

Princeton Montessori School

2022-23 School Health & Safety Plan

Our Campus Health and Safety Guidestar: The safety, health, and best interests of our students, faculty, staff, and families will lead how and where we learn and operate. Our belief in our mission and our fifty years of experience and expertise will ensure the quality and high standards of our student learning experiences, design, parent supports, and professional development of our faculty, staff, and adult learners, so that we can continue our mission.

We are using the NJ DOH and CDC guidelines as our touchstone and will consistently monitor the status of the pandemic and continue to update this Health & Safety plan as needed based on these guidelines. Our policies are dynamic and seek to ensure maximum risk reduction through multiple mitigation efforts and should be seen holistically. Our strategies to reduce risk of transmission of the Covid-19 virus include the following nine strategies:

1) screening 2) vaccination 3) social distancing & cohorting 4) masking 5) hygiene 6) disinfection 7) illness & isolation, and 8) testing

These layered prevention strategies, described below, not only protect against COVID-19 spread but can also help prevent the spread of other infectious diseases, such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and norovirus, thus supporting a healthy learning environment for all.

For the start of the 2022-23 school year, NJ DOH recommends that schools transition away from a case-investigation response model to a routine disease control model, similar to how flu outbreaks have been treated in past years. This model focuses more on the response to clusters of cases in a classroom and less on individual case investigation and contact tracing. Our plan outlined below follows this recommendation.

1) screening	<p>Assess your child for covid-related symptoms at home each morning. Keep your child at home if they are unwell. Families should conduct a self-screen at home each morning to assess their child’s health and determine if they are well enough to attend school for the day.</p> <p>Children with the following COVID-19 compatible symptoms should be kept at home and seek advice from their pediatrician:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measured above 100.4), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose;</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">OR at least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder.</p> <p>If a child will be absent, we ask parents to inform the school by emailing their child’s name to absences@princetonmontessori.org and including a reason for the absence, i.e, sickness, vacation, family event, etc. Absence notifications will be forwarded to the correct child’s conference teacher.</p> <p>Students with a temperature reading of over 100.4°F (38°C) will be sent home from school and will need to remain home and be fever-free, without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.</p>
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2) vaccination	We strongly encourage all individuals to remain up to date with their covid vaccinations. Vaccinations, including booster doses, remain the most critical strategy to prevent severe illness, protect students and staff, and reduce interruptions in learning and care. Everyone 6 months and older is eligible for COVID-19 vaccine doses. For our purposes, “up to date” means someone has received all doses in the primary series and all recommended boosters when eligible.
3) social distancing & cohorting	As of August 2022, the NJ DOH no longer recommends social distancing and cohorting in school environments. During periods of HIGH transmission, the school may revert to cohorting by classroom, and minimize interactions between classrooms.
5) masking	<p>Masking is optional. Anyone who chooses to wear a mask or respirator will be supported in their decision to do so, even during low transmissibility. Families should make decisions to mask based on their specific situation (e.g., if they or their family members are immunocompromised or at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19) even when the school does not require masking.</p> <p>Masking is optional both indoors and outdoors, except under the following circumstances, when masks may be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After returning from isolation or quarantine. Students and staff who return to school during days 6-10 of quarantine should be required to mask (If an individual is unable to wear a mask during days 6-10, they should remain at home for the full 10 days) ● When there is positive case in a classroom students, faculty and staff will be required to wear masks for 5 days, although a full 10 days is recommended. ● During illness - Students or staff who become ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in school should wear a mask until they leave the premises. <p><i>During periods of HIGH transmission, all students, faculty, and staff may be required to wear a mask while indoors.</i></p> <p>Children under 2 are not required to wear a mask.</p>
6) hygiene	All faculty, staff, and children will wash hands thoroughly and properly upon entering the building, and frequently throughout the day, according to what is appropriate for that age group. Teachers are responsible for setting and maintaining these routines.

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<p>7) disinfection</p>	<p>Classrooms are disinfected daily and all shared materials will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day.</p> <p>Throughout the school, iWave AdvantageAir Purification Bi-Polar Ionization units are installed in our HVAC units to break down pathogens, allergens, particles, smoke, odors and VOCs in the air, creating a healthy environment without producing any harmful byproducts.</p> <p><i>During periods of HIGH transmission, the school will optimize ventilation, increase outdoor air intake, and improve airflow to reduce the risk of germs and contaminants in the classrooms.</i></p>
<p>8) illness & isolation</p>	<p>Any child who exhibits signs of illness during the day will immediately be brought to the health office for further evaluation and isolation. If the 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. The child will remain in the health office, isolated from other students, until a parent can arrive. Parents are asked to ensure they have someone on their contact list that can be at the school to pick up within 30 minutes.</p> <p>To protect the health of all of our community and to prevent the spread of infection, parents must report to the school immediately if the student tests positive for the COVID-19 virus. The school will notify the classroom when there is a possibility of exposure to a positive case in the school setting. Confidentiality will be protected to the greatest extent possible.</p> <p>For individuals who test positive for COVID 19: Regardless of vaccination status, individuals who test positive, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay home for at least 5 full days after the onset of symptoms or if asymptomatic after the positive test (day of symptoms is day 0; if asymptomatic, day the test was performed is day 0). ● If they have no symptoms or symptoms are resolving after 5 days and they are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours, they can return to school. Masks should be worn for days 6-10. ● Students who are able but unwilling to mask should stay home for the full 10 days and may return to school on day 11 after testing positive. <p>For individuals who are exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID 19: Quarantine is no longer recommended in schools for students who are exposed to COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students who were exposed to COVID-19 can continue to attend school as long as they remain asymptomatic. Individuals who were exposed to COVID-19 are required to wear a well-fitting mask while at school for a minimum of 5 days after exposure.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exposed persons, regardless of vaccination status, are strongly recommended to get tested 5 full days after exposure. If the test is positive, they should follow isolation recommendations. ● Individuals would be considered “exposed to someone with COVID-19” from 2 days prior to symptom onset or positive test date, if asymptomatic. ● 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 classroom may need to be considered exposed. ● For Infant and Toddler classrooms: If a child under 2 years of age (unable to mask) is <u>exposed</u>, families should monitor for symptoms daily. All adults, and children in the classroom over 2 who may have had contact with the exposed child, are required to wear a mask indoors for a minimum of 5 days after exposure, while a full 10 days is recommended.
9) testing	<p>The CDC no longer recommends routine screening testing in schools. Therefore, the school will no longer administer screening testing on a regular basis during periods of low and medium covid activity.</p> <p>Individuals who have been identified as a close contact to a positive case should test 5 days after exposure, or sooner if symptoms develop after exposure.</p> <p>Individuals exhibiting covid-related symptoms should test before returning to school. At home test kits are not approved for use in children under 2 years of age.</p> <p><i>During periods of high covid activity, the school may consider screening testing, depending on the conditions in the local community.</i></p>

Princeton Montessori School follows the CDC community level assessments, posted weekly. NJDOH shares this information at the county level, characterizing community levels as low (green), medium (yellow) and high (orange). The report is posted online on Fridays and sent out via New Jersey Local Information Network and Communications System (NJLINCS) to schools.