

APPENDIX: COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols

Updated 9/14/2021

SOCIAL DISTANCING AGREEMENT

By sending your child to Namaste Montessori School, you agree to continue to abide by health and safety social distancing guidelines pertaining to COVID-19 until such time as it is no longer deemed necessary by the Tompkins County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control.

All individuals within a student's household/pod, including Namaste students, should always:

- Wear a face mask indoors when in public places or with other individuals outside of their household/pod.
- Wear a face mask outdoors when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Avoid large groups, crowded places, and mass gatherings as much as possible.

Immediately notify the administration of Namaste Montessori School if someone in a student's household/pod has been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 or tests positive for COVID-19

Please contact the administration if you are unsure how these guidelines may apply in your specific situation.

TRAVEL, VISITORS, and GATHERINGS

We are treating travel via public transportation or to popular tourist destinations, as well as close contact with individuals outside of the students' household or pod, as potential exposure to COVID-19, and following the corresponding CDC guidelines*:

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>)

Students may return to Namaste when:

- 10 days have passed since return from travel or last close contact with individuals outside the household/pod, and everyone in the student's household remains symptom-free.
OR
- 7 days have passed since return from travel or last close contact with individuals outside the household/pod, everyone in the student's household remains symptom-free, AND gets a COVID PCR test on day 5 or later and receives a negative result.

The quarantine period can be shortened or eliminated by taking the following steps:

If traveling:

- Only travel by car, avoid crowded places, wear a face mask in all indoor public places and outdoor public spaces where social distancing cannot be maintained, and avoid eating indoors at restaurants.

If seeing people outside your household/pod:

- Everyone that you will have close contact with minimizes exposure for 10 days prior to the visit by only participating in essential activities (school, work, grocery shopping, etc)
OR
- Contact takes place outdoors and masks are worn whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained. Indoor close contact is minimized and masks are worn whenever indoors.
OR
- Everyone in the student's household as well as everyone the student had close contact with gets a COVID PCR test within 48 hours following the gathering and receives negative test results.

Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes in a 24-hour period.

*Exceptions may be made if travel is part of a household member's essential work activity and all possible precautions are taken. Please check with school administration.

FACE MASK POLICY

All adults, and children of primary and elementary age, will wear face masks indoors and outdoors except when eating & drinking, resting & sleeping, or taking a brief mask break.

Face masks must comply with CDC recommendations. Namaste will provide reusable cloth face masks to students and teachers. Students and teachers may choose to wear their own face mask as long as it complies with CDC recommendations. The following types of face masks are acceptable:

- Multi-layer cloth masks without an exhalation valve that fit on the face with no gaps.
- Disposable masks that fit on the face with no gaps.
- Filter masks that meet a standard such as KN95 and fit on the face with no gaps.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>)

DROP OFF

Families will be met outside by one of their classroom teachers who will complete the Daily Health Check (see below). Arrival time for toddler and primary students is between 8:30 and 8:45 am.

Arrival time for elementary students is between 8:15 and 8:30 am.

- Toddler Classroom - in the courtyard outside classroom door
- Chickadee Primary classroom - outside the double doors
- Bluebirds Primary classroom - outside the back door
- Elementary Programs - outside the front door

PICK UP

- Hummingbird Toddler Classroom - dismissal is from the classroom door in the courtyard.
- Chickadee Primary Classroom - dismissal is from the playground through the courtyard. In case of inclement weather, dismissal is from the double doors. After-school dismissal is from the double doors.

- Bluebird Primary Classroom - dismissal is from the playground near the back door. In case of inclement weather, dismissal is from the back porch.
- Cardinal and Loon Elementary Program - dismissal is from the playground near the garden. In case of inclement weather, dismissal is from the front porch.

LUNCH AND SNACKS

Namaste will continue to provide morning and afternoon snack for children. Snack will be prepared and served by a teacher or set up for students to prepare and serve themselves individual portions. Children will eat at individual tables during lunch in the primary and elementary classrooms. Children may share a table in the toddler classroom.

DAILY HEALTH CHECK PROCEDURES

A Daily Health Check will be conducted on every person entering the school building. Staff will conduct the daily health check on themselves.

1. TEMPERATURE CHECK:

- a. Non-contact thermometers will be used; if not available appropriate coverings and sanitizing will occur between each use.
- b. A designated staff member will take the temperature of each person seeking to enter the building.
- c. Any person with a temperature of 99.4 F (axillary) or above will not be permitted to enter.

2. SCREENING QUESTIONS:

Each person will be asked the following questions and any person/household who answers “YES” to ANY question will NOT be permitted to enter and will be referred to school administration for further assessment:

- a. Do you or does any member of your household:
 - i. Have a fever of 99.4 F (axillary) or above now or in the preceding 72 hours?
 - ii. Have a cough or sore throat?
 - iii. Have any difficulty breathing/shortness of breath?
 - iv. Have any congestion or runny nose?
 - v. Have chills or repeated shaking with chills?
 - vi. Have fatigue, muscle or body aches, or headache?
 - vii. Have a skin rash?
 - viii. Have nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea?
 - ix. Have recent loss of taste or smell?
 - x. Have taken any Tylenol, Ibuprofen or another NSAID in the last 24 hours for fever or unexplained muscle pain?
- b. Is your entire household in full compliance with the COVID-19 Exclusion Policy and Social Distancing Agreement?
Including, in the last 10 days:
 - i. Has anyone tested positive for COVID-19?

- ii. Has anyone been tested for COVID-19 due to suspected exposure and is awaiting test results?
- iii. Has anyone traveled, had visitors from outside the household/pod, or been to a gathering where physical distancing and mask wearing were not maintained?

COVID-19 ILLNESS EXCLUSION PROTOCOL

Protecting the health of our families is our highest priority. We will be modifying our illness exclusion policy in the following ways:

If anyone in your household exhibits a possible COVID-19 symptom, please keep all of your family members out of school until a negative COVID-19 PCR test result is received for the individual with symptoms. The following symptoms are associated with COVID-19:

- Fever of 99.4 F (axillary) or above
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills or repeated shaking with chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Newly acquired loss of taste or smell
- Skin rash
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

RETURNING TO SCHOOL FOLLOWING ILLNESS OR FAILING HEALTH SCREENING

Any student who exhibits new symptoms of illness will be asked to stay home until one of the following conditions is met:

- If symptoms lasted fewer than 3 hours and no fever was present, the child can return once they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.
OR
- Child receives a negative COVID-19 test, has been fever-free for 24 hours without use of medication if fever was present, and has significant improvement of symptoms.
OR
- Child has been fever-free for 24 hours without use of medication if fever was present with significant improvement of symptoms AND has a positive diagnosis of another illness/condition AND has a letter from their doctor that it is safe for the child to return to school.
OR

- More than 10 days have passed since onset of symptoms, there is significant improvement in symptoms, and child has been fever-free for 24 hours without use of medication if fever was present.

Household Member with Symptoms:

Your child may return to school once:

- If symptoms lasted fewer than 3 hours and no fever was present, the child can return once the symptomatic household member has been symptom-free for 24 hours.
OR
- The symptomatic household member has received a negative COVID-19 PCR test result.
OR
- The symptomatic household member has a positive diagnosis of another illness/condition from their doctor.
OR
- 10 days have passed since onset of symptoms and household member has been fever-free for 24 hours without use of medication if fever was present

RETURNING TO SCHOOL FOLLOWING COVID-19 EXPOSURE

Your child may not be in school if the child or a member of their household has close contact* with a person known to have COVID-19 or who tests positive for COVID-19 within 2 days following the close contact. We will follow CDC guidelines corresponding to COVID-19 exposure for unvaccinated individuals in order to protect our students and school community.

The child can return to school when one or more of the following conditions have been met:

- 10 days have passed since COVID-19 exposure, and everyone in the student's household remains symptom-free.
OR
- 7 days have passed since COVID-19 exposure, everyone in the student's household remains symptom-free AND gets a COVID PCR test on day 5 or later and receives a negative result.
OR
- If the exposure only affects a household member and not the student, the household member has isolated from the student and received a negative COVID PCR test since the beginning of isolation.

**close contact* is defined as being within 6 feet of or in the same enclosed space as an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Medical professionals and health care workers are not considered to have close contact with COVID-19-positive individuals if the contact occurred while they were wearing appropriate PPE, including a fitted N95 mask.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

COVID-19 EXPOSURE RESPONSE POLICY

If someone who has been at Namaste Montessori School or a member of their household tests positive, we will:

1. Immediately notify Tompkins County Health Department and OCFS.
2. Dismiss all students and most staff for 24-48 hours. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to determine the COVID-19 situation impacting the center.
3. Discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group child care arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend's house, etc.
4. Communicate with staff, parents, and students. Coordinate with local health officials to communicate closure decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.
5. Clean and disinfect thoroughly.
6. Make decisions about extending the school dismissal.

DISCONTINUING HOME ISOLATION FOLLOWING COVID-19 ILLNESS or POSITIVE TEST

The following information is provided by the CDC regarding people who have or think they have COVID-19. Additional guidance should be obtained from the Tompkins County Health Department. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html#isolation>)

Persons who think or know they had COVID-19, and had mild to moderate symptoms:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving*

**Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation*

Persons who tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms:

- 10 days have passed since the positive viral test for COVID-19 and no symptoms have developed.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for "I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms."

Note that these recommendations **do not** apply to persons with severe COVID-19 or with severely weakened immune systems (immunocompromised).