

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Nokomis Neighborhood Preschool

updated 01/31/2021

The purpose of this document is to detail our plans and efforts in addressing actions and policies we are taking related to COVID-19. We have drawn from ours and other preschools' experiences and fact-based best practices to reduce the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. It includes risk reduction measures we are adopting.

This document reflects the most current and researched-based recommendations as of **January, 2021**. As new information becomes available, we will update the document. Note that the suggestions contained in this document are best practices that are based in the science of the virus and what we know about how it spreads.

SARS-Co-V-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19 illness) is a respiratory virus that spreads primarily through droplets during person-to-person contact. According to guidance from the [CDC](#), the most important actions you can take to minimize the spread of the disease are the following. Our COVID-19 response plan focuses on these steps:

1. **Physical distancing** - maintain at least 6 feet between families at drop-off and pick-up. Adults must wear a mask at this time. Staggered drop off 9-9:10a.m. and pick-up 12:00-12:10p.m. have been put in place.
2. **Keep your child home if they are sick** - Know the symptoms like fever, cough, body aches, shortness of breath ([see CDC](#)) and do not bring your child to the school if they have any of these symptoms
3. **Handwashing** - Wash your child's hands for at least 20 seconds
4. **Wear a cloth mask** - to prevent the spread of the virus, since you might not have symptoms. Masks can cause irritation; take care to avoid touching your face.
5. **Reporting** - Notify school staff ASAP if your child is sick, tests positive, or has had an exposure to COVID-19. Call Alyssa Nugent at (612) 703-0136. I will respond that I received the notification. If Alyssa does not respond call Melanie Grue at (651) 210-9239. We will then notify all families in the preschool of the situation stating the level of exposure.
6. **Use good personal hygiene - sneeze into a tissue** - cover your cough, and wash your hands after sneezing or coughing.
7. **Clean and sanitize** - the high-touch areas including toys and surfaces at least daily to minimize the spread via surfaces.

For each identified risk, we list the risk-reduction measures that we plan to take. This will be our finished plan that is our guiding document and summary of school COVID-19 policies. It is also our training guide and will be referenced by staff.

We will stay up to date on changing recommendations from public health organizations and state and federal government. We will revisit our plan regularly to update our policies as needed.

This document was adapted from the work of: *Natalie Hoidal, University of Minnesota Extension Educator, Annalisa Hultberg, University of Minnesota Extension Educator, Claire Strader, University of Wisconsin Extension, Dane County and FairShare CSA Coalition*

Section 1: Student/Staff health, safety, and training

Open, honest communication and the creation of policies that everyone understands is foundational to an effective COVID-19 response plan. Regular communication about plans and check-ins with employees and families will help ensure that everyone understands and is compliant with our plan and will also encourage a culture of openness and honesty.

1. **Our COVID-19 points of contact are Alyssa Nugent and Melanie Grue.** These two are the main points of contact for preschool families with questions about COVID-19, and parents should report to either of them if their student becomes ill.

2. **Regarding students who have a high risk of contracting COVID-19, or who would face a greater risk of severe consequences**

We are recommending students who are at high risk of contracting, or would face a greater risk of severe consequences take extra measures at home to reduce the risk of exposure. Please use your best judgement in determining your risk tolerance. If you're not comfortable with our environment for any reason, please let Alyssa or Melanie know and we will address your concerns.

Some examples of people with a high risk of contracting COVID-19 might include:

1. *People with household members who are essential workers.*
2. *People who live with multiple housemates.*

Some examples of people who face a greater risk of severe consequences might include:

1. *People who are immunocompromised or with heart conditions*
2. *People who live with and care for an elderly parent or relative*

3. **Screening students and staff before they enter the school each day.**

1. Staff will self-screen prior to work each day answering these *questions with a "No"*:
 - a. *Is your temperature above 99.8°F? (a thermometer is available for staff use)*
 - b. *Have you had a cough or shortness of breath in the last 14 days, OR*
 - c. *Have you had at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell?*
2. Staff will take students' temperature upon entering the building.
3. *Parents must not bring their students to school if either of the following conditions exist:*
 - a. *Your child's temperature above 99.8° F*
 - b. *Your child has had a cough or shortness of breath in the last 14 days, OR*
 - c. *Your child had at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell?*

4. **Our COVID-specific in-school safety practices include:**

1. *Students will wear masks while inside the building. We will provide students with masks (if they arrive without one) and instruction on how to use them properly.*
2. *We require staff to wear face coverings/masks.*
3. *We are limiting the number of people in the building at any given time to allow for maximum physical distance. We are serving pods of 10 children with two teachers.*
4. *We will spread snack time seating across 3 tables spaced apart to allow for greater distance between students while eating.*
5. *We will not offer lunch bunch for the foreseeable future.*

5. **Our COVID-specific training:** Staff has been trained on the following:
 1. *A basic overview of COVID-19 symptoms, how it spreads, and best practices.*
 2. *Our measures to reduce the spread, and our required protocols that we've have outlined in this document.*
 3. *Employee training for specific tasks such as cleaning and sanitizing or other essential tasks.*
 4. *A discussion about employee rights, sick leave policies, and how we will build a culture of honesty and trust.*

6. **How we will continue to remind students about our practices**
 In addition to constant verbal reminders:
 1. *We posted a sign with pictures demonstrating proper handwashing.*
 2. *We posted pictures on covering your cough or sneeze using your inner elbow.*

7. **Our policy for staying home if someone gets sick.** This is in addition to our standard sick policy. SICK STUDENTS SHOULD NOT COME TO SCHOOL. The [CDC recommends](#) ensuring that all sick students stay home and self-quarantine. According to the CDC person can discontinue self-quarantine when **ALL** of the following have been achieved:
 1. *They have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (3 full days) **without** the use of medicine that reduces fevers.*
 2. *All symptoms including coughing have improved AND either;*
 - a. *At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. OR*
 - b. *The student provides a "Negative for COVID-19" test results from a certified testing facility (test must occur on day 5 or later).*

8. **How we will monitor our students if someone in the school community becomes ill.**
 1. *We will **identify risks** to each individual student; this includes assessing whether other students interacted with the sick person within at least a 6 foot distance. Those with direct contact must stay home. Attendance will be taken daily.*
 2. **Pre-Screen:** *We will measure all students temperatures and assess symptoms prior to them starting school.*
 3. **Regular Monitoring:** *supervision during class to identify changes in health.*
 4. **Wear a Mask:** *The students will be required to wear a face mask at all times while in the building.*
 5. **Disinfect and Clean workspaces:** *We will clean and disinfect all student accessible areas in the school including, bathrooms, common areas, shared toys and utensils daily.*

Section 2: Handwashing, sanitizing surfaces, and physical distancing in the preschool

This virus is spread primarily through person-to-person contact between an infected person and another person. The best ways to minimize spread is by maintaining adequate physical distance between individuals and encouraging people to wash their hands regularly. Alcohol-based hand

sanitizer is effective against the virus, but it is not a substitute for hand washing since it is not effective when hands are dirty. It can be used when hand washing is not possible.

1. *Employees and students are trained on the location of the hand washing station in the school.*
 - a) *We have hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes accessible.*

2. **Handwashing frequency - How often will employees be required to wash their hands?**
 - a) *Employees must wash hands prior to the start of their shift.*
 - b) *Employees must wash hands after using the restroom, before and after eating, after coughing or sneezing, before donning gloves, and if they have reason to think their hands might have been contaminated.*

3. **Staff is responsible for monitoring the supplies at the handwashing station.**

Handwashing station needs to have soap, water, single use towels, proper drainage, and a covered garbage can/bag. Staff will check supplies regularly and fill as needed.

4. **Distancing -**
 - a. **Employees** - *Staff will practice physical distancing to the extent it does not interfere with child safety or best teaching methods.*
 - b. **Students** - *We will do our best to address distancing among students when behaviors warrant. For example: Regular play between students will not warrant intervention. However, if we see a student coughing or sneezing we will have other children step away.*

5. **How we will reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission on toys and student handled supplies.**

We will minimize the sharing of toys across classes by cleaning and sanitizing toys and student handled supplies after each class. (See cleaning and sanitizing section below.)

Section 3: Maintaining essential operations in case of illness

In the event either Alyssa or Melanie become ill, in-person classes will be suspended until return-to-work criteria as recommended by the CDC have been met. These are the same criteria as listed in section 1, para 7:

1. The CDC recommends ensuring that all sick workers stay home and self-quarantine. According to the CDC a person can discontinue self-quarantine when ALL of the following have been achieved:
 1. They have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (3 full days) without the use of medicine that reduces fevers.
 2. All symptoms including coughing have improved AND either;
 - a. At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. OR
 - b. The worker provides a "Negative for COVID-19" test results from a certified testing facility (test must occur on day 5 or later).

Section 4: Who is allowed in the preschool

Reducing the overall number of people in the school will help to reduce the transmission of the disease.

1. **Our essential workers** To minimize risk, we are only allowing essential staff in the school.
2. **Parents/guardians in the school**
 1. *We will implement an outdoor social distanced pick-up/drop-off area for students.*
 2. *We will request parents/guardians leave the premises if they have symptoms associated with COVID-19, including cough, fever, or difficulty breathing.*
 3. *Special appointments can be arranged by contacting staff with your concerns.*
 4. *State licensed inspectors are allowed in the school. (MN licensing inspectors have temporarily suspended in-person inspections)*
3. **How we will educate families/visitors of our risk-reduction measures**
 1. *We will notify families that this policy is available.*
 2. *We will share an electronic copy of this policy to our student families.*
 3. *We will provide paper copies of this policy.*
 4. *We will post this COVID-19 response plan on our website.*
4. **How we will you handle deliveries of supplies**
 1. *We will wash our hands immediately after handling packages.*

Section 5: Cleaning and Sanitizing

1. **Sanitizing surfaces; which ones, and how often**
 1. *Building: High-touch surfaces including door handles, chairs, and tables– **Daily***
 2. *Restrooms: toilet handles and seats, faucet handles, door handles – **Daily***
 3. *Toys and supplies: – **Daily, after use***
2. **How we will clean and sanitize surfaces**

Before a surface can be sanitized, it must be cleaned. Sanitizer is meant to be the **last step** in the process. If sprayed on a dirty surface, the active ingredient in the disinfectant binds up with the organic matter and it will not work. If there is no visible dirt, like on a doorknob or handle, we will spray with the sanitizer or wipe with a disinfecting wipe.
3. **Sanitizers we will use, and at what concentration**

Household bleach: Clorox Regular Brand bleach (or other 6.0% sodium hypochlorite product) will be used for all hard surfaces in the school. Mixed at a rate of about 1 T per

gallon, or no more than 200 ppm, which is the sanitizing rate for food contact surfaces listed on the label.

Note: The [CDC disinfection recommendations](#) state a rate of 5 T per gallon, or 1000 ppm should be used on all surfaces if there is a known COVID-19 case. This higher rate used on food contact surfaces must be followed by a fresh water rinse.
