



# CHILDREN'S GARDEN

*Montessori School*

**COVID-19 Protocols  
for the 2021/2022 School Year  
A Handbook Addendum for Families**

## **Safety Procedures and Protocols to Facilitate In-Person Education**

As we bring our community together once more, it is crucial that each of us continue to practice flexibility. Children’s Garden Montessori School (CGMS) has created this COVID-19 Handbook, which describes safety protocols to respond to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) COVID-19 pandemic and is to be used by CGMS Employees, Parents, and Children (the “Community”). Parents, please read this Handbook and return a signed copy to the school acknowledging your acceptance of the responsibility to help protect our children and staff from the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

The Handbook supplements our current policies and is based upon current information. The Handbook may be updated as new information becomes available. The Community is expected to read and adhere to any updates.

### **Information Regarding Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers general guidelines and recommendations to the public regarding how to limit the spread of COVID-19 in schools. Guidance for school is as follows:

Students benefit from in-person instruction whenever possible, thus it is imperative for the safety of the community that we practice layered mitigation strategies to allow the school to remain fully open and operational as much as we are able.

Regardless of the level of community transmission, it is critical that schools use and layer [prevention strategies](#). Five key prevention strategies are essential to safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to prevent COVID-19 transmission in schools:

1. Universal and correct use of [masks](#)
2. [Physical distancing](#)
3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)
4. [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities
5. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with isolation and quarantine

Schools providing in-person instruction should prioritize two prevention strategies:

1. Universal and correct use of masks should be required
2. Physical distancing should be maximized to the greatest extent possible.

All prevention strategies provide some level of protection, and layered strategies implemented at the same time provide the greatest level of protection. Schools should adopt prevention strategies to the largest extent practical—a layered approach is essential.

**To promote safety in our Community, the following wellness procedures will be followed:**

- Temperatures will be taken regularly for all Children and Employees. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 F or higher must leave immediately.
- The Community should have a clear understanding of when to stay home or when to go home. Any person with the following symptoms should not come to school or should leave immediately, if they develop while at school. Inform the school of present symptoms and reach out to a health care provider about COVID-19 testing and next steps for treatment.
  - Feeling feverish, having chills, or temperature 100.4°F or higher.
  - New or unexplained persistent cough.
  - Shortness of breath.
  - Difficulty breathing.
  - Loss of taste or smell.
  - Fatigue.
  - Muscle aches.
  - Headache.
  - Sore throat.
  - Nausea or vomiting.
  - Diarrhea.
  - Runny nose or congestion.
- Students or Employees may return to school if the symptoms resolve within 24 hours from their onset, 24 hours after being fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications. If symptoms persist, they must contact their health provider about a COVID-19 test.

- Community members must stay at home if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or are showing COVID-19 symptoms. In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, the Student or Employee must remain at home until it has been 24 hours since they had a fever, and any respiratory symptoms have improved, **and** it has been at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared. Students and Employees don't need a negative COVID-19 test to return to school.
- All non-vaccinated community members must stay at home if anyone in their household has tested positive for COVID-19, and must remain at home until they are cleared to return to school, based on the current recommendations for close contacts.
- Quarantine Guidance after COVID-19 Vaccine:
  - Whether or not you are in quarantine, watch for symptoms in the 14 days after exposure and get tested if you start to develop symptoms. If you test positive, [you will need to isolate](#).
  - If a full two weeks have passed since your final dose of the vaccine, you do **not** need to quarantine if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 -- but you should still wear a mask and physically distance. If it has been less than two weeks since your final dose of the vaccine, [you should quarantine](#) if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19.
  - Fully vaccinated individuals are recommended to take a COVID test 3 to 5 days following a known exposure, regardless of symptoms.
- Non-vaccinated community members who are considered close contacts with any person or persons who test positive for COVID-19, must quarantine A confirmed COVID-19 case or close contact should follow public health isolation or quarantine instructions for return to school/work.
  - Only asymptomatic close contacts qualify for shortened quarantine.
  - Symptomatic close contacts should isolate from symptom onset and pursue evaluation, including testing. If test is negative, they should complete a 14 day quarantine from date of last exposure.
  - Anyone who tests positive using any viral diagnostic test type (not antibody tests) should be treated as a case and should isolate. No additional test results can end a symptomatic positive individual's isolation period early.
- CGMS recommends contacting your PCP for advice involving illness and recommendations for returning to school.

- Other behavioral modifications:
  - Please note that this is general guidance and a request of our community. We thank you in advance for taking the safety of the entire community into consideration when considering travel and socialization.
  - TRAVEL GUIDANCE:
    - Symptoms may not appear until 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. We follow the [CDC Guidance for Travel](#) and recommend reviewing the [CDC Frequently Asked Questions About Travel](#) as well as the [CDC's Considerations for Travelers](#)
    - Community member who are not fully vaccinated and must travel, take the following steps to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:
      - Before you travel:
        - Get tested with a viral test 1-3 days before the trip.
      - While traveling:
        - Wear a mask over your nose and mouth. [Masks are required](#) on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
        - Avoid crowds and stay at least 6 feet/2 meters (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who is not traveling with you.
        - Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).
      - After travel:
        - [Get tested](#) with a [viral test](#) 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel.
          - Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days.
          - If your test is positive, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected.

- If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
  - Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if symptoms develop.
  - Follow all [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements.
- CGMS staff are not equipped to police the activities of the community beyond the walls of the school. When planning vacation and travel for unvaccinated individuals, consider the following:
  - Travel may put individuals at increased risk of contracting COVID-19, especially those that are not fully vaccinated. Travel may involve crowded public vehicles and spaces, where close contact with a high number of unique contacts with unknown vaccination status may occur.
  - The same layered mitigation strategies used in schools are recommended when traveling, especially those who are not yet fully vaccinated. Masking is recommended for anyone two years old and older in crowded indoor spaces, and is required on public transportation and in transportation hubs by federal order.
  - Families and staff are encouraged to get vaccinated before traveling and to use layered mitigation strategies to stay safe. After returning, students and staff should monitor for symptoms and get tested if symptoms develop.
- SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:
  - We recommend following the [CDC Guidelines for Personal and Social Activities](#), and avoiding activities and large group gatherings that will increase your risk.

## **DAILY MITIGATION PRACTICES**

### **Drop off/pick up protocols:**

- Parents, caregivers and other individuals must:
  - Adhere to social distancing during pick up and drop off.
  - Not loiter during these times, assuring that all families are able to drop off or pick up their own children in an expeditious manner.
  - Drop off at the specific gate for their classroom, during their drop off window.
  - Walk their children to the appropriate gate.
  - Parents and caregivers pick up their child from the same gate, during the following window.
  - Parents will walk their children from the appropriate gate.
  
- With the exception of enrolled children and staff members, there will be limited access to the school
  - All visitors will need to wear masks while inside the building, and be prepared to follow other school protocols
  - No visitors experiencing any symptoms of illness are allowed in the building under any circumstances.
  - Depending on community spread levels and local guidance, vaccinated visitors may be allowed into the classrooms on a limited basis
    - In order to spend time in the classroom, around the unvaccinated students, all staff and visitors must be fully-vaccinated
    - Anyone entering a classroom is expected to show proof of vaccination status

### **Expectations for Students:**

In order to keep the community as safe as possible, students in our community will have the following expectations:

- Mask wearing protocols
  - All Students ages 3 years and up must wear masks while inside the school building.
  - Mask wearing in outdoor spaces is recommended, but optional. Parents shall fill out a Mask Designation form and CGMS staff will support children in following these designations.

- Students enrolled in the Toddler Program will not be required to wear masks. Parents of toddlers who wish for their child to wear a mask at school can fill out a Mask Designation form and CGMS staff will support children in following these designations.
- Students 3 years and older should bring two clean masks with them each day. CGMS will have a supply of masks as a back-up.
- Students who need support in learning to use their masks will be provided with opportunities to remove them in special spaces where social distancing and individual work is possible, with the goal of fully adjusting to mask-wearing.
- Handwashing protocols
  - Handwashing is critical upon arrival to ensure a safe environment.
  - Teachers will create lessons and plans for how to stagger children's bathroom use.
  - Set times for handwashing
    - Upon arrival and everytime they come inside
    - After each work
    - After using the toilet
    - After contact with bodily functions
    - Before and after eating
    - After touching their eyes, nose or mouth
  - Children will be coached in proper handwashing timelines and techniques.
- Social distancing protocols
  - Social distancing will be encouraged and maintained through staff teaching (Grace and Courtesy Lessons) and environmental design
  - Students will be discouraged from giving high-fives, hugs, handshakes, fist-bumps, etc.
  - Students will be encouraged and supported in engaging in age appropriate socialization with peers and adults.
- Other Mitigation strategies
  - The school and staff will continue to provide clean, well-ventilated classrooms to promote and support healthy learning.
  - Multi-layered mitigation strategies will continue to remain in place in order to protect the health of the whole community.



