



COVID-19 Protocols and Recommendations

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Introduction



The purpose of this Plan is to outline the protocols, procedures, and COVID-19 mitigation strategies that will need to be in place to return to campus on **August 23, 2021**. While it is not the complete return to pre-COVID-19 conditions we hoped for last spring; it will allow us to resume the immersive French environment upon which this school was founded.

Because of the difficulty in predicting the future of the pandemic and its impact on our community, this is a working document, based on current CDC guidelines (updated as recently as August 2nd, 2021) and those of the Maine Department of Health, as well as input from our network of French and independent schools and our team of medical advisors.

In the months ahead, we will likely make some adjustments as the pandemic gradually fades away. But, as of now, **we will open on August 23, 2021**, in-person, on-campus for all grade levels, guided by the plan outlined in this document. We have broken the plan into sections addressing the overall school environment, the practical operations of the school, plans to address illness and possible forced closure, communications, and our adaptability to learn and make adjustments as needed continuously.

All of these provisions are in place to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment in which your children can continue to grow academically, socially, and linguistically. With everyone's help – staff, students, and families – we can make a successful and safe return to campus for the 2021-22 school year.

Part I: Healthy Environment

The following list will help ensure a safe and healthy environment at school each day:

Entering The Building – Only essential staff and students are permitted to enter the school.

Wellness Policy – Each day, parents will attest to a child's good health, and staff will attest to good health. In addition, children and staff receive a temperature check before entering the building in the morning and at midday.

Face Coverings – All students and staff will be asked to wear face masks inside the building to protect others and, in preschool, when appropriate. Face masks are strongly encouraged outside, and this until children aged 3 to 12 are fully vaccinated this fall. Children will bring 3 cloth masks to school each day – 1 to wear upon arrival, 1 after lunch, and 1 as a backup. Families are required to wear masks at drop-off and pick-up regardless of vaccination status.

Hand Hygiene – Children will be required to wash their hands with soap and water multiple times per day. Handwashing stations containing alcohol-based sanitizer for dry washing will be available throughout the school to be used after students touch their faces. For children allergic or susceptible to sanitizer, parents can provide special cream to Emily Smith.

Cleanliness – Desks will be washed by staff and children at the middle and end of each day at a minimum; door handles, light switches, bathrooms, will be sanitized by staff throughout the day. In addition, the entire school will be thoroughly cleaned each night.

Fresh Air & A/C – Our A/C system is equipped with HEPA filters, which capture 99.7% of contaminants. We will also utilize the outside space as much as possible.

Water – Students need to bring a water bottle for the day from home. Water fountains inside and out will not be used. Students can refill their bottles.

Health Center – We have dedicated the small room near the main office for a child who becomes ill during the day to await pickup. Parent-Student Handbook policy on illness, notification, and pick-up remains in effect.



Part I: Healthy Environment (cont.)

At Home & In the Community

- All teachers and Staff are vaccinated. We encourage families to get vaccinated and parents to model COVID-19 mitigating strategies for their children.

⇒ [COVID-19 Vaccine Sites in Maine](#)

- COVID 19 PCR will not be required before school starts.
- [Domestic travel](#) doesn't require testing before or after: As of May 1, 2021, Maine moved to an "all states exempt unless specified" model. This means that travelers coming to or returning to Maine are not required to quarantine or show proof of a negative test unless coming from a non-exempt state.
- [International travel:](#) Quarantine for 7 days from arrival in the US AND get a COVID-19 molecular or antigen test 3-5 days after arrival in the US.

Part II: Healthy Operations

In 2021-22, our classroom hours will remain 8:30am-3:30pm

Extended Care hours will be 7:30am-8:15am and 3:30pm-5:30pm.

The following outlines day-to-day school functions from drop-off through pick-up.

Drop-off Times & Procedures

- All Grades: 8:15-8:30 at playground gate at front side of building
- Parents form drop-off line starting at the playground gate, keeping distance between families, please wear a mask.
- Each child must have a temperature less than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius without any fever-relieving medication within the previous 6 hours.
- If no fever or illness, child immediately goes to their class area on the playground or into the classroom. If raining, all students go immediately to the classroom.



Part II: Healthy Operations (cont.)

School Day Procedures: All Grades

- Children will be kept in their classroom groups, and groups will not mix inside during the school day.
- Each group will have separate recess zones, and recess times will be spread out.
- Lunch and snacks will be eaten outside except on rainy days. After lunch, students will put on a fresh mask.
- Students will use individual or disposable supplies as much as possible.
- Water fountains will not be used indoors. Please send clean reusable water bottles daily.
- Physical education activities will not involve any physical contact between children.
- Please label your child's belongings, including masks.

Pick-Up Procedures

- Pick-up will begin at 3:00 pm until 3:30pm
- Students will wait outside at assigned class areas on the playground
- Parents can form a pick-up line at the playground gate, and their child will be brought over to them
- All students not picked up by 3:30 will go to Extended Care on the playground (lobby if raining), remaining in their classroom groups.
- Whenever possible, it's best if the same parent who drops off picks up; and that older, unvaccinated, more susceptible family members (grandparents, etc.) refrain from either activity.

Extended Care Procedures

- All protocols and procedures for the school day apply to Extended Care.



Part III: Healthy Responses

Procedures if Someone Becomes Ill or Exposed to COVID-19

1. **If a child becomes ill during the day**, they will be isolated in the room near the main office, and the school will notify parents to pick them up immediately.
2. **If a staff member becomes ill during the day**, they must go home.
3. **If a child or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19**, the school will notify the entire school community. Possible outcomes include staying open, closing a classroom temporarily, or closing the school temporarily. Regardless, rigorous cleaning and sanitizing of the school, inside and out, will precede any return of students and staff.

Guidelines for quarantine after exposure to a person with COVID-19:

1. **Exposure to COVID** is defined as having close (within 6 feet) contact with a COVID-positive person for a period of at least 15 minutes in a 24 hour period during which they would be considered contagious. Persons are considered contagious beginning 48 hours before exposure. The use of masks decreases but does not fully remove the risk of transmission and therefore is not taken into consideration when defining an exposure.
2. **If an unvaccinated parent is exposed to a person with COVID-19**, the parent must quarantine for 10 days, consistent with state and federal CDC guidance. A PCR COVID test 7 days into the quarantine is recommended to help assure that an exposed person is not an asymptomatic carrier. The negative test does not shorten the quarantine period of 10 days per Maine CDC recommendations. Children of exposed parents do not need to quarantine UNLESS the parent develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID. These children would still be permitted to attend school provided they can be safely picked up and dropped off by someone not under quarantine.
3. **If a vaccinated parent is exposed to a person with COVID-19**, the parent is NOT required to quarantine but must monitor their symptoms and get tested if any symptoms develop. It is also strongly recommended that vaccinated persons exposed to COVID-19 wear a mask whenever around others for a period of 10 days.
4. **Students at EFDM who are exposed directly to someone with COVID-19** must follow the guidelines for unvaccinated parents above. As vaccinations for children are available, the school will issue updated guidance on quarantine for vaccinated students.

Part IV: Communication

Because of the limitations on face-to-face teacher interactions with parents at drop-off and pick-up, our teachers will utilize Seesaw. They will be available for periodic “office hours” via Zoom or under the tent to speak about small issues or class happenings. The specifics of timing and structure will be determined before the start of school. Specific private meetings for a larger issue can be arranged via Zoom, and our School Director is always available by email or phone.

We will also continue to have Parent-Teacher conferences at the end of each trimester, with the format to be determined.

Latest de L'Ecole will continue to report the latest at EFDM every week. In addition, other school-wide communications will be released to keep everyone up-to-date on any impactful changes in procedure or policy.

Additionally, COVID-19 advisors will provide presentations and tutorials to parents and children regarding washing hands, sanitation, immunizations, and safe behaviors – in English and French!

Part V: Adaptability

These protocols, and all of our dedicated adherence to them, provide our best opportunity to keep children, families, and staff safe while preserving our mission to educate students in an authentically French environment that stresses social, academic, and cultural growth.

There will likely be changes to these protocols as we go, and, as a small school, we can respond and implement changes quickly.

Thank you all for your support during this challenging time – we look forward to seeing you all soon and welcoming you to the new school year **on August 23!**



Resources

Helpful CDC recommendations for mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic. We will provide more resources in the coming weeks as we all prepare to return to school.

Precautions to take at Home <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/checklist-household-ready.html>

When You've Been Fully Vaccinated <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>

Delta Variant: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>

COVID-19 Travel: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus/travel.shtml>

If you become Ill as a Parent/Caregiver: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/parents-caregivers.html>

Managing COVID-19 Stress: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

Maine CDC: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus/index.shtml>