

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 July 2023

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 is 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.

Daily Health Screening:

To protect the health of our school community and to prevent the spread of infection, families and faculty must immediately report if they or their child(ren) have any of the following symptoms: fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, cough, temperature, loss of smell, loss of taste, myalgia, fatigue, nausea, diarrhea.

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.

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 COVID-19 activity – when the COVID-19 Hospital Admission Level is high **AND there is an outbreak of COVID-19 within the school, all individuals over the age of 2 will be required to mask while in attendance.**
- **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.
- **After a COVID-19 exposure:** exposed individuals should wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days from last exposure, regardless of vaccination status.
- **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 be encouraged to wash hands thoroughly upon entering the building, and throughout the day as needed, according to what is appropriate for that age group and recommended by the CDC. Teachers are responsible for setting and maintaining these routines.

Personal Item Requirements:

Clothing and other student materials will be stored individually in the child's cubby or backpack. 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. High touch areas will be cleaned and disinfected/sanitized regularly and before and after activities such as meals, art projects, etc.

Each classroom is equipped with a Medify Air Purification unit for clean air filtration.

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. 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.

The school will immediately notify our county department of health of any suspected or known COVID-19 exposure or other communicable diseases 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 if an early dismissal or closure is needed. During the school year, 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).

Secret Garden Montessori
COVID Close Contact Policy
2023-24

Quarantine is no longer recommended for people who are exposed to COVID-19. Individuals who are exposed to COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, can continue to attend school as long as they remain asymptomatic. **Individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 are required to wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days after exposure.**

Individuals, regardless of vaccination status, are strongly encouraged to get tested 5 full days after exposure, on day 6 (date of exposure is considered day 0). Secret Garden has tests available for families in this situation. If the test is positive, isolation recommendations must be followed.

Individuals who are exposed and under 2 years of age (therefore unable to mask), will be required to resume daily symptom monitoring at drop off each morning for a period of 10 days after the date of exposure. Mask use will be encouraged in the Sprouts classroom for all individuals (staff and students 2 years of age and older) who care for or come in contact with the exposed child(ren) who are unable to mask.

After an exposure, students/parents and staff should carefully monitor for fever (100.4°F or greater), cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days. If COVID-19 symptoms develop, students/staff should immediately get tested and follow isolation recommendations.

Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period. In certain situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed. Individuals would be considered exposed to someone with COVID-19 from 2 days prior to symptom onset (or positive test date if asymptomatic) to 5 days after onset (not during the case's additional precaution period at day 6-10).



COVID-19 TRAVEL POLICY 2023-24

Secret Garden Montessori recommends that all travelers and residents returning from **domestic travel** to adhere to the following CDC recommendations:

- Get tested for current infection with a viral test if your travel involved situations with greater risk of exposure such as being in crowded places while not wearing a well-fitting mask or respirator.
- Follow additional guidance if you know you were exposed to a person with COVID-19. Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.

Secret Garden Montessori recommends all travelers returning from **international travel** to adhere to the following CDC recommendations:

- Get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after arrival. If travelers test positive, they should self-isolate and follow quarantine guidelines outlined by the Department of Health for individuals who test positive for COVID-19.

Secret Garden Montessori

Virtual Learning Plan

2023-2024

SGM follows all guidelines from the NJ Department of Health for any suspected or known COVID-19 exposure at the school and will implement partial or full closure of programs as required by the state. If there is a need for a physical closure, parents should expect contact from the Head of School announcing either an early dismissal (via email and phone call) or full closure (via email). Closures can last for 1-14 days depending on the most up to date testing/quarantine timeframes. In the event of a facilities closure, depending on length of time, the school will implement an alternative virtual learning program. Please note that the school's operational costs remain the same for both in-person and virtual learning. As such, in the event of a school closure, tuition will remain the same.

Below is an outline of what families can expect when a full closure is implemented:

On a virtual learning day, teachers will host a morning gathering via Zoom. This session will last anywhere between 30-45 minutes depending on student readiness. The morning gathering will include song, story, and a group lesson most relevant to the current work in the classroom at that time of year. Teachers may include work that can be practiced after the virtual session has ended.

In both classrooms, additional small group lessons may be offered after the morning gathering to support the ongoing work in the classroom. As virtual days can be unexpected and often last minute, teachers will provide material packets or supply lists relevant to the classroom curriculum ahead of the virtual meeting so that parents can help their children be prepared to participate.

On virtual learning days, teachers will be fully available to families to answer questions or offer support to children while they remain home.

Because there are many factors that contribute to the organization of virtual learning at SGM, please understand that we will do our best to accommodate in-person learning for individuals who in any given circumstance are not close contacts, fully vaccinated, or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days. Historically, virtual learning continues to prove to be the safest and most consistent way to care for the health of and provide services to all members of the SGM community.