



2021-2022 COVID Prevention Plan

8.26.21

August 26, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians and staff,

It is hard to imagine that we are still facing many of the same challenges as we plan to start the 2021-22 School Year that we faced in March 2020 when schools were first shut down. Due to the extraordinary efforts of our staff and our commitment to following the strictest CDC guidelines, we had a very successful year of In Person learning last year. While a few students were diagnosed with COVID in our school community, we were 100% successful at preventing secondary transmission. We learned a lot last year while operating during the pandemic and we have continued to research the most current guidelines to create a COVID Prevention Plan before reopening this September.

Montessori of New Paltz will be open for In Person learning for all students. If we are shut down by the state or local authorities, we will offer Distance learning for all students. A hybrid model is not being offered.

This document is intended to provide guidance for our COVID Prevention Plan. This plan has been developed based on guidance documents for K-12 Schools and Early Childhood Centers published by the New York State Education Department (NYSED), the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In preparation of this plan, we have updated our Reopening Plan which was created in July 2020 after careful review of the Reopening plans of several Ulster County school districts including the New Paltz Central School District. In addition, we reviewed the results of the survey we conducted of the MNP parent community. And finally, we conducted an in-person site review with an Infectious Disease Doctor from Vassar Hospital to get advice specific to our school and program. We discussed the outdoor classrooms, playgrounds, indoor classrooms, restrooms, hallways, learning materials, etc. Dr. Cluzet's suggestions were incorporated into our Reopening Plan. Throughout the school year we received continued advice as new scenarios presented themselves. Dr. Cluzet was consulted in preparation of this new COVID Prevention Plan.

The preparation of our plan includes the utmost commitment to the health, safety, and well-being of our students and staff. Our plan also focuses on the continuity of Learning while nurturing and sustaining the developmental needs of the whole child. This includes equal attention to social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs. This plan will be modified as needed in accordance with state and local guidelines.

There will be consistent communication throughout the School Year with the Montessori of New Paltz community.

Sincerely,
Joy Trapani
Director

Montessori of New Paltz is a small Private school for students age 3 through 6th grade. We are recognized by New York State Education Department as a non-public school. We will reopen for

staff trainings and meetings August 30-September 7, 2021. September 8, 2021 will be student orientation for new Primary Students. On September 9, 2021, phase-in will begin for the Preschoolers and Kindergartners through September 15. Their first full day is September 17. On September 9, the Elementary Students will start with their regular full day schedule. Every school year begins with a focus on transitioning students, teaching ground rules and community building. This year particular attention will be given to teaching new safety protocols, with a focus on social emotional well-being and the impact of COVID-19 on the students.

Capacity: Our current capacity per the Board of Health is 45 students. For the start of the School Year, out of an Abundance of Caution, there will be 3 separate cohorts with a maximum of 15 students. Each cohort will have its own indoor and outdoor classroom.

Montessori of New Paltz will implement the guidance suggested by the CDC as outlined below:

CDC guidance identifies multiple prevention strategies that schools can implement in a layered approach to promote safer in-person learning and care.

- [Promoting COVID-19 vaccination](#) for those eligible
- [Consistent and correct use of masks](#) by people who are not fully vaccinated
- [Physical distancing](#) among people who are not fully vaccinated
- [Screening testing](#) in K-12 schools
- Improving [ventilation](#)
- [Handwashing](#) and [respiratory etiquette](#)
- Staying home when sick and getting tested
- Testing and [contact tracing](#) in combination with [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#)
- Routine [cleaning with disinfection](#) under certain conditions.

Implementing these strategies is particularly important in areas with moderate, substantial, or high transmission rates and low vaccination coverage, and to protect people who are not fully vaccinated. CDC has developed guidance that administrators in K-12 schools and ECE programs can use to help protect students, teachers, and staff; slow the spread of SARS-CoV-2; and support in-person learning and care.

Per the guidance of CDC, the school encourages all those eligible to be fully vaccinated.

- Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection. A [growing body of evidence](#) suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to others than people who are not fully vaccinated. In most settings, people who are [fully vaccinated](#) and do not have compromised immune systems can safely resume activities they did before the pandemic.
- COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all people 12 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future.

Social Distancing and Face Covering:

- The school and its staff will ensure that appropriate social distancing of at least 6 feet is maintained between individuals while indoors.
- Staff and Students will wear face coverings whenever indoors (except when eating) and outside when social distancing is not possible.
- When outdoors, masks will not be necessary while students are with members of their cohort unless there will be sustained close contact of unvaccinated individuals lasting 15 minutes or longer or if the child or Parent/Guardian chooses.
- If cohorts are mixed for special instruction, masks will be worn inside and outside.
- If cohorts are mixed inside for special instruction, masks will be worn as well as maintaining appropriate social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- During naptime, mats will be spaced apart and placed so that children are head to toe for sleeping. Masks will not be worn when sleeping.
- Students will be given mask breaks throughout the day with appropriate social distancing.
- Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such covering would impair their physical health or mental health, are not subject to the required use of a face covering.
- The school will assist students who may have difficulty in adapting to wearing a face covering.
- The school will provide training to all students, faculty, and staff on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to, appropriate face coverings using CDC guidelines.

Personal Protective Equipment

- The school will provide acceptable face coverings to our faculty and staff who directly interact with students while at work at no cost to the faculty or staff member, pursuant to Executive Order 202.16, as amended and extended.
- The school will maintain an adequate supply of face coverings, masks, and other required PPE on hand should staff need a replacement, or a student be in need.
- The school will allow students, faculty, and staff to use their own acceptable face coverings, and shall not prevent employees from wearing their personally owned protective coverings (e.g., surgical masks, N-95 respirators, face shields), as long as they adhere to the minimum standards of protection for the specific activity.
- Each student should have at least 3 masks available which need to be laundered (or replaced if disposable) daily. Face coverings should be cleaned or replaced after use and must not be shared. Students and parents/legal guardians will be responsible for maintaining their face coverings and are directed to consult CDC guidance for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of PPE, as well as instructions on use and cleaning.

- The school recommends that students and staff attach their face masks to a lanyard. The school will provide for those in need.

Cohorts:

To the greatest extent possible cohorts will be a fixed group containing the same students for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Faculty, however, may instruct more than one cohort so long as appropriate social distancing and face covering is maintained.

To the extent possible, there will be no visitors to the school during school hours other than the staff. In-person presence will be limited to only those staff who are necessary to be at the school during normal school hours. Exceptions will be made if a student is ill and needs to be picked up by a parent. All meetings will be conducted via zoom or by phone.

Before and After Care are temporarily being offered to MNP students only. The goal will be to play outside to the extent possible based on the weather. Cohorts will likely be mingled; therefore, masks will be worn and appropriate social distancing will be maintained.

Space Configurations:

We have purchased 3 commercial grade tents where we created outdoor classrooms. Each cohort has their own designated outdoor classroom and meeting area. Shared playground areas will be scheduled to be used by one cohort at a time. The three-acre campus provides us generous space for social distancing in our outdoor classrooms, playground areas, open space and nature trails.

Each cohort has a separate classroom with at least one or two entrances and exits and many windows.

Drop off and Pick Up:

Student Drop off is from 8:30am-9am. Pick up is from 2:50pm-3:05pm Children are greeted at their cars where they say goodbye. Four cars are parked in the driveway at a time for drop off and pick up. The greeting teacher will be wearing a mask. We ask that all unvaccinated persons wear a mask when on school grounds. Parents must take their child's temperature at home every day before arriving at school and complete the Wellness check on the Playground app before entering the driveway. Anyone who does not have a complete wellness check will be directed to get back in the car line to keep a smooth continuous flow of traffic.

When Entering the school building:

- The two Primary cohorts will use the coat room, but the schedule will be staggered so that most of the time, only one cohort will be in the coatroom at a time.
- In the coatroom we will keep all traffic flowing in one direction based on the destination of the cohort.

- PreK-K students will wear masks when entering the coatroom with their cohort.
- Elementary students will wear masks when entering the building and will use the door that leads directly into their classroom taking turns by their cubbies.
- We will limit the number of students waiting in the hallway to use the bathroom and mark spaces on the floor denoting spaces of six feet.
- There are no commonly used areas where people congregate.
- When inside the classroom students can be socially distanced when using small tables or desks one student at a time. Larger tables will seat students with appropriate social distancing spaces marked.
- As we are using a cohort model, cleaning and disinfection will be performed in between each group's use instead of individual's use.

Signage & Communication:

Signs will be posted throughout the school and messages will be shared via email and the website's parent blog with the MNP community which are consistent with DOH COVID-19 protocols and procedures regarding public health protections against COVID-19. Where needed the school will develop our own customized and age-appropriate signage that is consistent with the Department's signage.

Signage will be used to remind students to:

- o Catch their sneezes and coughs.
- o Wash their hands after using a tissue or any time soiled.
- o Wash their hands every time they enter the building from outdoors.
- o Wash their hands every time they use the toilet. (Signs at every sink)

Staff signage and messages will include reminders to:

- o Stay home if they feel sick.
- o Cover nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering at all times when entering the school building or when social distancing is not possible outside.
- o Change into indoor shoes upon entering the building.
- o Wash hands upon entering the building.
- o Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.
- o Adhere to social distancing instructions.
- o Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID

Parent messages will include reminders to:

- o Keep their child home if they feel sick or have a fever.
- o Cover their nose and mouth with an acceptable face covering at drop off and pick up if unvaccinated or presenting any symptoms.
- o Report symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19:

- **Fever (100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or greater) or chills**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Fatigue**
- **Muscle or body aches**
- **Headache**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Congestion or runny nose**
- **Nausea or vomiting and/or Diarrhea**

Expectations for Parent/Guardians: Know the above signs and symptoms. **Do not send your child to school if they exhibit any of the symptoms.** Notify the school if your child has developed any symptoms of COVID-19.

Screening and Testing:

Out of an abundance of caution, due to the extremely contagious Delta variant and high rates of transmission in Ulster County, the school reserves the right to mandate a weekly COVID testing requirement for all unvaccinated staff and students.

Daily Temperature Screenings for Students & Staff: All students and staff are required to have their temperature taken before arriving at school each day. In the event that a student or staff member has a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, they are expected to stay home.

Daily Symptom Questionnaire for Students & Staff: All students and staff members are required to complete the daily wellness check on the Playground App before arriving at school each day. Any student or staff who do not pass the wellness check is expected to stay home.

In the event that a student or staff member does not pass the screening they are expected to notify the office via email. If a student or staff member develops symptoms during the school day, or outside of school hours, they are expected to immediately notify the director.

Ventilation:

Every room in the school has one or two doors and many windows. Prior to reopening in September 2020, we added a 400CFM (Cubic Foot per Minute) Exhaust fan with EA (Exhaust Air) grilles in each room for fresh air exchange.

Respiratory Hygiene:

The COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. Therefore, it is important that students and staff cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately. A supply of tissues and no touch/floor pedal trash cans will be available in each room. If no tissue is available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. Always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing, and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

All student snacks and lunches will be provided by parents, no snack buffets until further notice. Children will be assigned seats at a table 6 feet apart. Weather permitting children will eat on their personal outdoor picnic tables or yoga mat.

Shared Objects:

Every student has his/her own coat and shoe cubby. Any student who is reading or an emerging reader has their own book cubby. When possible paper readers will be replaced by individual books given to each student. Where possible students will have their own learning materials. Rather than sharing pencils, etc. as would normally happen in a Montessori classroom, each student will have his/her own personal supply box with pencils, scissors, glue, etc. Any of the wooden and other non-porous Montessori learning materials that cannot be replaced with an individual material will be used by only one cohort per day or will be disinfected before being shared by another cohort. Each child will wash his/her hands or use hand sanitizer directly before and after using any shared material.

Positive Screen Protocols

- Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, will be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.
- Students who are being sent home because of a positive screen (e.g., onset of COVID-19 symptoms) will be immediately separated from other students and supervised until their parent/legal guardian or emergency contact can retrieve them from school.
- The school will provide information on health care and testing resources.
- The Director will immediately notify the local health department to determine what steps are needed for the school community.
- The school requires individuals to immediately disclose if and when their responses to any of the aforementioned questions changes, such as if they begin to experience symptoms, including during or outside of school hours.

Tracing and Tracking:

If a student or staff member reports having tested positive for COVID-19, school administrators or his/her designee will notify the local health department to determine what steps are needed for the school community.

Schools are mandated to cooperate with state and local health departments for contact tracing.

The school will collaborate with the local health department to determine the parameters, conditions, or metrics that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases are increasing beyond an acceptable level.

Public Health Officials assume the task of contact tracing, once notified.

Quarantine, Isolation, and Return to School**Returning after non-COVID-19 related illness:****Students and staff may return to school:**

- Once there is no fever, without the use of fever reducing medicines, and they have felt well for at least 24 hours
- If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider provide a note stating they are clear to return to school.

Returning after a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 or presumptive positive:**Students and staff may return to school:**

- If it has been at least ten days since the individual first developed symptoms, AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without using fever-reducing medications, AND
- symptoms (such as cough, runny nose, etc.) have improved

Returning after completion of a quarantine due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19:

If an individual has been exposed to COVID-19, the school will follow the CDC's recommendation to institute a 14-day quarantine period after last contact with the infected person. Any individual who has been exposed to COVID-19 may return to school after completing a 14-day quarantine as long as they do not develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection:**Hygiene**

- The school will adhere to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including "Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19," and the "STOP THE SPREAD" poster, as applicable.

- Good hand and respiratory hygiene have always been part of our curriculum prior to COVID-19 and will continue after COVID-19. The first lesson given to each student at orientation is proper hand washing. All students and staff will be trained and reminded regularly to use proper hand and respiratory hygiene. Guides to proper hand washing signs are hung at every sink. Information is provided to parents and/or legal guardians on ways to reinforce this at home. At a minimum, students and staff should wash hands, as follows:
 - Before using shared objects or surfaces
 - Before and after snacks and lunch
 - After using the bathroom
 - After helping a student with toileting
 - After sneezing, wiping, or blowing nose, or coughing into hands
 - Before putting on and after taking off their face covering
 - Upon coming in from outdoors
 - Anytime hands are visibly soiled

- Every classroom has at least one sink except the classroom located outside the bathroom where there are 2 sinks. In addition, we have an outdoor sink. Each sink/handwashing area is equipped with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
- Each tent or outdoor classroom has a hand sanitizing station with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Student use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers will be supervised by teachers to minimize accidental ingestion and promote safe usage. Parents/guardians can inform the school that they do not want their child to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers by sending a written notice to the school. The school will provide accommodations for students who cannot use hand sanitizer, to allow for their use of handwashing stations.
- Students will be taught, and signage will be placed near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
- Staff will be reminded that alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be flammable and will not be located or used in the kitchen where a hand washing station is located.
- Every indoor and outdoor classroom is equipped with touch-free receptacles for disposal of soiled items, and PPE. Every classroom and outdoor classroom is further equipped with recycling bins and compost bins.

Cleaning and Disinfection:

Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure.

The school is cleaned and disinfected daily with a more thorough cleaning performed every weekend, using EPA approved cleaning and disinfecting products that are effective against the COVID 19 virus.

The following high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day. These include:

- o Tables
- o Doorknobs
- o Light switches
- o Countertops
- o Handles
- o Desks
- o Phones
- o Keyboards and tablet
- o Toilets and restrooms
- o Faucets and sink

Students will not be present when disinfectants are in use and will not participate in cleaning and/or disinfection activities.

Playgrounds will be cleaned per CDC guidance:

- o outdoor areas, like playgrounds, generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection
- o spray disinfectant will not be used on outdoor playgrounds- as it is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19
- o high touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings will be cleaned routinely
- o cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) is not recommended and will not take place
- o Sidewalks and roads will not be disinfected.

DAILY INSPECTION CHECKLIST FOR COVID-19 SUPPLIES

It is the expectation that all staff members inspect their workspace/classroom daily. Staff are to notify the office if running low on any of the following:

- Extra Face Coverings
- Tissues
- Hand Sanitizer
- Soap
- Paper Towels
- Cleaner/Disinfectant

Cleaning and Disinfection Following Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case:

- The school will provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces.
- The school will follow CDC guidelines on “Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility,” <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- If someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, the following will be performed::
 - Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
 - Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, unless waiting 24 hours is not feasible, in which case, wait as long as possible.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
 - Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, that area will be reopened for use.

Deliveries:

Will be left on the ramp outside the office door or received outside by the office staff.

Please note that some of this may change. We will continually monitor for outbreaks as well as the transmission rates in our local community and adapt the strategies as appropriate.

Sample Health Screening Questionnaire

Have you knowingly been in close or in proximate contact in the past 14 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?

Please circle YES or NO

Have you tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Please circle YES or NO

Have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, which cannot be attributed to any underlying medical conditions? Symptoms may include:

- temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit, or greater, in the past 14 days (including today)
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- muscle or body aches
- Headache
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- congestion or runny nose,
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

Please circle YES or NO

If you've answered **NO** to all of the above questions, you have PASSED the health screening

If you've answered **YES** to any of the above questions, you have FAILED the health screening.

Parent Verification of Health Screening Questionnaire

All parents/guardians are required to conduct daily health screenings for their children prior to arriving at school. Please conduct the screening at home, including taking your child's temperature daily, and complete the Wellness Check on the Playground app before entering the driveway. When conducting the health screening at home, if your child does not pass the screening, they should not be present in school. We cannot check in any student who has not completed and passed the Wellness check.

I, _____ parent of _____
Full name Full name

agree to complete the Health Screening Questionnaire/ Wellness Check and temperature check for my child on a daily basis.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____