

# Maria Montessori School Pandemic Response Plan

Maria Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its students, staff, and families. We have developed the following Pandemic Response Plan (PRP) for the 2021/2022 school year that will guide our decisions regarding operations on our campus with students and employees, as well as our overall program. *These policies and procedures will be in place when the campus reopens for the 2021/2022 school year, planned for September 7, 2021. Updates and revisions will be added as conditions and regulations change.*

We recognize that through the implementation of the following coordinated efforts, we can reduce, not eliminate, the risk of COVID-19 transmission in our community. We strive to balance our decisions to meet the needs of all our constituents, keep the campus open, and implement mitigation policies and procedures that make the school experience as safe and as “normal” as possible.

**All actions on the part of the school will be undertaken with the well-being of students and staff in mind.**

The School will update this PRP as federal, state, and local guidelines and regulations change. It will also be included as a temporary addendum to the Parent Handbook and Staff Handbook. Until communicated otherwise, the rules and guidance of this PRP supersedes previous policy to the extent that there is any inconsistency between it and the existing Parent or Staff Handbook. Parents and staff will be informed via email of updated versions as they are available. Updated policy documents will also be hosted on the school website: [www.MontessoriSchoolHouse.org](http://www.MontessoriSchoolHouse.org).

If you have any questions regarding current policies or procedures, please contact the school director, Dena Stoneman.

- **Resources and Guiding Entities**

- MMS’s Plan is based on recommendations, guidance, and regulations issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) standards related to COVID-19, Governor Gavin Newsome’s Health Orders as they pertain to schools, the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), and the health orders from the San Diego County Health Department (SDCHD).
- As part of our planning, the School has taken into account the growing and evolving knowledge about COVID-19 in children and adolescents, including the role they may play in transmission of the infection.

- **Implementation**

- To be effective, MMS’s PRP requires the full cooperation of all our community members, and everyone is responsible for implementing and complying with the School’s PRP to mitigate COVID-19 contagion.
- This PRP addresses the health and safety procedures that MMS has implemented and the responsibilities of the School and its community members.

## **Acknowledgement of Risk and Responsibility**

Continual on-campus learning will only be possible with all of us working together to follow health and safety guidelines, on and off-campus.

- Parents and staff will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of risk and responsibility. The school will rigorously adhere to health and safety guidelines determined by national and local health and government authorities. However, attendance at school poses some risk of exposure to COVID 19 due to children being in the same classroom with other children and staff.

Individuals may want to carefully consider this possibility and the potential impact on their household.

- Attendance implies acceptance of the risk. We encourage all to continue to assess the best course of action for you and your family. MMS will not be held liable for contracting illness.
- **We ask all families and staff to recognize their responsibility to other families and the teachers in our school community. To participate in the campus operations, we require that our community members:**
  - follow state and county health orders
  - monitor and report child and family health, watching for all COVID 19 symptoms
  - report all incidents of possible exposure to COVID 19

**Health and Hygiene Practices**

- **Face Coverings**

<b>Face Mask Requirements</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Outdoors	Optional	Optional
Indoors	<p>Required unless eating, drinking, or napping.</p> <p>If eating indoors, 6 feet distance from others to be maintained.</p>	<p>Required regardless of vaccination status.</p> <p><i>Vaccinated staff</i> may be unmasked in areas inaccessible by children (i.e. teacher lounge, storage room, back office) or when alone in the classroom.</p> <p><i>Unvaccinated staff</i> may be unmasked when alone in areas inaccessible by children. If eating indoors, 6 feet distance from others to be maintained.</p>

- Face shields with a drape are permitted for staff when necessary for the student to see the mouth movement (for speech clarity) or when conveying emotion or comfort for the child.
- Parents and staff are required to wear face coverings at all times when doing food service indoors or out.
- Students and Parents will provide their own face coverings.
- CDC guidelines provide general considerations for wearing and maintaining a face covering, including the following:
  - The mouth and nose are fully covered
  - The covering fits snugly against the sides of the face and chin so there are no gaps
  - The face covering can be tied or otherwise secured to prevent slipping
- Medical exemptions to face coverings will be handled on an individual basis.

- **Handwashing**
  - Children:
    - Children will wash hands under supervision before snack, before lunch, after-playtime, and after the use of the bathroom.
    - Supervised use of hand-sanitizer will be allowed as necessary throughout the day, but not as a substitute for handwashing.
  - Staff:
    - Staff will wash or sanitize hands at a minimum before and after eating, following the use of the bathroom, and after contact with any bodily fluids (saliva, tears, etc...)
    - Hand sanitizer will be provided for staff to use as needed.
  - Frequent handwashing is critical in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Everyone is instructed to wash their hands throughout the day for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
  
- **Meals and Snack**
  - School provided snacks will resume for Preschool and Kindergarten children, and those children in the after-school program.
  - Food preparation (an important part of the Montessori curriculum of practical life) will resume, and be executed with the upmost attention to hygiene and safety practices (hand washing, masks, gloves, single use utensils, no “buffet” style service).
  - Care at home should be given to thoroughly cleaning and sanitizing lunch boxes, containers, and water bottles daily.
  
- **Napping (Primary Students)**
  - Children will nap with cots spread the greatest distance possible, situated head to toe.
  - Cots and bedding, or rest cloths, will be stored separately and disinfected weekly.
  - Children on nap cots, or those lying down using a rest cloth, should remove masks.
  
- **Physical Distancing**
  - Children
    - Children will be encouraged to socially distance indoors as is practical.
    - If eating indoors, 6 feet of distance will be maintained.
  - Staff:
    - Staff will maintain social distancing indoors:
      - Keeping 6 feet apart from unvaccinated individuals while eating
      - Being aware of maximum occupancy of smaller common areas (i.e. kitchen, staff restroom, work rooms, inner office).
  
- **Protective Equipment**
  - Use of gloves required while disinfecting surfaces, materials and objects.
  - Use of gloves required while assisting children with urine or bowel accidents.
  - During food handling or service gloves are required.
  
- **Respiratory Etiquette**
  - Everyone should cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose, and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

- Respiratory etiquette signage will be displayed throughout the School.
- **Stable Groups**
  - Children will be grouped in stable groups to the extent practicable to minimize the impact and quarantine group size if there is a COVID positive student or staff member.
  - Groups of children will not be commingled on the playground, lunch area, bathrooms, or during after-care hours.
  - The cohorts include Primary students, Lower Elementary students, Upper Elementary & Secondary students.
- **Water Fountains**
  - Drinking fountain use is available, but discouraged. Personal water bottles should be brought to school, and thoroughly cleaned at home daily.
  - Please label your child's water bottle.
- **Field Trips**
  - Off-campus field trips will be considered individually according to the safety and necessity.
  - Students and staff on field trips will follow the same on-campus guidelines, or those of the location they are visiting, whichever is more stringent.

### **Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Ventilation**

MMS uses CDC-approved, eco-friendly medical-grade disinfectants and has implemented updated cleaning, disinfecting, and ventilation practices.

- Common areas will be disinfected with EPA COVID19 approved products (Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, etc.) twice daily (i.e. adult and child bathrooms, kitchen, door handles, hand rails, etc...)
- Classroom common areas will be disinfected with EPA COVID19 approved products (Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, etc.) daily (tables and chairs, shelf edges, commonly used materials and objects, etc...)
- Classrooms and common areas will be treated nightly with a disinfectant fogger (non-toxic) in order to sanitize materials and soft surfaces.
- If someone within the community contracts COVID-19, contact tracing will be used to identify and notify people who may have been exposed at school, and also to determine the exposed areas and equipment within the building. These areas and equipment will be disinfected per CDC guidelines.
- **Air Flow**
  - The School's HVAC system, coupled with open doors and window, allows for the maximum amount of incoming fresh air, and limited air recirculation. The School will continue to maintain a rigorous filter replacement schedule to support the best air quality.
  - Classroom doors and windows will remain open to maximize air flow and exchange.

- Classrooms without extensive air flow will have Hepa filter air purifier(s) to assist in air exchange.

### **Campus Access – Volunteers and Visitors**

To limit the possible spread of the virus between visiting adults and our students, we will limit parent and visitor access to indoor student learning spaces.

- All parents and visitors must enter through the main courtyard area and wear face coverings at all times.
- Visitors will self-assess and self-attest to being free from any symptoms of illness, and possible exposure to coronavirus.
- Meetings and events will be held outdoors or virtually where possible, or in well ventilated indoor spaces.
- Access to the interior of the school will be largely limited to children and staff. Volunteers and other visitors may be indoors under the following restrictions:
  - Parent volunteers must be fully vaccinated against coronavirus, or have proof of a negative test within 72 hours of entering.
  - School tours will be held by appointment with adults only; those being masked and not interacting with students or materials.
  - Vendors and service providers will be limited to access in areas away from students.
  - Emergency service vendors will be scheduled at non-operational times if possible.
    - If immediate service is required:
      - Children will be removed from the area accessed by the provider
      - A staff member will accompany the service provider at all times
      - Areas and surfaces will be disinfected after completion service if appropriate

### **Student Arrivals and Departures**

- MMS will return to pre-COVID arrival and departure procedures (see Parent Handbook for details) with the following changes:
  - Primary parents will sign children in and out at the podium located in the main courtyard or at the childcare desk in Room 1 during after-care hours.
  - Primary children will be escorted into their classrooms by a staff member.
  - All parents are encouraged to wear masks in support of your student, even though outdoors during arrival/departure, and unvaccinated parents must wear a mask.
  - If child will be picked up or dropped off outside the normal window of time, parent will contact the office by phone upon arrival so the child can be met in the courtyard and escorted to/from the classroom.
- **Student Movement on Campus**
  - Timing of student movement from class to playground, lunch area, outdoor classes, etc... will be arranged such as to minimize student interaction between cohorts.

## Wellness Status

- Staff and Parents (for their students) are asked to assess wellness at home. If there are any symptoms of COVID students and staff must not be on campus. Symptoms include: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.
- Assessment upon arrival and throughout the day monitoring for symptoms such as respiratory, digestive, lethargy, etc... Students and staff with any symptoms of illness will not be permitted to remain on campus.
- Parents are not permitted to give symptom masking medications (i.e. fever reducers, cough medicine, etc...) 24 hours prior to school attendance.
- Parents and staff must report if they or an immediate family member have had direct exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual.

## Sick Policy & Absence Reporting

- ALL STUDENT ABSENCES, FOR ANY REASON, MUST BE REPORTED TO ADMINISTRATION THROUGH KONSTELLA. Private messages should be sent to Absent Report via Konstella prior to the start of the school day. Please state your student's name and reason for the absence. These messages will be held confidential.
- Student absences and clearance to return will be reported to the teachers by the school administration.
- Our sick child policy will be amended as followed:
  - Children will be sent home when a temperature is 99.6 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, or other symptoms of illness.
  - Children with a temperature or other symptoms of coronavirus infection will be isolated from the group until pick up.
  - Parents will be called for pickup within 30 minutes.
  - If a parent is not available within 30 minutes or there is no response from the phone call(s), the emergency contacts on the child's release form will be called for pickup.
- **A person showing signs of illness may return to school after:**
  - Self-isolation for 10 days, and resolving symptoms OR
  - Receiving a negative COVID test, with resolving symptoms and fever free for 24 hours, with proof of negative test sent via private message to Absent Report on Konstella, OR
  - Obtaining a letter from an MD documenting the symptoms as related to an ongoing, chronic condition (i.e. asthma, allergies, etc...).
  - Parents are prohibited from using a fever reducer for an enrolled child within 24 hours of school attendance. Evidence of usage may result in discontinued enrollment.
  - The school reserves the right to send a child home as sick even in the absence of fever.
- MMS has implemented a specific COVID-19 health support policy that promotes staff staying at home when they are sick or displaying symptoms of COVID-19, when household members are

sick or displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or when required by a healthcare provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household.

- Before arriving on campus:
  - Anyone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or knows that they have COVID-19 should isolate at home.
  - Parents should communicate with the School—using the methods listed below—if one of them or a member of their household tests positive for COVID-19, or has had close contact\* with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
  - \*CDC currently defines “close contact” as “someone who was within six feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes (masked or unmasked, indoors or out) starting from 48 hours before illness onset.”
  - Parents should report close contacts, and/or COVID-19 diagnoses via email ([DenaStoneman@aol.com](mailto:DenaStoneman@aol.com)) or school phone (858-270-9350). This information will be held confidential.
  
- **COVID Positive Results, Contact Tracing, and Quarantine**
  - Contact tracing is part of the process of mitigating the spread of infection. MMS has a plan to work with public health officials if a community member tests positive for COVID-19. The School and/or local public health officials will work with the infected person to identify close contacts and will notify community members who may be close contacts. Patient confidentiality will be maintained.
  - The school director will be responsible for communicating COVID positive results to the Health authorities and to possible exposed persons.

<b>Quarantine Requirements</b>	Student	Vaccinated Student	Unvaccinated Staff	Vaccinated Staff
If COVID Positive	Quarantine for minimum of 10 days after symptom onset + symptoms improve + 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medication.	Same as other Students	Quarantine for minimum of 10 days after symptom onset + symptoms improve + 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medication.	Same as Unvaccinated Staff
If known Close Contact to COVID positive individual	Quarantine for 14 days, returning on day 15 after exposure. Test on or after day 5.	Quarantine not required. Test on day 3-5 after exposure.	Quarantine for 14 days, returning on day 15 after exposure. Test on or after day 5.	Quarantine not required. Test on day 3-5 after exposure.

- Anyone who is absent due to a positive COVID-19 test shall not be permitted back in school until at least 10 days after the positive test result, and other symptom improvement. Longer absence may be warranted and required by the school, dependent upon further health authority guidance.
- Any unvaccinated student or unvaccinated staff who is absent due to close contact with a person who has COVID-19 shall not be permitted back in school until 14 days after last exposure. This person should check temperature daily and be observant for any onset of

symptoms. They should also stay away from anyone who is at higher risk for getting sick and get tested.

- In addition to the aforementioned requirements, anyone who is required to be off-campus due to a COVID-19-related concern must consult and receive clearance from the school director before being allowed back on campus.

- **Testing for asymptomatic staff and students**

- Periodic surveillance testing for staff is paused at this time per State Health Department guidance, with the exception of unvaccinated staff doing weekly COVID testing.
- Routine student testing not required at this time; if student has close contact or Covid symptoms testing will be recommended
  - Students will be referred to their health care provider or to no-charge government testing sites.
  - While waiting for results, student should remain out of school, and isolated at home
- School may require testing on an individual basis if warranted.

### Campus Closure Triggers & Plans

- Every effort will be made to maintain on-campus operations. However, certain conditions may require closure of individual classrooms, or the school campus.
- Local Health Department officials will determine extent and length of closures.

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action / Duration</b>	<b>Communication</b>
County Health Dept. or State Mandated County Wide Closures	School campus closes. Education pivots to online platform.	School closure; time determined by authorities.	School wide email communication
COVID 19 Positive Case within a stable group (i.e. Primary, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary/Secondary)	Individual COVID positive Student or Staff excluded, and quarantined, along with close contacts (likely entire cohort).  Education pivots to online platform.	Room closures; 14 days, or as determined by authorities.	School wide email communication
Close contact with a confirmed COVID 19 case (i.e. family member)	Individual COVID exposed Student or Staff (if unvaccinated) quarantined for 14 days.	No closures.	Cohort email communication
COVID 19 symptoms (i.e. fever, runny nose, cough, etc...) in individual student or staff.	Individual COVID symptomatic Student or Staff excluded, and testing recommended. Return following negative test and resolving symptoms OR following 10 day isolation and symptom resolution.	No closures.	n/a

COVID 19 positive cases across multiple cohorts or in >5% of student body (determined to be an “outbreak” by Health Department)	School campus closes.  Education pivots to online platform	School closure; time determined by authorities; likely 14 days.	School wide email communication
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### Operating Hours

- Operating hours 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Before-school childcare offered 7:00-8:00am for Primary, and 7:00-8:15am for Elementary and Secondary
- After-school childcare will be offered until 5:00pm. SLate pick-up fees apply after 5:00 (@\$15 per quarter hour or any fraction of).

### Travel Policy

- We are responsible to one another, and to the health and safety of all of our families. Further, no one wants to be the individual who brings COVID 19 to our classrooms. To that end, we ask that our families and employees abide by this Travel Policy, which aligns with current CDC recommendations for individuals with possible exposure to COVID-19 due to travel.
- We are asking our families to adhere to the following quarantine instructions if child or staff travel:

<b>Travel Quarantine Requirements</b>	Unvaccinated Students & Staff	Vaccinated Students & Staff
Domestic or International Travel by Plane or other Public Transportation with high likelihood of exposure to unvaccinated people	Option 1: If no symptoms, obtain a diagnostic specimen <u>test</u> 5 days after return, complete a total of <u>7-day quarantine</u> after travel, then return to school following a negative test result.  Option 2: If no symptoms, <u>10-day quarantine</u> after travel, then return to school. <u>No testing</u> required.	No quarantine required
Car Travel with low likelihood of exposure to unvaccinated people	No quarantine required	No quarantine required

### Training and Preparedness

This document will serve as the Maria Montessori School Pandemic Response Plan for COVID-19. The School has provided employees with pandemic response training. Additional communications and training will be ongoing as COVID-19 guidelines and requirements change.

Parents will receive communication about the pandemic related procedures via email. The document will be an addendum to the Parent Handbook. Updates will be provided as appropriate.