



COVID-19

Parent Handbook

2022

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COVID Procedures and Policies

Purpose

This document has been created to ensure that we, as a community, are taking appropriate action to protect our Philomath Montessori community, staff, children and families from the potential outbreak of illness. Policies outlined in this handbook override existing ones from our current parent handbook where they overlap. Together we will work to continue the quality program that this community has created, while offering a safe place for work and learning for our children and staff.

Policies in this handbook are to provide direction for families and staff while on Philomath Montessori grounds, to help control the potential of an illness outbreak in our school community and provide protection for our staff, children, and families. Each policy outlined in this document applies to all employees and community members while at Philomath Montessori School.

We have based these policies on guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and the Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Division (ELD). You can view the CDC's guidance for childcare [here](#) and the OHA/ELD's guidance [here](#). Philomath Montessori will strive to take the strictest measures in terms of guidance from these sources for the health and safety of our community.

Due to the nature of the pandemic, changes are inevitable, and Philomath Montessori will provide clear communication in a timely manner regarding any changes to policy or protocols.

Health Procedures for Families and Staff

Prior to arriving at Philomath Montessori each day, we ask families and staff members to undergo the following self-assessment to maintain a healthy and safe environment. These are general health and wellness policies we adhere to from the Oregon Health Authority.

Staff and children may not attend school if they have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Signs of a new cold or illness: clear runny nose, feeling unwell, lethargic
- Green mucus from the nose, enlarged glands, earache, inflamed eyes
- Fever over 100 degrees F in the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Nausea or imminent vomiting
- Unusual cough, sore throat, rash
- Stiff neck or headache
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Complaints of severe pain

In addition, the Health Department maintains a list of daycare-restricted diseases including chickenpox, scabies, and staph and strep infections, in which case we must exclude the child and notify the Health Department of any outbreak. You can view the entire list of restricted diseases [here](#).

If your child has any of the listed symptoms, they must be kept home. If your child's symptoms are linked to a pre-existing condition such as asthma, allergies, etc. your child may come to school if they have a doctor's note explaining the symptoms are not related to COVID-19 or another communicable disease.

Children and staff exhibiting symptoms specific to COVID-19 should isolate at home for a minimum of 5 days after onset of symptoms and 24 hours after resolution of both fever and cough, UNAIDED BY MEDICATIONS.

If a child tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to isolate for a minimum of 5 days. The isolation period is counted with positive test or start of symptoms being day 0. If a child tests negative on day 6 with an at home/rapid test they may return to class with a well-fitting mask. A mask is required to be worn 5 days after isolation. If the child is unable to wear a well-fitting mask, they may return after a 10 day isolation period.

COVID in Home

If there is a family member who has tested positive, a minimum 5 day quarantine will be required for PhMS children who are *not fully vaccinated* **only if they can be completely isolated from the family member who has COVID**. A test the morning of the 5th day is required to return to school. Quarantine for fully vaccinated children is not required.

If complete quarantine from the COVID positive family member is not possible, when the family member who tests positive for COVID finishes an 8 day isolation period and the other family members/PhMS children remain asymptomatic and continue to test negative with a rapid test they may return on day 9.

We will continue to monitor for symptoms for the next 10 days and take any cold symptoms seriously as a possible presumptive case and the child will be sent home and referred to testing and further evaluation by a medical professional.

A child who has tested positive for COVID during this period, or shows symptoms of illness, would move from quarantine to isolation, with day one being the day they started showing symptoms. They can return to school on day 6 wearing a well-fitting mask.

The main preventative measures to be modeled and used at home and at school:

- Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals 6 months of age and up are encouraged to get vaccinated. Information about vaccinations can be found at <https://getvaccinated.oregon.gov>.
- Wear a mask when community COVID-19 levels are high.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly, using soap and water to scrub for 20 seconds.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with elbow or tissue and follow any coughing or sneezing with hand washing. Avoid touching your face.

Protocol if a child gets sick or exhibits symptoms while at PhMS:

If a child exhibits any COVID-like symptoms they will be taken to the office or outside to be isolated until guardians can be called and the child is picked up. The assistant will remain with the child until they are picked up. Parents must plan for a prompt collection of their child and will be required to have a plan in place that provides collection within 30 minutes. A staff member will remain with your child until a parent or guardian arrives. The staff will wear a mask, use gloves, and maintain as much distance as possible while providing as much care and comfort to your child as possible.

Any child or staff member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to stay home and seek testing. If you do not seek testing, your child will be asked to stay home for a minimum of 10 days after the onset of symptoms and 48 hours after resolution of both fever and cough, unaided by medications. They may return on day 11.

If you receive a negative result from at home testing, your child may return to school 24 hours after the resolution of symptoms. Children may return with a lingering cough as long as they have a note from their medical provider and wear a well-fitting mask until the cough subsides. Children whose symptoms worsen or do not improve after 3 days will be asked to retest.

Reporting

PhMS follows guidelines from the Early Learning Division and will report any confirmed or presumptive cases of COVID-19 to the local public health authority as required and seek guidance from those authorities regarding cleaning and possible closure.

PhMS will communicate with families as soon as possible if a child in our classroom tested positive for COVID-19.

Drop-off & Pick-up Procedures:

Drop-off

Drop off window is between 8:50 - 9 am. If running late, please communicate with by phone or email. Children will be dropped off at the gate to the schoolyard. A teacher will be waiting to check children in. Teachers will administer hand sanitizer and parents will help their child sanitize their hands.

Pick-up

At the assigned pick-up time a staff member will bring the group of children to the designated area to be ready for pick-up. Children will be administered hand sanitizer and signed out once we see their approved pick-up adult has arrived.

Sanitation & Ventilation

Philomath Montessori School follows the [Cleaning and Sanitation Guidelines](#) (see page 7) as outlined by the Early Learning Division.

Ventilation on school grounds:

- *HVAC & filters*: The HVAC system has been checked on schedule and is functioning properly.
- *Fans*: will be used in the classroom while occupied and when windows are open. Fans will be primarily used to pull air out of a room (e.g., via exhaust mode in a window).
- *HEPA filter*: We have installed a HEPA filter in the classroom.
- *Windows*: Windows remain open throughout the school year to increase airflow. Doors will also remain open when weather permits.

Visitor Protocol

For the health and safety of our staff, families and community during the COVID-19 outbreak, Philomath Montessori will limit visitor entry into the building. If you have a health or safety concern or wish to schedule a time to speak with a PhMS staff member, please contact us.

Only these individuals may enter Philomath Montessori's designated rooms in the building:

- Staff members
- Developmental/Educational personnel providing services to children
- Maintenance Personnel
- State licensing/Regulators/Inspectors
- Emergency medical personnel

****All other individuals are subject to approval by our Director, Jessica Neebe, before entry is permitted.***

Face Coverings

Face coverings are optional and preferences will be supported and respected.

We recommend N95, KN95, and KF94 face masks. KF94 masks have been shown to have a better fit on children and small face size. PhMS will provide KN95 or KF94 masks upon request for families for whom purchasing masks is a hardship. *Children will be asked to wear a well-fitting mask at school or to stay home when persistent mucus or cough is present.*

Please review the following guidance from the Early Learning Division when making decisions regarding masking.

When to wear a mask:

- Everyone two years and older returning to child care should wear a well-fitting mask for the five days following their five-day COVID-19 [isolation period](#).
- During periods of high [COVID-19 community transmission level](#), universal indoor masking is **strongly recommended**.
- During periods of medium [COVID-19 community transmission level](#), those who are at higher risk for severe illness or caring for children who are at risk of severe disease are recommended to wear a mask. These include those who:
 - o Are unvaccinated or not up to date on vaccination.
 - o Are immunocompromised.
 - o Have disabilities.
 - o Are living with people at high risk or unvaccinated.
 - o Have underlying health conditions.

Emergency School Closure Policy

Our School follows the inclement weather closure decisions of the Philomath School District. We are also governed by emergency closure conditions or change in operational guidelines decided by the Early Learning Division of the State of Oregon due to any short-term situations like stormy or inclement weather, or long-term situations such as a **pandemic** caused by a disease outbreak, or any natural or other major disaster. Our School will also close due to the loss of any essential utility service such as electricity, gas and/or water for a substantial period of time, or any major building issues that threatens the safety and well-being of our children and staff. For any such closure shorter than 8 consecutive school days in a month, there will be no reduction in tuition for that month. For closures conditions longer than 8 consecutive school days in any month, the school will charge up to 50% tuition for the duration of the closure in that month. I (We) understand that this clause allows the School to retain at least key staff on payroll, readily available to return to the classroom to welcome our children back when the School reopens. Please read your contract thoroughly and direct questions to our Director, Jessica Neebe.