



# Covid-19 Plan of Action

Updated: August 27, 2021

## **INTRODUCTION**

Maple Hill Preschool is a parent cooperative that originated as a playgroup, which gives us all a unique opportunity to grow and learn together. This makes it even more imperative to cultivate a safe and healthy environment for our students, teachers, and families, while upholding the mission of the preschool and wishes of the collective families.

There are many strategies and recommendations in the slowing and stopping the spread of COVID-19. To be clear we are a license-exempt childcare parent cooperative, that always has a parent in the building. Because of this we are not mandated or included the current set guidelines or mandates, however we the Board review them all, while keeping in mind the mission of the preschool and co-op aspect.

Due to the continued threat of Covid-19, we will be maintaining the revisions made last year regarding ways we operate and the updated health and wellbeing policies in the Parent Handbook.

Please keep in mind that the guidelines and state of the pandemic are ever changing. We will continue to closely monitor the infection rate, recommendations and the feedback from our teachers and parents.

## GENERAL UPDATES

- We will continue like last year not requiring our little learners to wear masks.
  - o It is at the discretion of each family if they would like to send their learner in a mask.
  - o Everyone at the cooperative will provide a supportive environment encouraging proper wear and handwashing when they touch it.
  - o Reasoning for continuation: the reliability of children wearing masks appropriately between the ages of 2-5 is low in this setting.
    - Any physical contact with mask, chewing on mask, not wearing it properly, sharing or playing with mask defeats its purpose and efficacy.
- All adults entering the building regardless of vaccination status **MUST** wear a mask.
- Adults staying in the classroom to volunteer may switch to a face shield or continue to wear their mask.

## SCREENING & MORNING DROP OFF

We will continue our low touch check in process via Brightwheel. There will be mandatory health screening questions at every check in. Failure to complete the check in process may result in you being called to pick up your child.

**No person shall go beyond the entrance/ "holding tank" without completing a health screen.**

- Temperatures:
  - o Are no longer a requirement in the screening process. Out of an abundance of caution we recommend parents do a temperature check their little learner prior to arriving to school.
  - o If an individual has a temperature of greater than 100.0°F during class time, the individual will be sent directly to a dedicated area with a teacher to be sent home.
- Health screening
  - o The purpose of the daily screenings is to identify individuals who should not go to school and should be referred to their health care provider for further evaluation and potentially tested for COVID-19. Additionally, it will aid us in case we need to provide the Health Department with contact tracing.
  - o The screening:
    - Electronic screening: can be utilized to maximize our efficiency and introduce new ways of communicating and doing business.
      - Should a parent not be able to access the electronic version, a tablet will be at the front during health checks which can be utilized to check in their child and then it will be properly sanitized.
      - Backup paper copies are available, but the electronic version makes reporting easier.

- Health screening questions
  - o Brightwheel will provide an electronic statement confirmation where you will need to confirm/ verify the following:
    - No fever
    - No cough or shortness of breath
    - No contact with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
    - Has not been given a fever reducing agent (ex. Tylenol) within the last 24 hours
    - To the best of your knowledge your child(ren), yourself and family are healthy
  - o If a response is unchecked (which means no/ decline) to any of the above, they will not be allowed to enter the program.

Once the health screen is completed, backpacks and jackets can be hung on their designated hook in the holding tank. From there the parent/ caregiver is to usher the child into the bathroom for toileting and good handwashing.

## **REVISION IN HEALTH INFORMATION**

Especially in these unprecedented times, to maintain a healthy environment at Preschool, we ask that you do not bring your child to school if he/she is showing any signs of illness. Prior to the pandemic, minor cold symptoms or cough did not impair your child from attending school. However, we need to be exceptionally diligent in preventing the spread of germs.

If your child becomes ill or the teacher(s) suspect an illness, during school hours you will be contacted immediately and requested to pick him/her up.

**Please see the MHPS Attendance Protocol addendum that addresses our current pandemic circumstances, in addition to our Parent Handbook.**

## **HAND WASHING & TOILETING**

Good hygiene starts with proper hand washing. We will continue to build routines of hand hygiene into the daily school schedule for all students and staff, including handwashing and sanitation breaks during or between classroom activities. Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol by staff and students.

- The use of sanitizer will always be under the supervision of an adult
  - o We will monitor to ensure that children and staff with sensitivity or skin reactions to hand sanitizer have access to soap and water.
- Handwashing will be reinforced during key times including but not limited to: arrival and dismissal; before and after eating food; after using the bathroom; after blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing; after touching objects with bare hands that have been handled by other people.

Proper and consistent hygiene practices is critical to stopping the spread of germs. There will be decals on the floor for distancing guidelines when the bathroom is occupied. Hands free/ low contact soap and paper towel dispensers have been implemented. All high touch surfaces in the bathrooms will be routinely cleaned multiple times throughout session.

## **DAILY CLASS SESSION**

The teachers will be diligent around classroom cleanliness and will work towards distancing the students as much as possible where it makes sense (circle time, snack, lessons). Some common experiences in the classroom were identified as needing to be modified which we will continue this year:

- Playdough is an exceptional development tool, however impossible to clean. Therefore, we will be making individual labeled bags for each student to have their own.
- Students' art supplies will be assembled into personalized art carts, so that there is minimal sharing of those tool.
- Cloth based toys such as imaginative play clothes, stuffed animals, cloth-based dolls have been removed from the classroom due to the challenge of effectively cleaning the.
- Teachers will maintain the flexibility of wearing masks or shield when they feel there is a high risk, or they are uneasy with the infection rate.
  - o Examples: toileting the children, long periods of time of contact, infection rate increases to a level they are personally concerned.
- The Board of Maple Hill Preschool and the teachers have aligned that the school will remain open until the 7-day trend of positive cases reaches 13% for Rensselaer county.
  - o The school will remain closed until the percentage declines to at least 10.5% 7-day trend of positive cases.
  - o An alert via Brightwheel will be sent in the event of a closure and reopening
  - o For monitory- <https://forward.ny.gov/covid-19-regional-metrics-dashboar>

## **SNACK**

- In previous years, snacks were provided daily by the "parent volunteer/ snack parent". Due to Covid-19 it is recommended that snack is either prepackaged or provided ahead of time.
  - o Therefore, snack will be provided through the preschool through shelf stable goods, fresh fruit, etc.
  - o The "parent volunteer/ snack parent" will assessable the indicated snack as per the calendar during their time there
- When it is your child's birthday, a special treat can be provided that day, as long as it is prepackaged/ store bought.

## **VOLUNTEER(S)/ SNACK PARENT**

As a parent cooperative the key to our success is parent/caretaker involvement. Even though Covid-19 is still an ongoing challenge, it does not diminish the importance of a parent's involvement.

- It will be mandatory that the parent volunteer completes the daily health screen and wears a mask/ face shield.
  - o Should an additional parent like to stay for the day and participate in the class we will need to limit the classroom to 2 parent volunteers per day in the class who all pass the daily health screen and wear the appropriate face coverings.
- The volunteer will be critical in helping us maintain the classroom cleanliness and will follow our classroom cleaning procedures.
  - o Examples: wiping tables and chairs down after snack, gathering soiled toys to cleaning, assisting with handwashing

## **CLEANING PROCEDURE UPDATES**

Maple Hill Preschool will strictly utilize the United States Environmental Protection Agency, "List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) for proper cleaning supplies to ensure proper disinfection.

- Once all the cleaning supplies have been obtained a Material Safety Data Sheets (SDS) binder will be available for any parent to view. A comprehensive list of cleaning supplies will also be provided.
  - o Please note cleaning supplies may change throughout the school year due to availability.
- Windows will be open whenever possible to increase classroom ventilation.
- Prior to entering the classroom all children and adults will wash their hands.
- Tables and chairs will be wiped down and children will wash their hands before and after snack time.
  - o Tables and chairs will be cleaned with disinfecting wipes while class is in session and sanitized after students have been dismissed with a bleach and water solution.
- All toys with hard surfaces can be set aside for cleaning by putting them into a dish pan labeled "soiled toys." This dish pan can contain soapy water to begin removal of soil, or it can be a dry container used to bring the soiled toys to a toy cleaning area later in the day.
- End of day cleaning includes:
  - o High touch surfaces (light switches, handles)
  - o Individual student kits/ supplies
  - o Check in, toys, cabinets, tables, chairs, coat hooks
- **IMPORTANT:** cleaning products and disinfectants will not be utilized near children. Proper ventilation will be ensured to prevent inhaling any fumes. These products will always be securely stored away from children.

## SUSPECT & CONFIRMED POSITIVE SCENARIOS

Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, must be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

- Students who are being sent home because of a positive screen (e.g., onset of COVID-19 symptoms) must be immediately separated from other students and supervised until their parent/legal guardian or emergency contact can retrieve them from school.
  - o Teachers will look for flushing of the face, lethargy, change in mood/ behavior, upset gastrointestinal tract symptoms
- **It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/ caregiver(s) to immediately notify Maple Hill Preschool Chair if a positive diagnostic COVID-19 test occurs. It is the responsibility of Maple Hill Preschool to immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if diagnostic test results are positive for COVID-19.**
- If any of the teachers or students, are confirmed positive for COVID-19, the school will close for a minimum of 10 days; or until cleared by the Department of Health.

### Cleaning and Disinfection Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

- Maple Hill Preschool must provide the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces.
- Maple Hill Preschool is expected to follow CDC guidelines on “Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility,” if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19:
- Areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 will be closed off.
  - o If possible outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation in the area.
  - o A wait time of 24 hours before we clean and disinfect to minimize risk of exposure, unless waiting 24 hours is not feasible, in which case, wait as long as possible.
  - o Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as classroom, bathrooms, and common areas.
  - o Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use.
  - o We will refer to DOH’s “Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure” for information on “close and proximate” contacts.
  - o If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection should continue.

## **OUR HOPES**

We hope that everyone is excited to watch their child learn and grow here at Maple Hill Preschool. With that said, we also hope that everyone will be responsible and play their part in keeping our school a safe and healthy place to be so that our children can experience preschool in the fullest capacity. We know these times are trying and release a lot of passion. Please be patient and kind while we all adapt to these changes and we hope that everyone can remain agile as it is inevitable that circumstances can and will change.

Sincerely,

The Board of Maple Hill Preschool