are lots of kids and cars so these signs are very helpful to ensure 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.

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.

"Go-Home" Bags/Extra Clothes/Toys from Home

Children should bring a bag of extra clothes/shoes on their first day of school. These clothes will stay at school in the bag, and we will inform you when additional clothing is needed. If you see wet clothing coming home you'll know to send in an extra set of clothing the next day. In order to minimize exchange of germs, backpacks will not be allowed to come in and out of the building each day.

A plastic grocery store bag called the "Go-Home bag" will go home daily with your child's work and other school related items. We will provide a bag for each child to use daily. As it is a plastic, reusable bag we have found this the easiest bag for you to clean out and wipe down weekly at home.

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 unless pre-arranged with the teacher as this encourages sharing of home toys and germs.

Masks

The Department of Education, in its July 14, 2022 update for schools and child care settings, has stated the following: "In general masks are not routinely recommended in these settings, indoors or outdoors, except during isolation for illness. Any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face higher risk from COVID-19, may do so as an option."

Here at Children's House, parents have the choice for optional mask wearing for their children. Currently, there are 3 choices for children at school: 1. Not wear a mask at all, 2. Wear a mask at all times, or 3. Wear a mask just inside or just outside. If you are choosing to have your child wear a mask please start practicing mask wearing at home several weeks before your child starts school

for a smooth transition. Please provide several spare masks that will stay at school if a change is needed. Teachers have the choice of whether or not they will wear a mask.

Bathroom Use/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, such as wiping themselves, 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 dress and undress and to wipe independently as best they can. Again, these are things that should be practiced at home before school starts so your child is comfortable with being independently successful using the bathroom.

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 sanitize 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. UUCR, our landlord, has installed a new, very effective heating and cooling system in the entire building designed to clean and purify the air.

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 unless an active situation within the school and/or outside the school community warrants it.

Testing related to a COVID exposure is covered in our Return to School after Illness Policy.

Outbreaks/Closures

If outbreaks occur in our community, we will follow the guidelines of the Fairfax County Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Education, our licensing agency. We have only had a few incidents of exposure and exclusion in the last 2 years but as restrictions have lifted and masks are optional we are seeing an increase in occurrences. Parents should prepare for these occurrences. For extreme situations where whole school closures may be required for longer than a week, we will move to an online format, to the best of our ability, in order to continue academic lessons and foster connection with children and teachers. While we understand this is not the ideal method, until the Virginia Department of Health says otherwise, this “School at Home” format may occasionally need to be used.

Now that children 6 months and over can be vaccinated we are following the Virginia Department of Health guidance for “Students, Teachers, and Staff in Childcare, K-12 Schools and Day Camp Settings” for exclusion related to quarantining for exposure and isolation for positive testing. Here is the link to the Virginia Department of Health website for this information. The information is also at the end of this document.

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/protect-yourself/isolation-quarantine/>. Scroll down to the section “If you are a student, teacher, or staff in a child care, K-12 School, or day camp setting.”

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 and unopened packages of 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.

VA Licensing states that all items (Lunch and Snack) coming into school must be labeled appropriately. Label each snack container or bag as “Snack 1” and “Snack 2” as this eliminates any confusion for the children. Label lunch bags with the current date each day. We found the best way for parents to do this is to use the same snack containers for morning and afternoon each day. Place a strip of masking tape on the items for the week with M-F dates, circle the correct date each morning, in the evening cross that date out. This is a tried-and-true parent tested method! Please place these snacks separately from the lunch bag so they can be easily accessed and put in their cubbies at drop off.

If your child will be taking a nap, a SMALL blanket must be able to fit into a small plastic shoe box that we will provide. A receiving blanket or other *small* lightweight item for cover is best. 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 each week for washing.

We will forgo sleepy toys for now in the interest of not spreading germs.

Isolation and Quarantine

A flow chart from the Virginia Department of Health is included here. We feel this chart is an easy way to determine what steps need to be taken when COVID is present in your household. We will also attach a PDF to this document.

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2022/01/K-12-COVID-19-Parent-Flowchart.pdf>

The following is a summary of the chart and will be followed by Children’s House.

- **Symptomatic persons** (regardless of vaccination status) should begin isolation at home and undergo testing as recommended by their healthcare providers. The day symptoms began should be counted as day 0.
- **Persons who test positive** (regardless of vaccination status) should isolate themselves at home for at least 5 days. If they are asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving and they have been fever-free for 24 hours, they may return to programming after Day 5, provided:

- If the individual is able to mask, they should do so through Day 10.
- If the individual is unable or unwilling to mask during this time (including children under age 2), VDH recommends a negative test on or after Day 6 in order to return to programming OR the person should remain home through day 10.
- If a student has become sick at school, we will arrange for the student to be picked up, while the student waits in a separate isolation room/area.

● **For exposed but asymptomatic persons** (regardless of vaccination status), quarantine is no longer recommended. These individuals may continue to attend programming as long as they remain asymptomatic. Exposure is defined as being within 6 feet of a person who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, or having direct contact with respiratory secretions from an infected person.

- Masks: Students/staff that attend programming during this time may consider wearing a mask around others indoors until Day 10.
- If a student or staff person in this group has ongoing household exposure to a person with COVID-19, VDH recommends students, families and staff consider more frequent testing.

● **If the school or facility is experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19** that has been difficult to control or is unusual in size or scope, regional and local epidemiologists may apply professional judgment and recommend traditional quarantine and isolation standards be applied until the situation is stabilized.

Returning to School:

- Anyone sent home with COVID-type symptoms or develops COVID-19 at home must consult and follow the recommendation of their pediatrician or physician, and/or the recommendation of the Department of Health, regarding testing for COVID-19.
- If a household member from a child or staff member's family has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the confirmed case must be reported to the CHMS Director. Quarantining for the child is no longer recommended for continuous exposure from family member in the home. However, testing between day 3 and 5 is recommended, with exclusion from school when symptoms develop or testing is positive.
- A negative COVID-19 test and/or physician's note regarding any type of diagnosis (childhood or adult illness or COVID-19) is to be presented before the child or staff member can return to school. The child or staff member must be fever free for 24 hours, without the aid of medications.

Supply List

Please send these items to school with your child the first day of school:

1 box 10 or 12 Crayola markers
1 box 24 Crayola crayons
1 box 24 Crayola colored pencils

1 water bottle with flip top lid

2 extra masks if you have chosen for your child to wear a mask

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 let you know when the supply gets low.