

2021-2022 NMS Covid-19 Health Policy

Updated January 19, 2022

The Newburyport Montessori School (hereafter “NMS”) values the safety and wellbeing of its staff, children, and families. For the protection of all, we have updated our COVID-19 Health Policy to take into consideration the highly contagious Covid-19 Delta and Omicron variants. These policies are subject to change and will be frequently **updated** based on the recommendation and guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and (EEC) Mass Dept. of Early Education and Care.

Preventative health measures:

NMS is confident that if certain measures such as wearing a mask, respiratory etiquette (cover cough and sneezes), frequent hand washing / hand sanitation and environmental cleaning and sanitizing are widely observed, NMS can operate in a safe and measured way.

All staff and students in Children’s house classrooms are required, to wear cloth or paper face coverings (over the nose and mouth). Masks or face coverings will not be worn when napping, eating or outdoors. Masks or face coverings will not be used by anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove their mask without assistance. When masks or face coverings are removed, they will be placed in a labeled plastic bin. Proper hand hygiene will be practiced immediately after handling a mask or face covering.

We cannot expect a group of Toddler & PreK children not to engage in interactive play or share materials. Parents or guardians should monitor the health of their child and not send them to the program if they are displaying any symptom of COVID. If COVID symptoms are present, parents or guardians should seek COVID testing promptly, and report results to the program given the implications for other children, families, and staff. Parents or guardians should protect any vulnerable persons who are members of the same household or come into frequent, close contact with infants, children and youth who attend NMS.

Parent drop-off and pick-up:

The pick-up and drop-off of children will be completed outside of NMS or at a designated entry unless there is a legitimate need for the parent to enter. Masks must be worn by all adults dropping children off at one of the school entrances. We hope to invite you into the school for other reasons like parent orientation and conferences.

Healthy Hand Hygiene:

All children, staff and anyone entering NMS will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- arrival to NMS and after breaks,
- before and after preparing food or drinks,
- before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children,
- before and after administering medication or medical ointment,
- before and after diapering,
- after using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom,
- after coming in contact with bodily fluid,
- after playing outdoors,
- after handling garbage. Hands will be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol will be used if soap and water are not readily available.
- Children will be supervised when using hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion.
- Children will be assisted with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
- After assisting children with handwashing, staff will also wash their hands.
- Posters will be placed at all sinks describing handwashing steps near sinks.

Illness:

Ill children and staff are required to stay home.

- NMS will communicate to parents the importance of keeping children home when they are sick.
- NMS will communicate to staff the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and staying in touch with the NMS Head of School if or when they start to feel sick.
- Any child or staff with a temperature of 100°F or greater will not be permitted to return to school until 24 hours after the fever has returned to normal without fever reducing medications. NMS will not allow a physician's note before the 24 hours.

Very commonly, a child might be present at NMS with cough and/or runny nose (mild respiratory symptoms) and the child is behaving normally with no fever. Children will be permitted to attend NMS if no other symptoms of illness are present.

Children or staff who become sick while at NMS will be sent home as soon as possible. The sick child or staff will isolate in the staff room from well children and staff until they can be sent home.

- NMS will communicate to staff the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and staying in touch with the NMS Head of School if or when they start to feel sick.
- Based on recommendations from the CDC in response to the steep rise in numbers of young people contracting the highly contagious Delta variant and, more recently, the Omicron variant, students who are **absent with a fever PLUS** one or more of the following symptoms **MUST** provide proof of a negative COVID PCR or Antigen test (either PCR lab test or Rapid Antigen test performed at home) before returning to school:
 - vomiting
 - diarrhea
 - sore throat
 - cough
 - runny nose or congestion

TRAVEL & QUARANTINE GUIDELINES:

We have tried to come up with a travel policy that aligns with CDC recommendations but also considers the type of travel that you will be doing while considering the high and low risk to that travel. When testing is required, we will accept a PCR or Rapid Antigen test administered at home.

We will review this policy and adjust per the CDC's recommendations.

High Risk: Students and unvaccinated adults in the household must get tested after the 3rd day back and can return to school with a negative result* if traveling by plane or train and staying at a resort or hotel with much exposure to large crowds of people.

Medium Risk: Students unvaccinated adults in the household must get a test upon return and can return to school with a negative test* if traveling by car to a destination and staying in a hotel or visiting an amusement park, etc. with some exposure to large crowds.

Low Risk: No testing or waiting is necessary if traveling by car with your family members and staying with family or friends, with some attractions or crowds.

This is the guidance from CDC for unvaccinated individuals for you to consider:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>

COVID TESTING and RETURN TO SCHOOL

Child is exposed either at school or in household, quarantine for 5 days, test on day 5 and return to school if test is negative and asymptomatic.

Child tests positive, quarantine for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or the test date, whichever comes first. Student can return to school on day 11.

In addition to clinician administered PCR and Antigen tests, we will accept a Rapid Antigen Test administered at home. You will need to provide a photo of the test results either by email or hard copy.

To locate testing sites, go to:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-test-search-results>