



## **BEST PRACTICES COVID-19 SCHOOL OPERATIONS (Updated 9/1/2020)**

Montessori Child Development Center's mission is devoted to carrying out the work of Dr. Maria Montessori to provide children with academic excellence, utmost care, understanding, guidance, respect, and a beautiful and safe environment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have carefully designed a plan to continue our mission to enable us to operate safely, whether through Montessori On-Campus or through Montessori At-Home programs. Our efforts are focused on the successful implementation of MCDC's COVID-19 Best Practices to keep our students and staff safe by following scientific and medically proven protocols. Together, we can continue serving our community.

### **OUR APPROACH**

#### **HEALTH FIRST**

MCDC is committed to providing a safe and clean environment for our students and staff. These are four main points that will help ensure we can continue to serve our families during this health pandemic.

- Screening
- Health & Hygiene
- Social Distancing
- Face Coverings / Masks

## COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Families play a vital role in maintaining safety on campus. The most important safety factor is to keep a child home if he/she is sick. We want to work with families to support their child's adherence to safety measures while on campus, as well as at home. We must do our part to adhere to state health recommendations and regulations to control transmission and potential future outbreaks.

All families of MCDC have a shared responsibility to prevent the spread of the illness when they are aware or suspect that they have contracted a communicable disease. The health and safety of the students, staff, and families depend on the cooperation by all individuals who are a part of the school.

- **Follow Federal, State, and Local Orders.** All families are expected to adhere to the directives of applicable federal, state, and local government health departments, and the CDC regarding social distancing in public, wearing of face covering and other measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- **COVID -19 Testing and Notification.** If your child or someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19, you must notify MCDC as soon as possible.
- **Stay Home if Sick.** If your child is sick, you are expected to keep him/her home from school. You must notify MCDC as soon as possible.
- **Stay Home if Exposed.** If anyone in your household has been notified that they were in contact with an individual infected with COVID-19, follow CDC guidelines. You must notify MCDC as soon as possible.
- **Travel.** Avoid unnecessary travel, follow all COVID-19 travel protocols, and self-isolate if needed when returning from travel.
- **Health Checks.** The school will check the temperature of child and parent/guardian upon drop off. Child will not be admitted temperature is 100.4 or higher from parent/guardian or child. Temperature checks are conducted every 2 hours. If your child is exhibiting other COVID-19 symptoms, they will not be admitted or sent home.

- **Face Masks.** Children should wear a face mask to school unless under the age of 2 or incapable of wearing a face mask due to a health issue. Provide clean facemasks every day. Children under 2 is allowed to wear a facemask when dropped off to school with it.
- **Hygiene.** Practice and reinforce good hygiene practices, in particular hand washing.
- **Student's Personal Items.** Provide a plastic bin to store all your child's belongings.
- **Limiting Exposure.** Visitors are not allowed on campus when children are present. Extra curricular activities are put on hold until further notice. Parents are not allowed on campus. Children will be escorted to and from classroom during drop off and pick up.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

MCDC is committed in providing all our students with a full school-year and complete academic program, whether we engage in Montessori On-Campus or Montessori At-Home learning. We have prepared different scenarios so that we're able to adapt to local and state health and safety guidelines.

There are 2 types of programs offered: Montessori On-Campus and Montessori At-Home.

There are 3 groups: Toddler, Primary, and Elementary. Our goal is to provide all groups a full Montessori experience.

## **MONTESSORI ON-CAMPUS**

### **TODDLER ON-CAMPUS**

Children have their own chair, rug, cot, and school materials. Children may choose his or her own work from the shelves. Each work is cleaned and sanitized after each use. Children wash hands before class time, before and after work time, after diapering, after bathroom time, before and after playground time, before and after mealtime, and before going home. Teachers prepare individual work each day. There is a maximum of 6 children in the toddler option group and 10 in toddler group. Most activities are held outdoors (weather permitting).

### **PRIMARY ON-CAMPUS**

Children have their own table, chair, rug, cot, and school materials. Each child is seated 6 feet apart. Children may choose his or her own work from the shelves. Each work is cleaned and sanitized after each use. Children wash hands before class time, before and after work time, before and after playground time, after bathroom use, before and after mealtime, and before going home. Teachers prepare individual work everyday. There is a maximum of 12 children per group. The outdoor space will be utilized for class and mealtime (weather permitting).

### **ELEMENTARY ON-CAMPUS**

Children have their own table, chair, and school materials. Each child is seated 6 feet apart. Children may choose materials from the shelves, and each work is cleaned and sanitized after each use. Children have their own space on their desk to store work. Children wash hands before class time, before and after work time, before and after playground time, after bathroom use, before and after mealtime, and before going home. All On-Campus students simultaneously participate in Montessori-At Home lectures. On-Campus students will need to stay active on Google Classroom in case On-Campus learning is transitioned to At-Home or if the student is absent from school. The outdoor space will be utilized for class and mealtime (weather permitting).

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Recess takes place on the playground for Toddler and Primary students. Each class will have a specific playtime schedule. The big

field will be used by the Elementary students. Toys, playground equipment and high touched surfaces are washed with soap and water solution between uses.

## **MONTESSORI AT-HOME**

### **TODDLER AND PRIMARY MONTESSORI AT-HOME**

The Montessori Toddler and Primary At-Home option is available to all Toddler, Preschool, and Kindergarten students.

All levels will receive online material support and specific virtual class schedule.

Primary classes will be divided per level (1<sup>st</sup> year Montessori, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Montessori and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Montessori) and will receive appropriate lessons per group. Materials will be provided for all activities.

Montessori At-Home students may transition to Montessori On-Campus when ready.

### **ELEMENTARY MONTESSORI AT-HOME**

The Montessori At-Home option is available to all elementary students. This may be done on an as-need basis or partial/full school year. The Montessori At Home lectures are done simultaneously with the On-Campus lessons to cohesively give the group similar lessons. Virtual classes will be scheduled according to grade level. Additional support will be provided for At-Home students to assist in any subjects.

Materials and work sheets are provided each week. Assignments on Google Classroom will be posted each week. Submission of assignments may be done through Google Classroom or dropped off at school. At-Home students may transition to On-Campus when ready.

## **DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE**

Individual school closure is recommended by the CPHD based on:

- Number of cases

- Percentage of the teacher/students/staff that are positive for COVID-19
- And, following consultation with the local health officer.

Individual school closure may be appropriate when:

- There are multiple cases in multiple cohorts at a school or
- When at least 5 percent of the total number of teachers/student/staff have COVID-19 cases within a 14-day period, depending on the size and physical layout.

School may typically reopen after 14 days and the following have occurred. Length of closure will depend on the order and could be 2 days or up to 14 days.

- Cleaning and disinfection
- Public health investigation
- Consultation with the local public health department

## **WHEN SCHOOL IS ORDERED TO CLOSE**

Should the school be ordered to close by the Local Health Department, the students will switch to Montessori-At Home learning.

At the time of closure, the link for virtual sessions can be accessed through Google Classrooms or emailed. Classes will be conducted virtually until school is cleared to reopen.

If closure is ordered prior to the dismissal of students, a packet will be sent home. If closure is ordered after the dismissal of students, a packet will be emailed.

If your child is sick and cannot attend school, you may request the link for virtual classes and your child may attend virtual classes until he/she can attend school.

## **CLASSROOM LEARNING**

These are best practices to keep our students and staff safe.

- Students will remain in a small group as consistently as possible.
- Movement of students and teachers are minimized in the classroom.
- Teachers are provided with face shields and each classroom have sneeze guards for use during individualized lesson time.
- Outdoors will be utilized in class learning and during meals.
- All persons wear a mask, except for mealtime or when students need a mask break.
- When social distancing is not possible in the classroom, teachers will use face shields or sneeze guards.
- Students are provided with a mask pouch to store their mask during mealtime.
- To assist in social distancing, markings on floors and walkways, and arranging tables are planned to minimize close contact.
- Playground time is staggered to encourage smaller group play.
- Each students' belongings are separated in a storage box to eliminate cross contamination. Students will take home all belongings at the end of the day.
- Adequate supplies are provided to minimize sharing.
- Student areas, materials, toys, high touched surfaces, and more a cleaned with soap and water, then sanitized with an EPA approved sanitizer.

- School have adequate supply of PPE such as masks, gloves, sanitizers, face shields, disposable aprons, and hand sanitizers.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

These health and safety protocols are updated frequently. MCDC supports the most recent updates.

- Prior to arrival, staff, students, and parents' temperature is checked. Sick students are not admitted to school.
- Parents are given copies of the health questionnaire each week. Prior to arriving to school, parents should check the child's temperature at home and fill out the questionnaire.
- Staff are screened. Sick staff are not admitted to school.
- Parents must call the school to report any absences.
- Parents will sign child in or out. Bring own pen.
- Parents may stand in the social distance line until child has been dropped off to a staff, bin received, and health check cleared. Do not leave child unattended. Parents may not enter the gate.
- Staff will welcome to the child to the school and lead the child to the group.
- If your child is going to arrive 15 minutes after drop off time, please call the office when you are at the gate. Parents are not allowed in the campus unless it is an emergency.
- If child needs to be picked up before designated pick up time, please call the office.
- At the end of the day, the parents may pick up the child at the gate. The staff will bring your child's belongings to the gate. The staff will escort the student to the gate.

## **FACE COVERINGS/ MASKS**

- Face coverings / masks are required for all staff and students (unless under the age of 2). If parents bring in their child who is under 2 to school with a facemask, MCDC will continue to encourage that child to wear it.
- Face coverings guidelines per OC Dept of Health
  - Under 2 years old – No Face Covering Requirement
  - 2 years old – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – Strongly Encouraged \*\*
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – High School – Yes, unless exempt.

***Face coverings are strongly encouraged for young children between two years old and second grade. If they are worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly.***

- Face coverings / masks may be removed during mealtimes, naptime, or when social distanced, the child needs a mask break.
- Students will change their masks after lunch time to a clean mask and whenever their mask is soiled, wet, or have been in contact on an unclean surface. Students should bring a few extra clean masks.
- Students will store their mask in a clean mask pouch when it is not in use to prevent cross contaminating other surfaces.
- Students are given lessons on handling and storing masks, and proper use of masks.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

- All desks are separated based on recommended social distance mandates.
- Assemblies, pep rallies, parades, on-campus parent meetings, on-campus extra-curricular activities and combined social gathers are put on hold until further notice.
- Movement of students and teachers around the classrooms is limited to allow for proper social distancing.
- When students are seated during circle time, chairs are

arranged so each child seat is spaced apart from each other.

- During nap time, cots are spaced 6 feet apart or 3 feet if positioned head to toe.
- Students and teachers are encouraged to practice social distancing at all times.
- Student eating areas have been designated with outdoor seating where students maintain proper social distancing.

## **HEALTH AND HYGIENE**

- Children are encouraged and taught proper handwashing.
- Bathrooms are sanitized after each use.
- Tables are washed with soap and water during the day, and sanitized at the end of the day when children are not present.
- Hand sanitizer is available at all entrances and for staff use.
- Drinking water stations are temporarily closed. Water bottles are refilled with filtered water.
- Extensive signage is added to all walkways and guidance posters are posted in bathrooms and classrooms.
- All used toys are placed in a bin to be cleaned and sanitized at the end of the day.
- All tables, chairs, counters, high touched surfaces and common spaces are cleaned with soap and water, then sanitized at the end of each day with a Human Coronavirus approved and EPA registered sanitizer.
- Playground equipment's high touched areas are cleaned with soap and water solution (CDC does not recommend sanitizing playground equipment).

## **PARENT EDUCATION AND RESOURCES**

Parents are encouraged to log on to the school website for additional school resources.

The following websites have the latest information about COVID-19

California Department of Public Health – [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

Orange County Health Care Agency [www.occovid19.ochealthinfo.com](http://www.occovid19.ochealthinfo.com)

Centers for Disease Control – [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Covid 19 California – [www.covid19.ca.gov](http://www.covid19.ca.gov)

## **COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

Families are encouraged to check the school's website for the most updated news and announcements.

Families may also reach the school through:

- Email at [mcdcsharks@gmail.com](mailto:mcdcsharks@gmail.com)
- Phone call at 714-377-5779

School may send communication to parents through email or ProCare communication system through text. Be sure to update your ProCare file.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION UPDATE**

To ensure that we are able to reach parents during an emergency, be sure we have all your updated email and phone numbers. You may update this information in your child's ProCare file.