KMS Response to COVID for the 2022-2023 School Year

Updated November 14, 2022

The Knoxville Montessori School community has spent the past 2.5 years responding to the ever changing procedures and recommendations for dealing with COVID. Despite the challenges of multiple closures in the 2021-2022 school year, the continued careful planning, implementation, and hard work from the staff, board, families, and children made it possible to continue the learning process in the classroom. We thank all that have been a part of this experience.

As we look forward to the upcoming school year, we celebrate the steps that have been taken in society to protect individuals. While there is still so much to learn about the various COVID variants, we have the rekindling hope of the new norm of our local and school community and look forward to being together more regularly once again. We have all missed our gatherings!

The following information explains the policies and procedures we will be employing for the 2022-2023 school year when responding for COVID with the recognition that these procedures will continue to be monitored and updated as needed throughout the year.

MASKING

- Based on the overall health of the KMS and local community, using the guidance of the CDC's Community Level Chart:
    - During Green (low) and Yellow (medium) levels **masks will be optional** for the school year when inside the building.
    - During Red (high), masks will be required for all students, staff, and visitors.
    - We will update each Friday on how we will proceed with masks for the following week, basing information on the CDC's COVID County Check.
- KMS will honor family and staff wishes to remain masked when indoors.
- Masks will be required for children and staff exposed to or diagnosed with COVID.
- Note – if a child is exhibiting various cold symptoms (runny nose, a "new" cough, etc.) they will be asked to wear a mask. A family will be communicated with if this is the case and will have the option to pick up their child from school.

MONITORING YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

We ask that you monitor your child's health for general wellness every morning before arriving at school. This will help in preventing any illnesses from coming into the school, impacting children and staff in the classrooms.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Regular hand washing and cleaning take place throughout the day at KMS. In addition to nightly cleanings of the school, the classrooms and materials are regularly disinfected and cleaned. Electrostatic Spraying Technology is available as needed and HEPA Air Purifiers are used in all classrooms all day and night. KMS uses disinfecting products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID.

TESTING

If exhibiting the common symptoms of COVID (fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, vomiting, etc.) we recommend testing at home or with a medical provider.

Testing to Return After Extended Breaks:

- KMS will require students and staff to test before returning to school after extended breaks (Summer, Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, and Spring Break)

- Tests should be taken in the evening prior to returning or the morning of.

- All test results are due before dropping off your child at school. A form on Transparent Classroom will be assigned.

TRAVEL

When traveling by public transportation (plane, train, etc.) the following steps should be followed (from CDC Update August 24, 2022)

- Get tested with an at home test if your travel involved situations with greater risk of exposure such as being in crowded places while not wearing a high-quality mask or respirator. If you already had COVID-19 within the past 90 days, see guidelines.

- Monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms.

- Adhere to KMS 10 day masking policy if you know you were exposed to a person with COVID-19.

- Follow all state, tribal, local, and territorial recommendations or requirements after travel.

- If you are going to be around someone who is at higher risk of getting very sick with COVID-19, consider additional precautions.

ILLNESSES AT SCHOOL

If COVID symptoms or other illnesses begin while at school, a child must be sent home as soon as possible to prevent continued exposure to other students and staff. Based on staffing, sick children will be kept separate from the larger classroom or school community.

Admin staff will contact parents to come to school to pick up the child. Arrangements must be made for an ill child to be picked up **no longer than 1 hour from the original notification**.

EXPOSURE

If exposed, the following protocol will be followed:

After being exposed to Covid-19:

- Wear a mask as soon as you find out you were exposed. Start counting from Day 1.

    - Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with Covid-19.
    - Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure.

- Continue precautions 10 Full Days.

- Get tested Day 6 (at least five full days after your last exposure); test even if you don't develop symptoms.

- If you test negative, continue taking precautions through day 10. Wear a high-quality mask when around others at home and indoors in public.

- If you test positive, isolate immediately.

- Snack, lunch, and nap will take place at a social distance of no less than 6-feet from other students.

POSITIVE TEST FOR COVID

If a positive test is received, the following protocol will be followed:

- If you HAD symptoms, day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset, regardless of when you tested positive, day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started.

- If you test positive for COVID-19, stay home for at least 5 days and isolate yourself from others in your home.

- If you had no symptoms, you may end isolation after day 5.

- If you had symptoms and your symptoms are improving, you are 24 hours without fever or fever reducing medication, you may end isolation after day 5. You will need to

wear a well fitting mask K-95/KN-94 for 10 days. Or, if you have access to antigen tests, you should consider using them. With two sequential negative tests 48 hours apart, you may remove your mask sooner than day 10.

- If your symptoms are not improving, continue to isolate until your symptoms are improving.

- KMS uses the CDC to set policy and will defer to the current CDC policy if there are discrepancies.

POTENTIAL NEED FOR SCHEDULE CHANGES

KMS strives to offer as few alterations to daily hours as possible. However, unforeseen circumstances and a shortage of staff due to illness may require the school day to be shortened.

If proper ratios and coverage are not possible for the entire school day (7:30-5:30) the day will be shortened, primarily impacting the hours of After Care. Families will be notified as soon as possible if a shortened day will be needed.