



COVID-19 HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS
2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Start of classes, grade school and early childhood: Tuesday, September 8, 2020

Note: *The first day of school is an early release day. Pickup time for Early Childhood will be noon. Pickup time for Grade School will be 1:00 p.m.*

Last day of school: Friday, June 11, 2021

OVERVIEW AND APPROACH

The *COVID-19 Handbook for Parents* is designed as a handy and essential reference guide for parents as they navigate a new school year, new protocols, and, in some cases, a new school. Much of the information in this document can also be found in the [Reopening Plan and the video recording of the Reopening Plan meeting](#). Some of the information, however, is new, having been detailed in more recent faculty meetings as the beginning of the school year approaches. We expect to continue to add to this document as we refine our plans. You should also refer to the [Parent Handbook](#), which is our annually-updated guide to all things Ashwood. Under normal circumstances, the *Parent Handbook* would be updated at the beginning of the school year and distributed to all parents digitally and to new parents in print format. Given the circumstances, the digital 2019–2020 *Parent Handbook* will stand as our guide for the time being.

The health and safety plans that follow, reflected in our Reopening Plan, are centered around three guiding principles:

- Community norms, values, and collective actions we can take together
- Using outdoor space as much as possible
- Minimizing overlap between grade school and early childhood

In forming our health and safety plans, it has been of utmost importance to develop strategies that can be revised and adapted depending on the level of viral transmission in the community, and done in close communication with local and state public health authorities. We know that our plan will need to shift as conditions, experience, and scientific knowledge suggests. Therefore, this plan is a living plan that will transform, as appropriate in the weeks and months ahead.

We hope the information in this handbook provides clarity and transparency as we make our way through this unusual school year. All questions or concerns about should be directed to Jeremy Clough, School Director, jclough@ashwoodwaldorf.org.

The Faculty

Jeremy Clough, *School Director; Grade School Teacher*

Rob Kaczor, *Grade School Class Teacher*

Elizabeth Doshi, *Grade School Class Teacher*

Laura Purdom, *Subject Teacher; Director of Outreach & Marketing*

Marianne Bockli, *Early Childhood Class Teacher*

Sarah Ewing, *Administrative Assistant/Maintenance*

Tamara Cody, *Business Office Manager*

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

DAILY HEALTH CHECKS

The Morning Health Check is one of the main safety features of our return to in-person learning. It is critical that all members of our school community conduct this health check every morning before entering the building. To help insure this happens, we are requiring every individual student and staff member to verbally report the results of this daily health check to a staff member upon arrival.

Each student (or parent on behalf of student) and staff member should go through this daily health check before coming to school/work in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- ☐ *Do I feel unwell today?*
- ☐ *Do I have a cough or sore throat?*
- ☐ *Do I feel feverish?*
- ☐ *Do I or have I had shortness of breath?*
- ☐ *Do or have I had a loss of taste or smell?*

Additionally, parents should answer the following question each day before their child comes to school:

- ☐ *Does the child have a temperature of 100.4°F or more?*
- ☐ *Has the child been around anyone exhibiting above symptoms within the past 14 days?*
- ☐ *Has the child been living with anyone who is sick or quarantined?*
- ☐ *Has anyone in your household returned from travel within the past 14 days from a state on the governor's travel advisory list, or a country on the CDC travel advisory list?*

If the answer is YES to any of these, then you need to stay home and check in with your doctor.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Morning Drop Off

- Drop-off traffic will flow single file and be indicated by cones in the parking lot.
- Staff members will greet cars and parents will remain in the vehicle.
- Parents may park in indicated spaces in the lower and EC parking lots and walk their child to a designated area where an Ashwood teacher will greet them.

- All students (grade school and EC) arriving after 8:30 a.m., must be **accompanied by a parent** to the **outside door** of the school office. This door is located on the side of the grade school building that faces the playground. From there, administrative staff will direct the child or the parent and child to their class's location.

Afternoon Dismissal

- Grade school student pick up will take place in the lower loop. Cars will follow the same traffic pattern as in the morning and students will be brought/sent to cars by their teachers.
- Grade school students will wait for parents in designated areas on the campus.
- EC parents should proceed to the top of the parking lot where they will be met by a staff member who will then accompany the child to the car.

Please note: Playground spaces will not be open after dismissal.

BATHROOMS AND HANDWASHING

Each class will have their own bathroom to use. Handwashing will be encouraged throughout the day, particularly before eating as well as before and after recess. Hand sanitizer will also be used throughout the day at periodic intervals (e.g. during transition times). Children do not need to bring their own hand sanitizer; each teacher will have a bottle on hand.

Students and staff will wash or sanitize hands in the following situations:

- Upon entering the school
- Before and after eating
- Before and after removing or putting on a face covering
- After using the restroom
- Before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment

There are sinks in every classroom for hand washing. Hand sanitizer will be available in the classrooms as well as in situations that prevent washing with soap and water.

CLEANING

Common-use surfaces will be wiped down multiple times each day. Our cleaner will come regularly to thoroughly clean floors, surfaces, and bathrooms. We will also open windows in all classrooms at the end of the day (and periodically during the day, too), to ensure fresh air exchange.

Indoor and Outdoor Classrooms

- Classroom desktops will be sanitized by teachers or students at the end of every class period if students are changing classes.
- High-touch surfaces, such as door handles, office phones, shared keyboards, toilet handles, and faucets and other surfaces will be regularly sanitized.
- All areas of indoor and outdoor classrooms and buildings will have specified staff members responsible for the cleaning and disinfection of that area on a designated schedule.

Outdoor Play and Learning Spaces

Students will wash or sanitize their hands before and after using outdoor play and learning spaces.

Additional Early Childhood Program Steps

- Toys will be sanitized at the end of each day.
- Toys that cannot easily be regularly sanitized will be removed from circulation.

FACE COVERINGS

Students should come to school each day with two appropriately-fitting, clean face coverings. Double-layered cloth masks or paper surgical-style masks are acceptable. We recommend designs with ear loops or longer loops to go around the head; we do not recommend “gaiters” or makeshift masks such as a bandana, as these can require lots of touching to adjust and make comfortable to wear. Please select face coverings without slogans/text or vivid graphics.

All students and staff are required to wear a clean face covering that covers their nose and mouth while **inside the building**, with the following exceptions:

- While eating snack and lunch
- As needed, teachers will offer safe alternatives to students who need a break from wearing a face covering.
- When adults are in their own office or classroom, by themselves
- Students who are able to remain at least 6 feet apart **outdoors** do not need to wear face coverings.

When on campus, parents are asked to follow the same face covering rules that teachers and students follow.

BUILDING USE

Teachers have created a careful traffic flow within each building to minimize traffic in common spaces and overlap between classes. Each class will have their own indoor space that allows for sufficient spacing. Each class will have their own bathrooms to use.

Please note that we are unable to welcome parents into the school buildings this year, except in the cases of a scheduled meeting.

Hallways will be marked to direct the flow of traffic and support social distancing.

Inside spaces will be marked to indicate proper spacing where lines may form.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS

Our plan is to remain outdoors as much as is possible, within the parameters of curricular demands and safety. When there is inclement weather, teachers will coordinate with the administration to decide whether it is safe to be outside.

Please check the weather forecast regularly and ensure that your children come to school with ample layers and gear appropriate to the weather. All students should have the following gear, labeled with the child's name:

- sensible shoes (no Crocs, please) that hold the feet and protect the toes
- layers of clothing
- raincoat and pants
- hat for sun or for warmth
- sunscreen
- insect repellent

Your child will also need:

- a complete change of clothing. These are to be left at school.
- comfortable rubber boots, if possible to be left at school as well.
- a hearty, healthy (no sugar or as little as possible) snack and lunch packed up in an airtight container (to avoid spillage) in a lunch box/bag marked with your child's name on the outside, in a visible place). If you give your child prepackaged items, unpack them before school. Make sure appropriate utensils are also packed.

PARENT ROLE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

As teachers and parents, we share the overarching goal that Ashwood children will be able to attend school with each other safely. Above, we detailed the many measures our school will implement in order to safely facilitate an in-school experience for your child.

We also ask that you partner with us in maintaining the shared precautionary measures listed below:

FACE COVERINGS

Our COVID-19 health and safety protocols require that each child has a face covering that is comfortable enough that it can stay on for extended periods of time. We recommend that you send your child with **two** face coverings, in case one is lost or becomes unusable. Make sure your child's face covering:

- fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- completely covers the nose and mouth
- is secured with ties or ear loops
- includes multiple layers of fabric
- allows for breathing without restriction
- can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

SICK POLICY

Please carefully review the Daily Health Check section. If your child displays any of the listed symptoms, we ask that you not bring them to school and contact the office to make a plan for returning to school. In the event your child falls ill while at school, you will be asked to come pick up your child as quickly as possible.

VISITORS

We are unable to accommodate unanticipated visitors into the school building this year, including parents. In the event of a planned meeting with a teacher or school director, a suitable on-campus meeting spot will be determined.

TRAVEL POLICY

We ask that household members refrain from travel outside of Maine. Additionally, we ask that you refrain from welcoming household visitors from outside the state during this time.

We understand that there are cases in which travel is unavoidable. In such cases, you are required to self-quarantine for 14 days and be tested upon your return.

Additional travel precautions and guidance from the Center for Disease Control may be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>

QUARANTINING, SELF-ISOLATING AND TESTING

Household members who travel outside of Maine must follow the state quarantine requirements at the time of their travel. At this time, the requirement is that children 18 and younger do not need to be tested if their parent(s) with whom they traveled receive a negative COVID-19 test. If no COVID test happens, a 14-day quarantine is required.

Check this link for current guidelines:

<https://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/faqs>

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

See DAILY HEALTH CHECKS, above.

This year, we ask that families limit contact with those outside of their child's class and not mix and mingle after pick up time. We know this is not our typical community atmosphere, but we appreciate your help in keeping everyone safe.

BATHROOM, MEALS, HANDWASHING

Children will be brought inside in small groups to use the bathroom and wash their hands throughout the day. We will also wash our hands before eating and food preparation. Children will eat a packed lunch from home prior to 1:00 pick up. We ask you to send your child each day with a lunch of simple, healthy foods. This year, we also ask parents to send their child each day with a cloth napkin and utensils. The school will continue to provide a healthy snack each morning.

PARENT EVENTS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The first parent evenings of the year will be conducted via Zoom. The dates are:

Early Childhood: Tuesday, September 29, 6:00–7:00 p.m.

Grade School: Tuesday, September 15, 6:00–7:30 p.m. (with breakouts)

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held at the following times:

Early Childhood: Fall conferences will take place from Monday, November 2 through Friday, November 13. Spring conferences take place from Monday, March 22 through Friday, April 2.

Grade School: Fall conferences which will take place on two Thursdays: November 5 and 12 from 1:30–6:00 p.m. Spring conferences will also take place on two Thursdays: March 25 and April 1 from 1:30–6:00 p.m.