VMS 2020-2021 COVID Policy and Procedures

**Illness Policy:**

* All children will be temperature checked prior to admittance.
* Please do not bring your children to school if:
  + They have a cough.
  + Or, they are experiencing shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
  + Or, they have two or more of the following symptoms
    - A fever of 100.4°F or higher or a sense of having a fever
    - A sore throat
    - Chills or repeated shaking with chills
    - Headache
    - New loss of taste or smell
    - Muscle aches
  + Or, someone in your house exhibits the above.
  + Or, the child has been exposed to someone suspected or confirmed to have Covid-19.

**If a child becomes sick at School**

* The child will be quarantined into a separate room.
* You will be contacted immediately.
* Please designate someone to be available to take the child home within 60 minutes.

**CDC Guidelines for potential COVID exposure, or COVID illness**

* Children must stay home if someone in their household are waiting on COVID test results. The child can return once the test comes back negative.
* Children must stay home for 10 days if a family member in their household has tested positive for COVID, regardless of whether the child has symptoms.
* If your child has COVID, alert the school as soon as possible. Your child must remain at home until they have two negative COVID tests no less than 24 hours apart and are fever free for at least 72 hours.
* **If a child or teacher in a POD has a positive COVID test**, that POD will be closed for 2-5 days, through a weekend, for extensive cleaning and sanitizing. An example is a child or teacher is diagnosed with COVID on Tuesday, the POD will be closed Wednesday through Sunday for cleaning.
* The entire school will be notified if someone at VMS tests positive. The school will not close for a positive result, only the POD will close.

**Key Items**

* Parents will not be permitted to enter the School building. Teachers and administration will be available after school via phone or ZOOM with an appointment.
* All parent information nights will be via ZOOM in the fall. Conferences will be held in person, with masks and socially distanced, outdoors when possible.
* All staff will wear face coverings in the presence of parents or children, except when outside on the playground and distancing is possible.
* Parents and caregivers must wear face coverings when dropping and picking up children.
* Face coverings are required for children 5 and up and are strongly encouraged for all children age 3 and up.
* We will work with any child whose family would like them to consistently wear a mask at school.
* Children will be allowed to be without a mask on the playground if they can socially distance. Masks will be kept in reusable pouches labeled with the child’s name, collected by the teacher once on the playground, and redistributed prior to returning to the classroom.
* All children should bring a small backpack that contains one set of extra clothing and the child’s lunch bag/box. Containers in the lunch should be able to be opened by the child without adult assistance. Please label them with your child’s name.
* Each child will have a designated table space. This is where they will keep all supplies (provided by VMS) have lunch and do their work. Additionally, they will have individual work rugs (provided by VMS), washed bi-weekly.
* Floor work will have spaces designated for the rug, to make sure social distancing rules are enforced.
* Each classroom will have additional playpark times available every 1.5-2 hours of the school day. We realize this does conflict with the 3-hour Montessori work cycle but is in the best interest of the health and safety of the children and staff.
* All work is sanitized between use.

**Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Children**

Morning Greeting Procedures

* Regular drop-off will be from 8:00-8:30AM.
* Parents and caregivers are required to wear a mask.
* A manned check-in table will be set up at the front entrance and at the toddler entrance of the building.
* Children in Lilac and Lavender will check in at the front entrance.
* Children in Sunflower, Honeysuckle and Sweet Pea will check in at the toddler entrance.
* The parent or other drop-off person will get the child out of the car and bring them to the check-in table.
* The child’s temperature will be taken with a touchless thermometer.
* The adult will confirm that the child has not exhibited the above symptoms.
* The child will be supervised on their way to the classroom.
* Please maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from staff and other parents during this process.
* Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day.

Afternoon Pick Up Procedures

* 12:30 and 3PM pick up will be at the main door of VMS.
* A staff member will escort the child to the parent.
* Children at school for aftercare will be picked up from the playground, weather permitting. Once the weather changes, we will update you as to your POD’s pick-up procedure.
* A staff member will escort the child to the parent.
* Please avoid congregating closely with other parents while waiting for your child.
* Once the child leaves the school building or playground, they will not be allowed to re-enter the property for that day.
* If you choose to allow your child to play in the grass area outside of the school, they must continue to social distance, as to not infect another POD of children.

Toddler Drop Off

* Families park in the upper lot and wait in the designated space until it is your turn to check in.
* Parents will drop their child outside with the toddler staff person at the check-in area.
* That staff person will escort the child to Honeysuckle classroom.

Toddler Pick-Up

* Parents will enter the toddler yard from the toddler side of the building. Please wait at the gate by the Honeysuckle classroom if the children are outside.
* If the children are in the building, knock on the outside door and wait for a teacher to greet and escort your child to you. Parents will not enter the classroom.
* The toddler teacher will be available via email, ZOOM or on the telephone from 3-4 each day, with an appointment.

**Safety Procedures Implemented at VMS**

We want you to know that we are taking every precaution to reduce the risk of infection in the school building and within the classrooms.

We recognize that the children in the same class will unavoidably interact with each other. Nonetheless, we have identified certain steps we can follow to minimize the risk.

**Classroom Setup**

1. Class sizes are 20 children.
2. Classes have been assigned so that the same children can be together all day, to keep the interaction between many at a minimum, siblings will be together.
3. Children will remain with their POD (classroom) for the entirety of their school day.
4. Each child will be assigned their own desk and work rug.
5. Desks and rug locations will be spread out at least 6 feet apart.
6. School will provide each child with a container and supplies that they can use individually rather than sharing.

**Sanitation**

1. We will teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.
2. We teach and reinforce use of face coverings among all staff.
3. Bathrooms will be used by one child at a time and sanitized in between.
4. Frequently touched surfaces within the school will be cleaned and sanitized at least daily (for example, door handles, sink handles).
5. Shared objects will be sanitized between uses.
6. Playground equipment will be sanitized between groups.
7. We will ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep products away from children.

**VMS tuition policy**

* *No refunds are made for missed school days due to illness, POD or school closure due to COVID, family vacation or inclement weather*
* VMS follows Evergreen School District for inclement weather closures and late start.
* A 30-day written notice is required for withdrawal from VMS, and responsibility of tuition remains for the entirety of the 30 days.
* Changes to your child’s schedule must be in writing prior to the 15th of the month for the next tuition month.
* Due to COVID scheduled drop-in aftercare from 3-6pm needs 48-hour notice and is not guaranteed. *We are unable to accommodate 7am or 6pm drop-in care for 2020-2021 school year.*

**VMS family agreement**

* Families will let VMS know if they have or will be traveling.
* Families who travel with their child, to any known COVID hot spot, should self-quarantine for the appropriate number of days prior to returning to VMS. Current hot spots include Georgia, Florida, Arizona, Texas, and California.
* Families agree to do their utmost to protect the POD their child is enrolled in. This includes social distancing, wearing masks where and when mandated, limiting travel, and isolating when appropriate.
* A signed parent agreement (attached)will be required on or before September 1st, for your child to start the fall term. This agreement states that families have read, understand, and agree to abide by the VMS COVID policies and procedures.

Interesting articles on COVID:

<https://www.cnn.com/world/live-news/coronavirus-pandemic-07-19-20-intl/h_9c56b06a3070237e875dfd234cbaf062?utm_term=15951648670862e2870401e85&utm_source=Copy+of+Five+Things+for+Sunday%2C+July+19+2020&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=227350_1595164867087&bt_ee=bt4nDZlOHciOiKlZ51eVgXUbv%2FiTkqKd5zvV%2Fme4HYasLrbRFtXoPhDD1teAoKP%2F&bt_ts=1595164867087>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/18/health/coronavirus-children-schools.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20200719&instance_id=20443&nl=the-morning%C2%AEi_id=114267123&segment_id=33788&te=1&user_id=6d0d4001e7dea13c0f27e8a176234f35>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>