



# COVID-19 Health Policies and Response Plan

## Introduction

---

New Day Preschool (NDP) is committed to protecting the health of our children, families, staff and community. The following policies were designed in response to guidance from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and Maryland Department of Health (MDH) in accordance with best practices from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and with everyone's well-being in mind. To limit the potential spread of COVID-19, we will be making some temporary changes to our programming that include robust cleaning and disinfecting procedures and minimizing opportunities for person-to-person exposure. The following plan outlines policies and practices we will use to protect the health of our children, staff, and families while at the same time ensuring that children are experiencing developmentally appropriate and responsive interactions and environments. New Day Preschool will add to, or modify these policies and practices as necessary and appropriate. By following these policies and practices and by working together, NDP families and staff can create an environment where children will be able to play, learn and grow while protecting everyone's health and safety.

## Classroom Cohorts

---

- NDP will maintain “classroom cohorts” which means that each child will be assigned to a classroom group that will only come into contact with the children in that group and NDP staff assigned to teach their classroom. In the event a staff member is absent, a substitute will be assigned. Every effort will be made to avoid a substitute working in multiple classrooms.
- Drop off and pickup times will be staggered. Each classroom cohort will be assigned a drop off and pick up time to avoid contact between classroom cohorts and to limit contact between families.
- We will limit the mixing of classroom cohorts by staggering times for outdoor play and other activities where children from multiple classrooms are typically combined.
- If restrooms are shared by children from different classrooms, they will be used by children from one classroom at a time and disinfected between uses by each classroom.
- Common areas shared by staff will be used by only one person at a time and high touch areas will be disinfected between uses.

## Supporting Social/Physical Distancing

---

Children are naturally interested in being near and interacting with each other. While it is not realistic to expect that children will be able to maintain physical distancing all the time, our program will use the following strategies to encourage physical/social distancing in our learning environments:

- Rearranging furniture to section off play spaces and maintain 6-feet separation, when possible.
- Limiting the number of children in one space at a time.
- Having duplicates of toys/materials and/or setting up multiple areas for high-interest activities (e.g., multiple block areas or art stations).
- Helping children define their personal space using yarn, masking tape, mats, carpet squares, sheets of cardboard, hula hoops, etc.
- Using markers (e.g., tape) on the floor to indicate spaces to line up.
- Conducting more activities in small groups (e.g., read-alouds, introducing a topic) that might usually be done in a large-group (e.g., circle time).
- Planning activities that do not require close physical contact between children.
- Incorporating additional outside time as much as feasible.
- Only NDP students and NDP staff will be permitted to access the building. Access to all parents, guardians, and other non-essential visitors is currently restricted.

## Items brought from home

---

Only essential items from home should be brought to school on a daily basis. All items brought to school MUST be labeled clearly with the child's name.

- Backpack
- Water Bottle
- School Folder (provided by NDP)
- **Extra Face Coverings/Masks:** at least one additional face covering/mask in a labeled bag.
- **Lunch:** Children may bring their lunch in a disposable paper or plastic bag, or in a small soft-sided reusable lunch bag clearly labeled with the child's name. Lunches should contain all necessary items, such as napkins and any eating utensils.
- **Extra Clothing:** Each child should have a complete set of additional clean clothes at school at all times. A complete set of clean clothes includes an extra face covering, pants, shirt, underwear, and socks. All items must be labeled with the child's name and stored in a large Ziploc bag. These items will remain at school.
- **Toys and Lovies:** Child(ren) should not bring toys or other items from home unless they are absolutely necessary for their well-being, such as a security blanket or stuffed animal to comfort a

child as needed. If sending, families must place lovies in a sealed plastic bag with the child's name on it.

- Items brought from home will be stored in individual cubbies/bins.

## **Food & Mealtimes**

---

To limit opportunities for exposure during mealtimes, our program will engage in the following recommended practices:

- Spacing children as far apart as possible (ideally 6 feet apart) by limiting the number of children sitting together and rearranging tables/seating.
- Serving children individually rather than family-style
- Staff and children will wash hands before and immediately after children have eaten.

## **Toys and materials in the Learning Environment**

---

### **Availability and Use**

At this time, our program will make the following changes to the toys and materials in our learning environments:

- Providing duplicates of toys and multiple sets of materials to limit the number of children touching the same objects.
- If sensory materials are used, each child will have their own individual materials and container.
- Temporarily removing toys and materials from the classroom which cannot be easily cleaned or sanitized between uses.
- Cloth toys or materials will be used by one child at a time and then laundered or will not be used at all.
- Rotating the toys that are out at any particular time so that they can be adequately cleaned and sanitized.

### **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

Staff will engage in the following best practices to clean and disinfect toys:

- Toys and other materials will be washed and sanitized before being used by another classroom cohort.
- Cleaning toys frequently, especially items that have been in a child's mouth or if a child coughs or sneezes on them.
- Setting aside toys that need to be cleaned (e.g., out of children's reach in a container marked for "soiled toys" or "yucky bucket").
- Cleaning toys with soapy water, rinse them, sanitize them with a CDC-recommended disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

---

Staff will engage in the following cleaning and disinfecting practices in accordance with CDC recommendations:

- Frequent cleaning/disinfecting of high-touch surfaces (e.g., sinks, toilets, diaper stations, light switches, door knobs, counter and tabletops, chairs).
- Normal routine cleaning of outdoor spaces, with special attention to high-touch plastic/metal surfaces (e.g., grabbars, railings).
- Outdoor toys (e.g., tricycles, balls) are cleaned and sanitized between use by different classroom cohorts.
- Use of a schedule for regular cleaning and disinfecting tasks.
- Ensuring staff wear disposable gloves to perform cleaning, disinfecting, and trash pick-up, followed by hand washing.
- Use of CDC-recommended disinfectants such as EPA-registered household disinfectants, diluted bleach solution, and/or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol
- Keeping cleaning products secure and out of reach of children, avoiding use near children, and ensuring proper ventilation during use to prevent inhalation of toxic fumes.
- Floors in all classrooms, hallways and bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily by a professional cleaning service.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting the Facility if Someone is Sick**

If someone has been in the building who tests positive for COVID-19 or shows COVID-19-like illness (any one of these symptoms: *cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell* OR two or more of these symptoms: *fever, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose*), we will follow [CDC guidance](#):

- Close off areas used by person who is sick.
- Wait 24 hours (or as close to 24 hours as possible) to clean or disinfect
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area
- Temporarily turn off room fans and/or in-room, window-mounted, or on-wall recirculation HVAC (we will NOT deactivate central HVAC systems).
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick (e.g., classrooms, bathrooms, offices).
- Vacuum the space if needed (with a high-efficiency particulate air [HEPA] filter if possible).
- Follow guidance listed above regarding types of surfaces and disinfectants to be used.

## Healthy Hygiene Practices

---

Our program will reinforce regular health and safety practices with children and staff and continue to comply with licensing regulations and CDC hand washing guidelines as follows:

- A written hand washing procedure approved by the Office of Child Care shall be posted at each sink used for washing hands.
- Hand hygiene is especially important after toileting or diapering, before eating or preparing food, handling an animal, participating in an outdoor activity, or blowing one's nose (or helping children do any of these actions).
- Staff and children will wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Staff will assist children with hand washing and use of hand sanitizer to ensure proper use and prevent ingestion.
- Staff and children (with frequent reminders and support) will cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve and wash hands immediately after.
- Wearing gloves will not replace appropriate hand hygiene.

## Face Coverings

---

### Who Should Wear Face Coverings

The following policies apply with regard to wearing face coverings at NDP:

- NDP staff is required to wear cloth face coverings throughout the work day.\*
- Parents (and other adults) are required to wear cloth face coverings during drop-off and pick-up, when performing temperature checks, and if they enter the building.\*
- It is required that 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds wear a cloth face covering while in the child care program *if they can do so safely and consistently*.\*\*
- Face coverings will not be placed on children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

\*If an adult has concerns about wearing a cloth face covering, they should discuss with the NDP Director and health care provider as necessary.

\*\*Parents and NDP staff will discuss whether an individual child is able to safely and consistently wear a face covering if the child:

- Keeps trying to touch or remove the face covering;
- is unable to remove the face covering without assistance; is uncomfortable; and/or has respiratory or other medical conditions that might make a face covering unsafe.

Any concerns about whether an adult or child should wear a face covering should be brought to:

Keshika Dias - [director@newdaypreschool.org](mailto:director@newdaypreschool.org) or 301-340-3373

### **Use, Removal, and Storage of Face Coverings**

Our program will use the following recommended practices with regard to face coverings:

- Children's face coverings will be removed by the child for meals, snacks, high-intensity activities (e.g., running), outdoor play (if physical distancing can be maintained), or when it needs to be replaced (e.g., becomes wet or soiled).
- Staff and children will wash their hands if they touch their face covering or face; before and after removing a face covering; and before replacing a face covering.
- Cloth face coverings should be worn properly (i.e., cover the nose and mouth; never be worn around the neck or over the head or if they pose a strangulation risk).
- Cloth face coverings will be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the child's name and date) when removed until the face covering needs to be put on again.

### **Family Responsibilities for Face Coverings**

We ask that families follow these policies regarding the provision and washing of children's face coverings:

- Parents should provide cloth face coverings (or surgical face masks) for their own child/children.
- Face coverings should be free of choking hazards (e.g., stickers, buttons) and be clearly marked with the child's name and which side of the covering should be worn facing outwards.
- Parents should provide a sufficient supply of clean/unused face coverings for their child each day to allow replacing the covering as needed.
- Parents should take home their child(ren)'s face coverings to launder them.
- If a child wearing a face covering/mask cannot successfully wear their covering/mask and it presents a safety hazard, NDP reserves the right to remove the covering/mask and safely store in a paper bag to go home with the child.

## Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

---

Our program will use the following recommended practices during drop-off and pick-up times to protect the health of children, families, and staff.

- At this time, families will not be allowed in the building, and check-in/out procedures (including health screening and temperature checks) will happen outside.
- Parent/guardian access to the facility will be limited to the area just inside the entrance with social distancing during temperature/symptom checks and child hand-off.
- Only one adult per family should be present at drop-off/pick-up. Ideally, this would be the same parent or designated person every day, though we recognize this is not always possible.
- Parents/guardians are required to wear a mask during the checking-in/out process.
- Parents/guardians should avoid congregating in a single space or large group.
- There will be hand sanitizer and wipes at the sign-in station for parents/guardians to clean pens between each use.
- **Drop Off:**
  - Parents/guardians will pull into the Kiss-N-Ride lane in front of the main entrance to RUMC and walk their child over to the “Signing In/Out” area located by the Church Entrance. If another family is already at the Signing In/Out Area, please remain in your car and approach the table after they have left.
  - A staff member will assist each family in completing the Daily Temperature and Symptoms Screening. Once the Screening is completed and the child has been admitted to NDP, the parent/guardian will “Sign In” their child for the school day.
  - The child will be greeted by his/her teacher and walked to their classroom to put their belongings away and wash their hands.
- **Pick Up:**
  - Parents/guardians will pull into the Kiss-N-Ride lane in front of the main entrance to RUMC and walk over to the “Signing In/Out” area located by the Church Entrance. If another family is already at the Signing In/Out Area, please remain in your car and approach the table only after they have left.
  - As each parent/guardian arrives, a staff member will walk each child over to their parent. The parent/guardian will “Sign Out” their child for the day.

## Screening Families & Staff for COVID-19 Symptoms and Exposure

---

Upon arrival at the program, we will ask staff and families to report if staff/children have:

- Had any symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, OR fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, chills or shaking, muscle aches, sore throat, headache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, and congestion or runny nose).
- Been diagnosed with COVID-19, tested for COVID-19 due to symptoms and are awaiting a result, or have been instructed to isolate or quarantine by a health care provider or health department
- Had close contact (been within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes total in a 24-hour period) with anyone with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days and did not complete quarantine.

### **The procedures used to screen staff for symptoms and exposure includes:**

- The Director will assist each staff member in completing the Daily Temperature and Symptoms Screening. All information collected during the Temperature and Symptom Screening will be documented in a Screening Log and stored securely to protect the privacy of staff.

### **The procedures used to screen children/families for symptoms and exposure includes:**

- A staff member will assist each family in completing the Daily Temperature and Symptoms Screening. All information collected during the Temperature and Symptom Screening will be documented in a Screening Log and stored securely to protect the privacy of the family.

Families/staff must promptly notify NDP in the event that an enrolled child/staff member or any member of a child's/staff member's household:

- Has tested positive for COVID-19
- Is exhibiting COVID-19 like illness
- Is known to have been exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Has signs of any other contagious illness

Under no circumstances should such child/staff member or any other member of the household enter NDP until cleared in writing by a Health Care Provider

## Daily Temperature Checks

---

### Temperature Checks

As fever is a key indicator of COVID-19 in children, staff will check each child's temperature upon daily arrival to the program. Staff will also take their own temperatures and record them upon arriving to work. Staff will re-check children's temperatures throughout the day if they appear ill or "not themselves" (e.g., flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, or extreme fussiness).

- **When children arrive to the program, temperature checks will occur:**  
Before children enter the building.
- **Each child's temperature will be taken by:**  
Their parent or guardian while staff stand 6 feet away.

### Parents/guardians will:

- Take their child(ren)'s temperature upon arrival while being directly observed by program staff.
- Use a personal thermometer brought from home (which will only be used for their child/family and will not be handled by program staff).
- Maintain social distancing to the extent possible from NDP staff.
- Wear a face mask during temperature checks (as will NDP staff).
- Show the temperature result to NDP staff for recording.

### If a family does not have access to a personal thermometer/forgets to bring one:

Our program will provide a thermometer for use. If using a school thermometer, the parent/guardian should wash their hands (or use hand sanitizer) and put on disposable gloves before taking their child's temperature. Thermometers will be cleaned after each use as recommended by the CDC.

## Responding to COVID-19 Symptoms On-Site

---

### Responding to COVID-19 Symptoms On-Site

If a child or staff member develops any COVID-19 symptoms (i.e., cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, headache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose) during care, they will be sent home immediately with the recommendation to contact their primary care physician/medical provider. If anyone shows emergency warning signs (e.g., trouble breathing, persistent pain/pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face), we will seek medical care immediately.

If a child develops symptoms during care hours:

- Parents will be contacted for prompt pick-up. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be contacted.
- The child will be isolated from other children and as many staff as possible (the child will not be left alone).
- The child will wait with the following designated staff member(s): Keshika Dias
- The child and designated staff will wait in the following safe, isolated location: Room #12 - located across from the Director's Office.

If a staff member develops symptoms during care hours:

- They will be asked to go home immediately.
- Children may need to be picked up if no other staff member is available.

## **When Children and Staff Should Stay Home and When They Can Return**

---

### **When Children and Staff Should Stay Home**

A child or staff member will not be allowed in the child care program if they:

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Have had any of the following new symptoms: *cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, headache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose.*
- Were tested for COVID-19 due to symptoms and are waiting for test results.
- Have been instructed by a health care provider or the health department to isolate or quarantine.
- Have been in close contact (i.e., within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes total within a 24-hour period) with someone with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 during the past 14 days and have not completed quarantine.
- If multiple children from the same family are attending, if one child from the family does not pass the Daily Temperature and Health Screening, all the children in that family will not be admitted until cleared to return to school.

### **When Children and Staff May Return to the Program**

When an individual can return to the program will depend on individual circumstances (i.e., symptoms, COVID-19 test results, previous exposure, alternate diagnoses). To help inform our decision-making process, our program will use the following resources:

- MDH Decision Aid Flow Chart: [Decision aid flow diagram 1.7.21](#)
- Consultation with health care providers and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

## Out of State Travel

---

If travelling out of state, please inform NDP of any travel plans and follow the most recent State testing and quarantine requirements prior to returning to the program.

## Quarantine and Temporary Classroom/Program Closures

---

### Reporting Exposure

Monitoring a child care program for possible COVID-19 requires close communication between program staff and parents. Parents are encouraged to keep their children home when they are ill and to report illness within their household, children and themselves to help inform decisions related to quarantine and closure. If a child, staff member, family member, or visitor to our program shows symptoms of a COVID-19-like illness or tests positive for the virus, we will contact our local health department and licensing consultant. Based on the guidance of the local health department, we will determine the extent and duration of the closure and other next steps. When communicating with families and staff about any COVID-19 cases, we will respect the privacy of individuals and not share health information of a specific person.

Our program will determine when to contact our health department/licensing specialist:

- By consulting the Child Care Closure Guidance document:  
<https://bit.ly/CenterClosureGuidance>
- Reviewing the *Exclusion, Quarantine, and Closure Recommendations* and *FAQ* sections of the COVID-19 GuidanceFor Child Care Facilities document:  
<https://bit.ly/MSDEChildCareGuidance>

### Our local Health Department can be contacted at:

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services  
Phone: 240-777-0311  
Email: [hhsmail@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:hhsmail@montgomerycountymd.gov)

## **Tuition Payments during Closures (during school year)**

---

New Day Preschool is a non-profit program that is primarily funded by tuition payments. During this challenging time, as we at NDP continue to adapt to the needs of our community, it is vital that families honor their enrollment agreements and continue to pay tuition. While our sincere hope is to have an uninterrupted school year, in the event of a closure, NDP will address tuition payments as outlined below.

### **Closure due to a case of COVID -19 within the community**

If either a class or the program has to close for a period of time due to a case of COVID-19 within the NDP community, we will continue to maintain a home-school connection via daily Zoom Circle Times and provide activities that can be completed at home. No tuition refunds or credits will be provided during such short term closures.

### **Closure due to a Church, State, County, Federal or MSDE mandate:**

In the event of a longer term mandated closure, the New Day Preschool Board will evaluate the situation and make a decision regarding tuition payments at that time.

## **Supporting Families, Staff, and Children**

---

### **Communicating with Staff and Families**

Our program will actively communicate with staff and families to determine when they will return to work/care if they have been out, discuss concerns or questions, share new policies and expectations, and confidentially discuss any extenuating circumstances that have emerged and/or any health concerns/conditions that may elevate risk for complications if exposed to COVID-19.

- The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for staff is: Keshika Dias
- The staff responsible for handling questions and outreach for families is: Keshika Dias

### **Training Staff**

To support staff in effectively engaging in best practices and making personal decisions, we will provide learning opportunities to help all of us understand how COVID-19 is transmitted, the distance the virus can travel, how long the virus remains viable in the air and on surfaces, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and our new policies and procedures as outlined in this plan. All Staff will complete the mandatory COVID-19 Training offered by MSDE.

**Supporting Children's Social-Emotional and Special Health Needs**

Staff and families will partner together to support the physical and emotional needs of children during this time. We anticipate that children will experience a wide range of feelings during this transition period. Some children will be relieved, some will have initial challenges with separation from their parent(s), some may demonstrate anger at the "disappearance" of their child care provider, and some may act out toward other children. Whatever the reactions, we acknowledge that staff and families may need some new tools in their toolkit to assist the child with emotional regulation, and we will work together to support all caregivers. We will also continue to support children with special health needs and will collaborate with their families and other service providers to ensure their needs are met.

**Supporting Staff Members' Social-Emotional Needs**

To ensure the well-being of the children, it is also imperative to ensure the well-being of their teachers and caregivers, and to provide them with the emotional and administrative supports necessary during this time of re-integration, and in the months ahead. As essential workers in the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand our staff may have worries about their own physical or psychological health, and the potential risk to their family members at home. Because young children internalize the stress of the adults who care for them, we know it is vitally important to provide supports and services to ensure the emotional well-being of our staff.