



"Adaptation to the environment is the first necessity."
-Maria Montessori (London Lectures 1946)

Gateway Montessori COVID Plan 2021-22

Last updated: 1/14/2022

A Note from Ms. Judy Meerschaert, Gateway Head of School

We are committed to our Gateway families and will continue to put your health and safety first. Our COVID Plan is a playbook for parents, teachers, and employees on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community. We want to provide you with the latest developments so that we can remain open, healthy, and prosperous. Everyone plays a role in keeping our kids in school, our teachers safe, and kids active and learning. Thanks for your help and cooperation as we navigate these challenging times.

Gateway COVID-19 Plan to Keep Kids & Employees Safe

<u>SCENARIO</u>	<u>ACTION PLAN</u>
CHILD HAS NO SYMPTOMS AND NO KNOWN EXPOSURE.	N/A
CHILD HAS COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS AND/OR FEVER OF 100.4 OR HIGHER. NO KNOWN EXPOSURE.	24 hour waiting period for low grade fever of 100.4 or higher AND at least 24 hours free of fever without fever reducing medication. For other COVID-related symptoms beyond fever, including symptoms of a respiratory illness or any flu-like symptoms if symptoms develop at home, the child should stay home. Children with two or more symptoms of any kind that develop at school, the parent will be called to pick up their child from school. The child must remain home for at least 10 days after symptoms first appeared, must be 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medication, and other symptoms must improve -OR- The child must receive a negative <u>nasalpharyngeal respiratory swab, PCR test</u> -OR- If the child visits a healthcare provider and another cause is identified for the symptoms, the child may return with a doctor's note once symptoms improve, and they have been 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medication.

FEVER AND/OR COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS DEVELOP AT SCHOOL.	Child will be kept separated from other students and parents will be called to pick child up.
KNOWN EXPOSURE: CHILD LIVES WITH, OR HAD "CLOSE CONTACT" WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-19.	<u>Infants and Toddlers:</u> Remain at home 10 days after last exposure. They must also receive a negative <u>nasalpharyngeal respiratory swab, PCR test</u> (administered at least 7 days after last exposure) and be symptom-free to return to school. <u>Unvaccinated Primary Students who have not had COVID-19 in the last 90 days:</u> Remain at home for 7 days. Get tested on the 5th day and may return to school on the 8th if test is negative is symptom free and is able to properly wear a mask. We will also ask the child to immediately obtain a <u>nasalpharyngeal respiratory swab, PCR test</u> upon being notified of any exposure outside the classroom..
CHILD TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19.	Remain at home for 10 days after symptoms first appeared or from the date of positive test result if no symptoms; may return once 10-day period has passed and child is symptom free without medication.

PLEASE NOTE:

- *We will follow health department guidelines, which may differ from the above based on local conditions and needs. Gateway is in close contact with the Oakland County Health Department and will contact them as cases arise for guidance as needed.*
- Per CDC guidelines, vaccinated teachers/staff will not be required to quarantine following exposure to COVID if they show no symptoms. They should get a PCR test on day five following exposure. If they develop symptoms, they should stay home.
- All children in an **Infant and Toddler** classroom with a confirmed case of COVID must remain home for 10 days. Every student should get tested on day 5-7, unless they have had COVID within the past 90 days.
- All students in a **Primary** classroom with exposure to a case of COVID must remain home for 7 days, get a PCR test on day 5 and if negative and student has no symptoms, they may return on day 8 **and must properly wear a mask.**
- ***Primary students who are fully vaccinated or have had COVID in the past 90 days do not have to quarantine. However, they should monitor for symptoms and get tested on day 5 if vaccinated. Students who have had COVID in the past 90 days are not required to get tested. We may impose a quarantine period on a case-by-case basis if the exposure is within the home and the COVID-positive individual is not able to isolate from others in the home.***
- ***Any Primary student who is unable to properly mask will need to quarantine for the entire 10-day period and test on the 7th day following a known exposure to COVID.***
- *Due to some of the current changes, it may be possible to partially open a Primary classroom for students who are fully vaccinated or have had COVID in the past 90 days. This will be decided depending on teacher and staff availability and the number of students who qualify. It is possible that the classroom may only be open for a half day in these circumstances, and this will be communicated to families and staff in advance. It is not possible to put students in a different classroom. **This scenario only applies to Primary classrooms and for students who can mask properly.***
- Household members or “close contacts” of any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must be tested and remain at home for 10 days since last exposure. In addition to remaining at home for 10 days after last exposure, they must also receive a negative **nasalpharyngeal respiratory swab, PCR test** (administered at least 7 days after last exposure) and be symptom-free to return to school.

- on day 5 To protect the safety of everyone at the school, ***do not send your child to Gateway if you, your family, or anyone else in your household comes in close contact with anyone who tests positive for COVID-19.*** Please inform the Head of School as soon as possible and we will work with you to determine next steps.
- We will not close school for low-grade fevers (less than 100.4), but we will send home children who show 2 or more symptoms consistent with COVID-19 including, but not limited to, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, or new uncontrolled cough. We will also send children home in accordance with our general illness policy. **We ask that if your child is showing any of these symptoms that you keep them home.**
- If you have any doubt at all whether to send your child to school, please keep them home and contact the Head of School!
- According to the CDC, “close contact” means someone who was within **6 feet of an infected person** for a cumulative total of **15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period** starting from **two days before illness onset** (or, for asymptomatic patients, **2 days prior to test specimen collection**) until the time the patient is isolated.

School Closures

We will make every effort to remain open, however, decisions about school and classroom closures based on the information we have available at the time. We will continue to notify families via email and the Brightwheel app immediately after we receive information on any COVID cases.

If there is a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 within Gateway, we may be required to close the entire school for at least 24 hours to ensure deep cleaning, contact with the local health department, and to make decisions regarding any further closures of the school or specific classrooms.

Decisions regarding any school and classroom closures will be made by the Head of School in close consultation with the Board of Directors. This plan will help govern these decisions and ensure consistency in decision making whenever possible. The health and safety of the children and teachers is our top priority, and we will continue to evaluate and assess each situation based on the guidance from the local health department, the state, and the CDC.

Pods

We are making all efforts to organize ourselves into pods (or classrooms) as much as possible to reduce spread and enable teachers and children who are not in infected classrooms to continue their work. To preserve this, we are continuing to make efforts to:

- Avoid co-mingling students across pods
- Avoid co-mingling teachers across pods as much as possible
- Prohibit overlap in common spaces – stairwells, playgrounds, teacher lounges.

While we are attempting to prevent overlap among staff as much as possible, as a practical matter staffing issues may require staff to substitute in another classroom periodically. We will keep track of these movements in the event contact tracing is necessary.

Family Roles & Responsibilities

We must take a collective approach when it comes to mitigating the risks involved with reopening during COVID-19. Each family depends on the cooperation of the others to keep the entire community safe. Therefore, we ask our families to abide by the following practices:

- Please be on the alert for any signs of illness in your child. **It is imperative that you keep your child at home if they are sick, even if you think it is unlikely, they have COVID-19.** We ask parents to err on the side of keeping their children home when considering whether to send their child to school should they show any signs of illness or discomfort.
- Parents are required to conduct a pre-screening each day at home by monitoring for health and signs of sickness and taking their children's temperature every morning. **Parents will be responsible for entering this information via the Brightwheel app on their phone or tablet.**
- As mentioned above, to protect the safety of everyone at the school, ***do not send your child to Gateway if you, your family, or anyone else in your household tests positive for COVID-19 or comes in close contact with anyone who tests positive for COVID-19.*** Please inform the Head of School as soon as possible and we will work with you to determine next steps.
- ***It is now required for all students to get tested to return to school following an extended break for more than one day!***

Child Expectations

Primary children and toddlers ages 2 and up are expected to wear a well fitted face covering indoors at all times except when eating, drinking, or otherwise permitted by the supervising adult(s). Masks will not be required outdoors. Please be sure that your child has an appropriate size mask for their age group and that it fits snugly. We are recommending N95 masks.

Teacher Expectations

- Gateway highly encourages all staff to be vaccinated against COVID. As of September 7, 2021, Gateway will require all staff to provide proof of vaccination or weekly negative COVID PCR test result. If the teacher chooses weekly testing, tests should be conducted on Fridays, so results are available before Monday of the following week. Staff will be required to change their shoes when entering the classroom.
- All staff will always be required to wear masks indoors. Masks will not be required outdoors. The school will provide N95 masks for any staff who wishes to use it.
- Staff who aid with potty training and diaper changes will wear gloves, masks, and practice appropriate hand washing.

Arrivals (7:30-8:30)

- Infants will be dropped off in the infant room as always.
- Jen's toddlers will be dropped off in her classroom at the door that enters her room.
- All other toddler rooms will enter at door from playground and parking lot.
- Primary students are dropped off at the garden door.
- Parents, please physically distance while waiting.
- All children should be signed in via the Brightwheel app!

We ask adults to wear masks at drop off and pick up. Temperatures will be taken upon arrival. **Parents will also be asked to enter accurate wellness information into the Brightwheel app before arrival. Any child or staff with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will be asked to go home (see chart above). Students who have any two symptoms of any kind that may or may not include a fever will also be sent home.**

Drop off and pick up times could get congested. Please plan accordingly! Parents are no longer allowed in the building unless prior arrangements are made with the Head of School.

Children will put their belongings into their cubbies, change their shoes, and wash their hands before entering the classroom.

Dismissal (3:00 p.m.)

- Infants will be dismissed at the classroom door.
- Jen's toddlers will be dismissed at her classroom door.
- All other toddler students will be dismissed via the parking lot/playground door.
- Primary students will be dismissed at the garden door.
- Staff will walk the children to the door. Again, masks must be worn, and adults must physically distance while waiting. There will be times when a line will form. Please be patient.
- Dismissal for half day students is done the same way.
- Parents should sign their child out through the Brightwheel app.
- Parents will not be allowed to come into the school.

AfterCare (3-6 p.m.)

- All students who are signed up for AfterCare will remain in their classrooms in their pods. Children will not be intermingled, including on the playground.
- All equipment and supplies will be cleaned after use.

*Arrivals and Dismissals will be conducted in the same manner for half days and holiday camps.

Mealtimes/Snacks

- Children will wash their hands before eating at snack and lunch.
- Each child will have an assigned seat at the table.
- Children bring their own lunches from home.
- Snacks that are brought for classrooms or individually should come in individually wrapped packages.
- All students should have their own water bottle daily and it should be labeled with their name.
- Children will wash their hands again after eating lunch and snack.
- Tables and chairs will be wiped down at the completion of eating with a bleach and water solution.
- Temperature checks will be done before the children eat lunch.

Naptime

- Toddlers nap in their classrooms.
- Primary students will nap in separate locations still being in their class pods. They will be spread out as much as possible in a head-to-toe position.
- Classroom doors will be closed at all times.

- Parents will bring sheets/blankets from home at the beginning of each week and will take them home at the end of each week to be laundered. Bedding will be kept in a plastic bag labeled with the child's name and stored in their cubby.
- Cots are disinfected each day following naps.
- Infant room cribs and changing tables are cleaned after each individual use.
- Stuffed animals and sleep items are discouraged at this time.
- Students will wash hands following nap.

Recess

- All classes will be scheduled for recess only with their class pod. Classes will not intermingle.
- Masks are not required outdoors.
- Physical distancing will be supported as much as possible.

General

- Students should not bring items from home such as toys or electronics. Keep in mind that these guidelines may change. Gateway will communicate these changes as they develop, and we are notified.
- Gateway has hired a professional cleaning crew who will come in after closing each night, M-F, to clean and sanitize the entire school. Staff will spot clean during the school day.
- Each scenario with this virus can vary and the actions taken could be different in each case. We will always follow the guidelines and instructions given by our licensing consultant as well as the local health department.
- It is our goal to remain open and take all precautions and follow all protocol for the health and safety of our students, staff, and parents. We will close if it were to become necessary for the health and wellbeing of anyone or if mandated by the state.
- At this time, we will only close affected classrooms and other classrooms will remain open.
- **We are unable to give any credits or refunds for classroom or school closures due to COVID as it is out of our control, and we follow all safety protocols. Virtual learning will take place for extended closures.** If the entire school would need to close for any reason, remote learning would begin within 24 hours. (See remote learning document)

I have read and understand the Gateway Montessori COVID-19 Plan for the 2021-22 school year. I understand that all policies will be followed and enforced. I also understand that the policies are subject to change based upon local conditions and needs.

Signature _____

Date _____