



childrenstree.org

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Covid-19 Policies: 2021-22 School Year

September 2021

At The Children's Tree Montessori School, the health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority. For the 2021-2022 school year we are continuing our intensified cleaning and disinfecting protocols. We will continue to increase ventilation by keeping windows open in the classrooms. There are also new air purifiers for each classroom. Shade structures have been installed on the playground and the field to create extra space for lunch, and provide more opportunities to have class outside. There are also more picnic tables and outdoor activities available this year.

Masks

In following the current state mandate, staff and students ages 3 and up, who are not exempt, will continue to wear masks while indoors. Masks are not required while outdoors, eating, sleeping, or for children in the toddler classroom. We ask that parents send children in with a mask on a lanyard so they are able to take mask breaks and not lose their mask in class. Masks should be labeled with the child's name. An extra mask needs to be kept at school with each child's extra clothes. Mask breaks will be planned and scheduled throughout the day. Mask breaks indoors must maximize physical distance between individuals, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible.

1) Protocols for the wearing and removal of masks as guided by the CDC.

- All children over 3 yrs of age who can independently & safely put on, wear and take off their mask, will be encouraged to do so, unless they are eating, singing, resting, outdoors, or receiving one:one instruction.
- Parents will be responsible to teach their children proper mask wearing procedures including how to take off and put on a mask. We ask parents to refer to their healthcare provider to ensure proper mask size and fit.
- Children will only use clean masks provided by their family. Masks must be clearly and prominently labeled with your child's name across the front, in an attempt to prevent mask sharing. Masks will

be sent home to be laundered daily.

- Our staff will not physically place masks on children.
- Parents will send their child to school each morning wearing a clean mask attached to a break-away lanyard. They will also have a spare mask in their belongings in case the one they arrive in becomes soiled.

2) How to address non-compliance by children as they adjust to mask wearing considering gentle reminders and other least restrictive means of supporting compliance.

- The staff at CTMS will gently remind children to wear their mask properly. If children can not wear their mask safely, we will have them take it off and leave it on their lanyard.
- As a Montessori school, a guiding principle is to follow the child. We trust their ability to self regulate. If a child removes their mask, we will take that as an indicator that the mask is causing them distress and will not force them to put the mask back on.
- We will follow the CDC guidance of Feasibility and Adaptations which states that, “younger children (e.g., preschool or early elementary aged) may be unable to wear a mask properly, particularly for an extended period of time. Wearing of masks may be prioritized at times when it is difficult to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others.”
- Children shall not be excluded from the program or isolated from their peers due to the child not wearing a mask.

3) Our program response to parent(s) or guardian(s) who refuse to permit their child to wear a mask.

- We suggest parents refer to their healthcare practitioners, including therapists for guidance about mask use for their child.
- We suggest parents explore resources from the CDC, and from the WHO to help them make an informed decision for their child, family, and the school community.

4) According to the OEC, exceptions to the mask requirement are as follows:

- A child with a documented medical condition, special health care need, or developmental need (such as sensory integration) for whom wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their health or safety is not required to wear a mask.
- A child with a documented disability or special education need for whom wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their needs may be permitted exceptions. In addition, children and staff involved with certain special education and related services activities like speech and language therapy or where lip reading is required may remove a face-covering mask intermittently.
- Children are not required to wear a mask while eating, sleeping or resting. Distance between children must be maximized, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible when

masks are removed.

- Children who are newly enrolled within the past two months and are working toward mask wearing are permitted to remove their mask or face covering.
- Children who have just turned three years old may have up to two months to acclimate to wearing a mask or face covering and support developmental readiness.
- Mask breaks may be planned and scheduled throughout the day. Mask breaks indoors must maximize physical distance between individuals, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible.
- Masks may be removed for outdoor activities.

Drop Off

- Staggered drop is strictly adhered to, as it is based on enrollment and ensures that we have enough staff to ensure safety at drop off time.
 - 8:15-8:30 Elementary and siblings
 - 8:30-8:45 Primary and siblings
 - 8:45-9:00 Toddler only
- Parents pull up to drop off the circle, put the car in park, and sign their child in using the ProcareConnect app, answering 3 questions:
 - In the past 14 days have you come in contact with anyone who is sick and suspected to have Covid-19 or has tested positive for Covid-19?
 - Has your child or anyone in the house had a cough, fever, shortness of breath or sore throat?
 - In the past 14 days, has anyone in your household traveled to a hotspot or on an airplane?
- The teacher will take your child's temperature, unbuckle the child, take the child out of the car and walk up the sidewalk to class.
- If the child is having a hard time separating, the parent can pull forward to a parking place, and either walk the child to the playground and try to walk away, or the parent will hand the child to a teacher/staff member.
- Please form a second line if the cars are starting to go out into the road.

Pick up

- Pickup is 11:45 and 12:45 for half day students, 2:45-3:00 for primary students and siblings, and 3:00-3:15 for elementary, toddler students and siblings, or extended care until 4 or 5. Staggered pick up is strictly adhered to, as it is based on enrollment and ensures that we have enough staff to ensure safety at pickup time.
- Parents will pull up to the pick up circle, place their vehicle in park and sign their child out on the ProcareConnect app.
- A Staff member will walk their child to the car and the parent will buckle them in.
- Please form a second line if the cars are starting to go out into the road.

- Be mindful of the people and children around you, and respect their comfort levels on social distance.

Social Distancing Strategies

- We follow OEC guidance on group size.
- Grouping of children is created based on age, and needs.
- Groupings of children will remain consistent.
- Playground and studio time is staggered to allow for smaller groups.
- During rest time children are spread as far apart as possible and placed head to toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Drop off and pick up times are staggered and valet style, allowing for social distancing.
- Drop In care is not available.

Hand Washing Hygiene

All staff and children will wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds:

1. When they arrive at the school;
2. Before coming in contact with any child;
3. Before and after eating;
4. After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing;
5. After using the restroom;
6. Before handling food;
7. If they look visually dirty;
8. After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated; and
9. After using any shared equipment like toys, computer keyboards, mouse.

If soap and water are not available, use of an alcohol based hand sanitizer is required. Use of alcohol based hand sanitizers should always be supervised by adults.

Respiratory Hygiene

- All staff: cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow;
- Children are encouraged, when appropriate, to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow;
- Soiled tissues are to be disposed of immediately after use;
- Followed by thorough hand washing for 20 seconds.

Intensified Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures

- We will be cleaning and disinfecting according to CDC, OEC and local health policies.
- Surfaces are routinely cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected, as are objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This also includes cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily

cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized daily will be removed from the classroom and can not be used. such as machine washable cloth toys.
- Nap mats will be sent home weekly for washing.

Staff Vaccinations

- We follow the state recommendations and mandates for schools, preK-12 and licensed childcare programs.
- All staff and regularly scheduled volunteers are either vaccinated or will have a weekly Covid-19 test on file.
- We will not disclose staff's personal medical information.

State Guidelines:

[Executive Order No. 13D](#) requires that all staff of all childcare facilities and preK-12 schools statewide must have received at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine by September 27, 2021. Those who do not get vaccinated due to certain exemptions will be required to be tested for Covid-19 on a weekly basis.

If a Child Becomes Ill at School

- The teacher will call the office and the nurse will come and get the child.
- The child will be removed from the classroom and isolated in the back office, which we have designated as our "sick room".
- The child will wait in that room with the nurse until the parent arrives to pick him/her up.
- The classroom will be disinfected after the child leaves and the isolation room will be disinfected after pickup.

When to Stay Home

- If your child has a fever of 99.8 or higher.
- Or, if your child or anyone in the household has fever or chills, headache, any congestion or runny nose, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, muscle or body aches, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell.

Child Returning to School After Illness

- Child must be symptom free for 24 hours without medication, even with a doctor's note.
- We recommend getting Covid-19 testing while ill, especially if your child has a fever.
- A negative test can return to school when symptom free for 24 hours.
- Report a positive Covid-19 test to the school office immediately.

If a Child or Employee Tests Positive for Covid-19 or Exhibits Symptoms and is Suspected to Have Covid-19

- We will close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Teachers/staff will open all outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
- Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning or disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the child/staff who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.

If the suspected child/staff tests positive for Covid-19

- Office and teachers will:
 - Determine the date of symptom onset for the child/staff member.
 - Determine if the child/staff member attended/worked at the program while symptomatic or during the two days before symptoms began.
 - Identify what days the child/staff member attended/worked during that time.
 - Determine who had close contact with the child/staff member at the program during those days (staff and other children).
 - The office will notify families via email or text and staff of the child care program about the exposure.
- The office will report the positive test to the child or staff's town health department, the schools local health department and state health department using this form:
<https://dphsubmissions.ct.gov/Covid/InitiateCovidReport>
- Depending on the size of the class and the number of people affected, closure of a particular room or the entire school will be considered.
- If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.