

FISHTOWN MONTESSORI FAMILY COVID-19 POLICIES

This COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan will serve as guidance for the child care activities at Fishtown Montessori ("FM") whether under the yellow phase or green phase of the [Process to Reopen Pennsylvania](#). Any policies, procedures or protocol in this COVID Policy will supersede the corresponding items in the FM Handbook. In this COVID policy, we have attempted to include all areas of our operations affected by changes with regard to COVID-19.

Given the dynamic nature of the pandemic, this COVID Policy and the plan set out incorporates enough flexibility to adapt to changing conditions. This is a dynamic document that will change as new guidance emerges and is shared through our regulatory or governmental agencies. Any changes to this COVID Policy will be shared with all families and staff via email. It is the role of the parents to ensure that Fishtown Montessori has updated contact information, giving us the ability to rapidly communicate information.

If there are any cases of COVID-19 in the wider community, there are no strategies that can completely eliminate transmission risk within a child care population. The goal is to use guidance from professionals and experts to keep the risk of transmission as low as possible while continuing child care activities as safely as possible. We encourage parents to talk to their children's healthcare providers about their individual risk factors for COVID-19 and the risks of attending a childcare facility.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at Fishtown Montessori is to prevent it from getting into Fishtown Montessori. This will be improved by the joint effort of parents, staff, and children. This is a partnership, we rely on parents to keep their child home and visit the doctor when symptoms are present and to comply with the policies and procedures in this document.

We wish to extend gratitude toward the following organizations whose research and/or guidance this plan is based on:

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Montessori Society
- American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Policy Lab
- City of Philadelphia's Guidelines for Childcare and Early Learning Centers During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Department of Human Services of Pennsylvania, Office of Child Development and Early Learning
- Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- Public Health Management Corporation
- Safety Center of America

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

In order to provide a secure setting for the children and staff at Fishtown Montessori, we are requesting that all family members maintain a minimum of six feet distance from other families while waiting to drop their child off. Child health screenings will take place on an individual basis in the vestibule. Parents should expect arrival and departure routines to take longer especially during peak times.

We will be utilizing a staggered drop-off schedule with primary students entering from 8:30 - 8:45 and toddler students entering from 8:45 - 9:00 each day.

In order to provide for a smooth arrival and departure, we are asking families to follow these steps:

Prior to Leaving Your Home Screen Children for Symptoms of COVID-19:

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at Fishtown Montessori is to prevent it from getting into Fishtown Montessori. Staff are asked to screen themselves and parents are asked to screen their child before leaving the house for fever, symptoms, and any visual indication of ill health. A daily screening checklist will be administered to staff and children and asked of parents/ caregivers upon arrival. Children and staff will also be monitored throughout the day. Please do your part by conducting a temperature check and screening your child for the following symptoms:

1. All parents should conduct an assessment on their child by answering the following questions **prior to leaving your home**:. These same questions will be asked upon arrival to the school and are also asked of any staff member upon arrival.
 - a. Does your child have any **one** of the following symptoms?
 - cough; shortness of breath; difficulty breathing; fever (≥ 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit); diarrhea; vomiting.
 - b. Does your child have any **two** of the following symptoms?
 - chills; muscle pain or body aches; sore throat; new loss of taste or smell; fatigue; headache; congestion; runny nose.
 - c. Make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness. Does your child have flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness? Is the child experiencing coughing or shortness of breath?
 - d. Have you, your child, or any member of your family been exposed to anyone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
2. If the answer to any of the above is yes, the child is not permitted to go attend group care and should not be dropped off to attend FM. Parents must keep their child home and contact their healthcare provider for further instructions.

Procure Check In:

1. Check your child in on your personal cell phone using the [Procure Connect](#) App as you are approaching the building.
 - a. This app enables parents sign-in on your phone once you have come within 100 meters of our building.
 - b. Answer the parent questions. If you can answer yes to any of the questions regarding fever, symptoms, visual inspection or exposure, do not proceed with drop-off.
 - i. A staff member will also verbally ask the screening questions

Arrival Procedure:

1. Please limit the drop off to a single adult and only children who are enrolled in our program when possible. Ideally the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, individuals with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children because they are more at risk.
2. All parents and children two years of age and older must wear a mask during drop-off and pick-up.
3. Staggered drop-off times will be practiced.
 - a. AM Care students will arrive between 7:30 - 8:30
 - b. Primary students will arrive between 8:30 - 8:45
 - c. Toddlers will arrive between 8:45 and 9:00.
4. During school-day arrival, parent and child(ren) will form a line toward Oxford Street. The parent and child should wait least six feet from other families as you approach Fishtown Montessori.
5. When a family's turn has arrived, a staff member will be present to ask the pre-screening questions and to do a visual and temperature check of arriving children with a non-contact thermometer.
6. Parents are asked to check their child out on their personal cell phone or communicate to the staff member to enter their four-digit code on the tablet for them.
7. Personal strollers or car seats are not permitted to be stored in the building until further notice.
8. Once checked in and screened, children will use hand sanitizer and be escorted to their classroom with their belongings by a staff member.
9. Parents are asked to keep a 6 foot distance from others during drop off and pick up.
 - a. Refrain from congregating near the front of FM, exit the area after drop-off or pick-up.

If you arrive and do not immediately see a staff member, please sanitize your hands and ring the doorbell to alert the staff of your arrival.

Upon Arrival Children Should:

1. enter the vestibule.
2. remove their mask from home and place in a waterproof bag provided by parents or a zipper top bag provided by FM.
3. use hand sanitizer on their hands.
4. unwrap child-sized disposable mask and place it on their face securely
5. have their temperature and any symptoms checked by the staff member.
6. enter the building and go to their cubby.
7. hang up their outerwear and tote bag, place lunch in their cubby.
8. take off their outdoor shoes and put on their indoor shoes.

9. wash hands.
10. join their classmates at the circle or join their teacher if entering during AM care.

School Day Departure:

1. School-day pick-up will occur between 3:00 and 3:15 each day.
2. Parents should line up at the front of FM at least 6 feet from other families.
3. A staff member will be in the vestibule waiting for parents to arrive. When they see the child's parent, they will go get the child and will escort the child safely to their parent.
4. Parents are asked to check their child out on using the Procure Connect App on their personal cell phone or communicate to the staff member to enter their four-digit code on the tablet for them.

PM Care Departure:

1. PM Care pickup will occur between 3:15 and 6:00 each day.
2. When picking up during PM Care, parents should schedule a time to pick up their child by calling or texting the FM mobile phone at least 15 minutes prior to their arrival.
3. The parent should ring the doorbell or send a text message to alert staff of their arrival.
4. The staff will respond and bring the child(ren), with their belongings outside for dismissal.

HEALTH POLICIES

Plan for When Someone Becomes Sick:

- If children develop symptoms, they should be brought to a designated isolation room while waiting to be picked up. The staff member waiting with the child should wear a mask and also gloves if holding the child.
- A letter will be given to caregivers explaining why the child is being dismissed and criteria for returning to Fishtown Montessori.

Criteria for Returning to Fishtown Montessori After Illness:

If a child or staff member in a classroom has COVID- like illness they can return to FM if:

1. initial COVID-19 testing is negative, and individual meets FM's normal criteria for return after an illness.
OR
2. a clinician has evaluated the child and documented and has provided a written alternative diagnosis.
OR
3. for children who were not tested for COVID, they can return to FM if all of the following are true:
 - a. At least 10 days since the onset of symptoms **AND**
 - b. until fever free off anti-fever medications for 3 days **AND**
 - c. symptoms are improving.

Note: repeat COVID testing should not be required to return to FM.

If a child or staff member has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19:

1. Fishtown Montessori will close for a period of 48 hours following the confirmed positive COVID-19 case so that FM can be cleaned and disinfected properly.
2. Administrators will call the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and report a confirmed case of COVID-19
3. All children and staff in the same classroom or who have come in close contact with (defined as greater than 10 minutes of interaction less than 6 feet away) must quarantine at home for 14 days.
 - a. Anyone who develops symptoms during that time should contact their healthcare provider to request testing.
 - b. It is requested that in this case that parents voluntarily report positive test results to the Head of School in writing.
4. Children or staff with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must follow criteria for return to FM as determined by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health or other applicable regulatory agencies.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Promote Social Distancing: It will not be possible to prevent children and infants from coming in close contact with one another and their teachers. Instead, the goal is to create cohorts of children and staff to limit the number of people in close contact in order to lower the risk of transmission.

- As much as possible, the same teachers will be with the same children each day, limiting cross-exposure between groups.
- Staff breaks and lunch hours for staff will be staggered when possible in order to minimize interactions.
- Employees should maintain distance and avoid eating near or across from each other.
- All nonessential visitors and volunteers will be restricted.
- Only staff and children will be permitted through the first set of doors, parents and other nonessential visitors will not be permitted to enter the building.
- All special events such as group orientations, group holiday events, and special performances are cancelled until further notice.
- All field trips are cancelled.
- When taking walks or playing outdoors, choosing space that is not occupied by children other than those who attend Fishtown Montessori will be prioritized.
- Children will not be permitted to use playground equipment until further notice.
- Each child will have their own personal supply of items such as crayons, markers, colored pencils, eraser, pencil sharpener, scissors, school glue, glue stick, hole puncher, etc. This personal supply should not be used by anyone other than your child.

Social Distancing During Nap Time

- Children will not wear face masks during nap time as this is not advisable or recommended for safety reasons.
- At nap time the children's cots will be spaced out as much as possible and children will be arranged head to toe in order to reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Ventilation measures will be used including the use of open windows and fans to promote fresh air circulation when practical.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Hand Hygiene: Hand hygiene will be performed by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer if hand washing is not available. Hand hygiene should be practiced at the following times:

- Upon entry to FM (use sanitizer, switch to indoor shoes, then wash hands)
- Before and after eating or assisting children with meals and bottles
- Before and after preparing food, bottles, and drinks
- Before and after breaks
- Before and after medication administration
- Before and after diapering
- Before and after helping a child with toileting or in the bathroom
- After using the toilet
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose
- After playing outdoors
- After coming in contact with bodily fluids
- After handling garbage
- Before leaving FM

Handwashing Procedure: Follow these five steps every time.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Push LED timer.
3. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
4. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds, stopping when the LED timer light turns red.
5. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
6. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Universal Face Covering: To protect the public from the spread of COVID-19, the Pennsylvania Department of health has required that face coverings must be worn in certain circumstances as described in the Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health [Order for Universal Face Coverings](#) except as provided in Section 3 of the Order.

- New three-ply child-sized masks will be provided to every child upon entry each day. A replacement will be provided if or when this mask becomes soiled. A \$20 per month fee will be charged per child to cover the costs of child masks.
- Masks from home are not permitted to be worn in the building because their effectiveness and cleanliness are impossible to confirm. Parents are asked to provide children with a labeled ziplock or other waterproof reusable sealed bag to place their home mask in upon arrival. This mask bag will be placed in their school bag so they have it for when they leave the building.
- Children two years old and older are required to wear a face covering indoors as described in the Order.
- If a staff member or child is outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from individuals who are not a part of their household, they must wear a mask. If they are able to maintain six feet distance when outdoors, they are permitted to take down their mask.
- If a staff member is unable to place a face covering safely on the child's face, they should not do so.
- If a child 2 years old or older is unable to remove a face covering without assistance, the child is not required to wear one.
- The Department of Health recognizes that getting younger children to be comfortable wearing face coverings and to keep them on may create some difficulties. Under these circumstances, parents, guardians, licensed child care providers in community-based and school settings or responsible persons may consider prioritizing the wearing of face coverings to times when it is difficult for the child to maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from others who are not a part of their household (e.g., during carpool drop off or pick up, or when standing in line at FM). Ensuring proper face covering size and fit and providing children with frequent reminders and education on the importance and proper wearing of cloth face coverings may help address these issues.
- Individuals who cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition, including those with respiratory issues that impede breathing are not required to wear a face mask.
- All staff must wear face coverings at all times during child care operations except while eating or if outdoors during break time and unless a medical reason prevents the staff from wearing a face covering as provided in Section 3 of the Order.
- Staff are asked to refrain from eating while in the presence of children.
- Staff are asked to wear a three-ply individually wrapped adult-sized disposable mask provided by Fishtown Montessori rather than a mask from home or a face shield.
 - In the event that viewing the mouth is an important part of a lesson (such as the slow and intentional articulation of sounds during phoneme segmentation) face shields may be worn during that lesson.
- If using a disposable mask, a new mask should be used each day.
- Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are required to wear masks at pick-up and drop-off.

Masks Should Not be Placed on:

- Babies and children younger than 2 years old.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- Children during naptime.

Other PPE

- Toddler staff will wear gowns/smock/scrub jackets over their clothing. If contaminated by a bodily fluid, the staff member will change their gowns/smock/scrub jacket. Gowns/smock/scrub jackets will be laundered if soiled and on a daily basis.
- Staff should wear gloves when diapering.
- Staff should wear gloves when preparing food or bottles.

CLEANING, DISINFECTION AND VENTILATION EFFORTS

Intensify Cleaning and Disinfection Efforts:

- Items that are difficult to clean, sanitize or disinfect should be reduced or eliminated such as stuffed animals, shared pillows, etc.
- All toys or works that need to be cleaned should be set aside in a container marked "soiled toys". Wash toys that have not been mouthed with soapy water and air dry before the next use.
- All works should be wiped clean with a sanitizing cleaner and sprayed or wiped with a disinfectant or run through the disinfecting dishwasher on a daily basis.
- Any food prep work will be used by only one child before being disinfected for the next child. Staff will use a clean pair of gloves when handling food.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily. This includes tables, chairs, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, strollers, and sinks.
- Wipe off playground equipment between usage by different classrooms or cohorts of children.
- Keep each child's bedding separate. Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Cots and mats should be labeled for each child. Bedding that touches a child's skin should be cleaned weekly.
- We use a disinfecting product that is EPA-approved for use against emerging pathogens such as COVID-19. All cleaning products are securely stored out of the reach of children.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Fishtown Montessori is professionally cleaned and disinfected every evening after children are in care.

Air Quality and Ventilation

- Windows will remain open to promote fresh air circulation whenever practical.
- Fans will be used to draw fresh air in and blow air out, promoting circulation of fresh air in the building whenever practical.
- Ceiling fans will be used to promote air circulation and diffusion of particles, and to reduce air stagnation.

Food Safety Procedures:

- Staff members will use a gloved hand to plate each child's snack to serve it. Self-serve snacks will be discontinued until further notice.
- Children should not use the same serving utensils, clean utensils should be used each time if children need to serve food with a utensil.
- Sinks used for food preparation should not be used for any other purposes.
- Staff should ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- Staff and children should wash their hands before and after preparing food.
- Staff should wash their hands before and after helping children to eat.
- Staff should wear gloves while preparing food/ bottles and feeding children or giving them bottles.
- If place settings are used, staff should put a place setting on each table for children rather than having children get their own fork, spoon, knife, plate, napkin, or cup.
- Staff should pour water for each child rather than having them share a pitcher.
- The snack table should be cleaned by an adult before and after each use.
- Lunch tables should be cleaned and disinfected before and after eating lunch.
- Children will continue to eat lunch that is brought from home each day.
- Children are not permitted to share food or beverages.

PARENT & FAMILY EFFORTS

Health and safety starts at home. We rely on the efforts of all our community members to support this COVID-19 plan.

- Parents must maintain social distancing of six feet from others every time you drop off or pick up your child.
- Parents must wear a mask every time you drop off or pick up your child.
- Provide your child with a ziplock or other designated bag to place their mask from home in once they arrive at FM and change into their FM-supplied disposable mask.
- Label all of your child's belongings so that they do not get misplaced or mistaken for another child's belongings.
- Do a symptom check as indicated above, including temperature check prior to leaving the house each day
- Refrain from giving your child fever reducing medicine before drop-off at FM
- Limit drop off and pick up to one parent or guardian when possible
- Parents are encouraged to have the same parent or caregiver pickup or drop off daily when possible
- Launder the nap mats when soiled or every weekend at minimum
- Launder school bags when soiled or every weekend at minimum
- Launder lunch bags when soiled or every weekend at minimum
- Launder outerwear when soiled or every weekend at minimum
- Parents and guardians should refrain from entering the Fishtown Montessori building unless specifically invited to do so
- Create a plan: Personal strollers or car seats are not permitted in the building until further notice.
- Support the health and safety of all our community members by complying with these COVID-19 policies.