

Secret Garden Montessori

School Health & Safety Plan for COVID-19

Policy and Procedures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic are reviewed and reevaluated regularly by school leadership and Board of Trustees. SGM will continue to follow all mandates from the state of New Jersey. We remain committed to communicating with families as changes occur.

Updated February 2022

Pre-Screening:

All health forms need to be received on or before the child's first day of school or summer program. All immunizations must be up to date. All required medications must be documented on the school's medication administration form prior to the child's start date.

Attendance will be taken daily. If a child will be absent, we ask parents to inform the school via email (rosalie@secretgardenmontessori.org) or phone and include a reason for the absence, i.e, sickness, vacation, family event, etc. Absence notifications will be forwarded to the classroom teacher.

Children: To protect the health of all of our community and to prevent the spread of infection, parents must report to the school immediately if the child or any person in the child's household has or is suspected to have COVID-19, or has come into close contact with someone who has a confirmed positive case of COVID-19. State and federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, and confidentiality will be protected to the greatest extent possible.

Faculty/staff: All staff will report to the school immediately if they or any person in their household has or is suspected to have COVID-19, or has come into close contact with someone who has a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 or has any of the following symptoms: fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, cough, temperature, loss of smell, loss of taste, myalgia, fatigue, nausea, diarrhea.

Daily Health Screening:

Children: Health screenings for all students will be conducted daily at drop-off each morning. *Children and staff with a fever in excess of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, or exhibiting other symptoms of COVID-19, shall not be allowed to enter the facility, nor will persons that have exposure to persons known to have COVID-19.*

Faculty/staff: A health screening will be completed independently by staff each morning. Any staff with a temperature equal to or higher than 100.4 will be sent home.

Drop off and pick up: Cross-class exposure will be minimized during drop off and pick up times by the use of multiple entry and exit points and a refined transition to the classroom for each group. Details of each program's procedures and arrival and dismissal times will be included with program-specific communication at the beginning of the school year/summer program.

Visitors: Non-essential visits will occur after school hours. Essential visitors shall be scheduled and escorted into the school so that they will not come within six feet of students and non-visit related

employees. All visitors shall be subject to the same screening procedures as children and staff.

Cohorting:

Cohorts are defined as 'classrooms' at our school. Sprouts and Primary classrooms will remain in their own learning environments when the overall attendance at school is over 30. During Summer Program, depending on attendance totals, classes may integrate at different times throughout the day.

Children and teachers will have close contact, but each classroom will function as an independent unit, and be socially distant from other classrooms, administration, and facilities, as much as is possible. Our goal is for children to be comfortable and able to freely move, learn, and interact. Keeping children in smaller cohorts reduces overall risk of transmission.

Masking:

Mask wearing during the school day and in all extended care programs will be optional after March 7, 2022, except during the following circumstances:

- **During periods of elevated community transmission**, when COVID-19 Activity Level Index (CALI) is elevated to scores of high (orange) to very high (Red), all individuals will be required to mask while in school.
- **After returning from isolation or quarantine:** All individuals who are permitted to return to school during days 6-10 of quarantine are required to mask while in school.
- **When illness occurs at school:** All individuals above the age of 2 who become ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in school will wear a mask until they leave the premises.

Hygiene:

All faculty, staff, and children will wash hands thoroughly and properly upon entering the building, and frequently throughout the day, according to what is appropriate for that age group and recommended by the CDC. Teachers are responsible for setting and maintaining these routines.

Certain individual supplies will be provided to children, such as: scissors, pencils, markers, glue, playdough. Students will wash hands before selecting a work and disinfecting of materials will happen as often as possible.

Personal Item Requirements:

Clothing and other student materials will be stored individually in the child's cubby or backpack. All personal belongings will be sent home daily. Linens need to be washed before they return.

Toys from home are not permitted in the school building.

Disinfecting:

SGM staff will implement sanitation procedures throughout the day, disinfecting high volume surfaces such as doorknobs, tables, and bathrooms regularly.

Materials in the classroom will be wiped down after use. High touch areas will be cleaned and disinfected/sanitized regularly and before and after activities such as meals, art projects, etc.

Each classroom has at least one Medify Air Purification unit. The EPA states “when used along with other best practices recommended by CDC and others, filtration can be part of a plan to reduce the potential for airborne transmission of COVID-19 indoors.”

Illness & Isolation:

Children are expected to be in good health when in school. Parents are asked to keep their children at home when showing any signs of illness.

Any child who exhibits signs of illness during the day will immediately be brought to the office for further evaluation and isolation. If a child exhibits a fever or is deemed to be too ill to remain at school, a parent will be called to pick the child up.

Students who are absent due to illness with covid-related symptoms must present a negative COVID-19 test result OR self-quarantine for 10 days without a test, and be symptom-free, before returning to school. Students with a temperature over 100.4°F (38°C) will need to remain fever-free, without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.

Staff who are showing symptoms of illness will also be sent home to monitor for Covid-19 symptoms and will not return to work until cleared. Unvaccinated staff who have a family member who has tested positive for COVID-19 or have themselves come in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, will not come to school until they have completed the appropriate quarantine time according to NJ guidelines and cleared.

The school will immediately notify our county department of health of any suspected or known COVID-19 exposure at the school and will follow guidelines on partial or full closure of programs as required by the state. The community will be informed by email or phone call when an early dismissal or closure is needed. In the event of a facilities closure, depending on length of time, the school will implement an alternative learning program. In this case, tuition will remain the same, with the exception of Before and After Care Costs (when offered).