



2022-2023 School Year Covid Policies and Protocols

It's hard to believe that we are entering our third year with Covid. While it's not gone, we know much more about how to navigate and mitigate this virus to keep our school community safe and healthy. As we enter the 2022-2023 school year, we plan to operate as normally as we can while being mindful that Covid is still impacting our community, particularly those with elderly and/or immune-compromised family members. Please read through this document to familiarize yourself with our Covid protocols and procedures.

First off, our preschool will generally follow this guidance from the CDC regarding education settings: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html>

The highlights of these recommendations include:

- If a child or staff member does not feel well, they should stay home from preschool.
- We strongly encourage all of our staff, children and preschool parents to be up-to-date on their Covid-19 vaccinations including whatever boosters are currently recommended.
- Masks will be optional for any child or staff member who wishes to wear one.
- For those exposed to Covid 19, you may continue to attend preschool so long as you are asymptomatic.
- For children who test positive for Covid 19, we are asking families to keep their child home for a full 10 days. While this recommendation is more conservative than what the CDC is recommending (that a child may return on day 5 and wear a mask for 5 additional days), we are mindful that young children, especially for those who have not been wearing a mask regularly, may not wear the mask effectively.
- We will no longer be conducting contact tracing, in accordance with new CDC guidelines. If multiple cases occur in the preschool community, we will notify parents and staff.
- We will no longer do a health screen when you drop off your child, but of course, if your child has a fever or a new cough, they should remain home.
- We will continue to clean our surfaces, toys and high-touch areas daily.
- We will continue to encourage hand-washing and hand-sanitizing.

Here are some additional Q & A:

What mitigation strategies do you have in place to prevent the spread of covid?

First and foremost, the best way to prevent the spread of Covid is for those who don't feel well to stay home. We will rely on our parents and guardians to keep their child home should they exhibit any Covid symptoms or simply don't feel well. In addition, children and staff will wash their hands or use sanitizer upon entry into school, before using the gym, after using the gym, before and after snack, before and after lunch and at dismissal. Children will always wash hands after using the restroom.

What is your mask policy at preschool?

Our preschool has a mask-optional policy for all students and staff. For those families who want their children to wear masks, we will support and encourage mask-wearing for those children. Should our school experience an outbreak and Montgomery County moves into high-transmission, we may recommend that masks be worn by all students and staff.

What happens if a child tests positive for Covid in preschool?

If a child tests positive for Covid, we are asking families to keep their child home for a full 10 days from symptom onset or positive test, whichever comes first. The child must be fever free for at least 24 hours with improved symptoms before returning to school.

What if my child was exposed to Covid?

If your child was exposed to Covid, they do not need to stay out of school unless they are showing symptoms. Parents should test their children at the first sign of any symptoms.

Are you requiring your staff to be vaccinated?

As we move into the 22-23 school year, we are continuing to encourage our staff and vendors to stay up-to-date with their vaccines, but please be aware that we do not check vaccine status during the hiring process.

What happens if one of the teachers tests positive for Covid-19?

If a teacher tests positive for Covid, they will stay out of school for a period of 5 days. So long as they have improved symptoms and are fever-free, they may return on day 5 and wear a mask for 5 additional days. We will get a substitute for the time the teacher is out of school.

What happens if a child develops a fever or other Covid symptoms during the day?

The child will be separated from their class. If we determine that the child must be picked up, the director or a staff member will wait with the child at the outside entrance (weather permitting) while waiting to be picked up by a parent or caregiver.

Please keep in mind that the policies outlined above and below are subject to change, particularly if cases rise dramatically in our preschool or local area. We will continue to monitor Covid trends and CDC and state guidance, and may need to make adjustments to the stated protocols. If we need to modify our protocols, we will ensure we provide timely informational updates to our families.