



2021-2022

COVID HEALTH AND SAFETY OPERATING PLAN

(AS OF 8.16.2021)



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OVERVIEW

Without the option of a vaccine for our children, and with rising COVID numbers, the Southlake Montessori board and staff have had to thoroughly and thoughtfully consider how to conduct the 2021-2022 school year in as safe a way as possible for the children that we serve. Their health is our primary concern, and we are always going to choose the more conservative route when it comes to keeping them safe. This does not come without repercussions as we certainly have endured some prospective families that deride us for our decisions, however, as we are with our Montessori standards, we hold steadfast to our beliefs in what is best for children based on the information that we have and will not bend for pressures outside of those beliefs. We thank the families in our community who support and work with us as team members in providing an optimal environment for children... academically, socially, and personally. This is a difficult time for us all and working together is our only way through it.

Our classroom environments are designed to harness the developmental forces of each plane of a child's development, allowing each child to reach their fullest potential through experimental learning opportunities within these specifically prepared environments. Our ability to guide that development is restricted in the absence of a face-to-face learning environment. By continuing in-person learning we are aiming to fulfill the mission of Southlake Montessori, which is to provide a premier not-for-profit AMI Montessori program that fosters the unique academic, social and personal development of each student and motivates them for a lifetime of learning and success.

This document explains the policies and procedures we are employing to mitigate COVID-related risks at school. Many of these same procedures helped to ensure a successful in-person year last year and we hope for the same this year. The approach is built around intensive continued health monitoring and screening procedures, as well as classroom/school day procedures. All staff, regardless of vaccination status, and students will wear masks when inside, with obvious exception to mealtimes. Masks will be optional during outdoor playtime unless children are huddled in one area together at which time they will be asked to wear a mask.

In sum, Southlake Montessori has concluded that in-person learning can continue on our campus under these conditions and is in the best interest of the community and that each Southlake Montessori family will make its own decision about the balance of risk, and what is best for their children. The information in this document will provide clarity around the practices and procedures Southlake Montessori has established to minimize exposure to our community but in no way warrants that COVID-19 or other communicable disease infection will not occur through participation in our programs. Updates to any of the procedures included will be sent via email to the primary parent contact email on file.



2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM SUMMARY

September 1st, 2021 – June 16th, 2022

PROGRAM HOURS

Half-day Primary: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm (Arrival: 7:30 - 8:00 am & Departure: 12:00 pm)

Full-day Primary: 8:00 am - 3:30 pm (Arrival: 7:30 - 8:00 am & Departure: 3:30 - 3:45 pm)

Elementary: 8:00 am - 3:30 pm (Arrival 7:30 - 8:00 am & Departure: 3:30 - 3:45 pm)

Extended Care: 3:30 pm – 5:00 p.m.

CLASSROOM STAFFING

Magnolia Room (Primary)

- Elin Chang (Lead Guide), Angie Rife (Assistant)

Sequoia Room (Elementary)

- Debby Riordan (Lead Guide), Shandi Gambill (Assistant)

PARENT CONTACT/COMMUNICATION

Email and phone

Each lead guide has a school email address for parent communications. Guides will respond to emails within 24 hours during the week. Guides do not respond to messages during the school day unless time allows during their break. Time-sensitive contact with guides during the school day can be facilitated by calling the office at (817) 557-7520 and/or emailing Debby Riordan at driordan@southlakemontessori.org

Conferences

Conferences will be held by the guide via Zoom as needed or as requested by the guide or parent.



Observations

Due to restrictions in place to mitigate the spread of COVID, regular parent observations are currently on hold.

Parent Gatherings

Parent gatherings and enrichment events will occur via Zoom and will be communicated at least three weeks in advance.

CHILDREN'S MEALS

Primary Snack

Our daily snack may consist of fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese, yogurt, non-meat proteins (such as hard-boiled eggs and edamame) and grains. Snacks will be prepared and served by the adult. Familystyle snack offerings have been suspended.

Lunch

All of the children enjoy their lunch in our environment. At arrival, each child brings their lunch box and places it on the shelf or in their cubby as part of their arrival routine. For more information regarding lunch policies please refer to Nutrition and Mealtime, Southlake Montessori Family & Student Handbook. (2021-2022 Handbooks will be distributed prior to the start of school.)

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our existing carline arrival and departure procedures, with added procedures for health screening and hand hygiene, meet the state guidelines for social distancing and limited contact.

Carline Arrival

- Carline arrival for all students is from 7:30 to 8:00 am.
- Walk-up arrivals cannot be facilitated until further notice.
- For the health and safety of our staff, as well as to set an example for the children, parents are asked to wear a face mask during carline as school staff assist children from their cars.
- As much as possible, the same parent or designated person should drop off the child each day.

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- Each child must have a health screening upon arrival. Staff will facilitate.



- Lunch box/bag items go on the floorboard of the car below the seat.
- When entering the school lot, drive your vehicle through the entrance gate opening.
- Stop at the designated arrival/departure area (at the main back door of the building). Please remain in your car.
- Staff will walk to your car to greet your child. We ask that your child remain seated with their seat belt on.
- A staff member will take your child's temperature using a contactless thermometer prior to your child leaving the vehicle.
- If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, the staff member will verify the temperature with another thermometer.
- A child with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will not be admitted.
- Your child will be invited to unbuckle the seat belt or be assisted as needed.
- As soon as your car door closes and your child and the staff member are safely away from the car, you may pull up to await your turn to exit the circular drive and proceed toward Wall Street.
- Staff members will clean hands with hand sanitizer after each child's arrival.

Please note: With exception to spare clothing articles when needing to be added to a Primary child's spare clothes box, outerwear clothing, and/or a lunch box/bag, no other items, or bags, may accompany your child to school without their guide's permission. Water bottles will stay at school and be refilled with filtered water and washed in our dishwasher on a regular basis.

Late arrival - Due to the necessary health and safety requirements, late arrivals will not be possible unless prior arrangements have been made with and approved by Debby Riordan at least 24 hours in advance of the needed accommodation.

Carline Departure

- Carline departure for Half-day Primary children will be at 12:00 pm and take place at the front of the building.
- Walk-up departure cannot be facilitated during this time with exception to Extended Care (3:30 to 5:00 pm).



- Extended Care departure will also take place at the front of the building.
- Carline departure for Full-day Primary and Elementary will be from 3:30 to 3:45 pm and take place through the circular drive at the back of the building.
- We ask parents to wear a face mask during all departures.
- During carline departures, wait in your car and your child will be walked to you and helped inside the car.
- Once your child is in the car, pull up to the furthest available spot at the end of the circular drive, just prior to exiting the gates, to finalize buckling your child in their car seat. We ask that you do this as efficiently as possible as other cars will be waiting behind. Once your child is securely buckled in, you may exit the school lot and pull across Wall Street into the available parking lot if you need to take more time to get settled. Please note, we do not have permission to park in the adjacent dentist's parking lot as it is, understandably, reserved for their patients.

Early Departure

Early departure must be scheduled in advance with Debby Riordan. Please follow this procedure:

- Contact the office by phone at (817) 557-7520 and indicate the exact time of your child's early departure. Please allow a minimum of 1-hour advance-notice and note that you will either need to speak with someone live or wait for confirmation that your message has been received. In cases of extreme emergency, we will work as quickly as possible to accommodate early departures inside of the 1-hour notice window, although please know we are a small staff and early departures will likely affect our routine health and safety operational procedures.
- An admin staff member will notify the classroom community to make arrangements for assisting the child with departure at the pre-arranged early departure time.
- Early departures will take place at the front of the building.



GENERAL PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING

Southlake Montessori has and will continue to review plans given by health organizations and local health officials to help protect the whole school community. School plans are designed to complement other community mitigation strategies to protect high-risk populations and the healthcare system and minimize disruption to teaching and learning. Southlake Montessori operating procedures meet or exceed the minimum standards of care and will be updated as new information or additional guidelines are made available.

TRAINING

Staff must be familiar with and receive ongoing training regarding State and CDC recommendations and requirements.

Training Sessions for the 2021-2022 School Year will cover all topics in this document.

FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. Please note that due to the nature of some of the presentations given in our early childhood program, face coverings may be removed for part or all of the presentation.

Staff

Staff will be required to wear face coverings at the following times:

- Carline arrival and departure
- When performing health screening of staff and children
- When working in the classroom except during presentations that require clear articulation and visibility of mouth such as language exercises and presentations
- When assisting an ill child or staff member



Children

All children will wear face coverings while inside. If at any time a child is struggling to wear their face covering in a safe manner, a staff member may request that it be removed. Primary children may also be asked to remove their face covering during some presentations.

Parents and Guests

Parents and guests are required to wear a face-covering, regardless of vaccination status, at all times when inside the school building, and also are asked during carline.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Health and Temperature Screening Protocol

All children and staff who meet any of the criteria below will be denied entry:

- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher

Any of the following symptoms if the symptom is of greater intensity or frequency than what is normally experienced:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea



- In the previous 14 days has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID and is unvaccinated
- Is under investigation for COVID; or
- Is unvaccinated and in the previous 14 days, has traveled to a destination with a state or federally imposed 14-day self-quarantine expectation. A negative COVID test result taken at day 7 will allow re-entry into the program. If vaccinated and symptom free then will be allowed entry immediately upon return (proof of vaccination required for our documentation).

Staff Self-Screening Prior to Arrival at School

Staff members will conduct self-screening and submit documentation prior to arrival at school. If a staff member self-identifies as having symptoms listed in the screening criteria above, she will contact Debby Riordan and will not come into work,

Staff Screening at School

Upon arrival, all staff members will:

- Take temperature with a contactless thermometer and record their temperature with administration.
- Staff members with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more will be relieved of duty for the day.

Parent Screening of Child Prior to Morning Arrival

Parents are encouraged to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.

Please do not bring your child to school if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills



- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea

Note: For the safety of our community, please do not bring your child to school if you have provided them with a fever reducer within the last 24 hours.

Staff Screening of Child at School

- Upon arrival, a staff member will take your child's temperature using a contactless thermometer.
- If the child has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, the staff member will verify the temperature with another thermometer.
- Contactless thermometers will be used in all cases if possible.
- If an in-ear/forehead thermometer is used, it will be disinfected after each use.
- A child with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will not be admitted.
- Staff will conduct and log the temperature checks of each child and adult in the community three times each day. (At arrival, before lunch, prior to departure)
- Staff will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing, or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness. If the child exhibits any of these symptoms at arrival or at any point during the day, the child will be isolated, and parents will be required to pick up their child.



Child Illness Policy & Procedure

Our sick child policy will be amended as follows. Children will be sent home when the following symptoms are observed:

- Temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Temperature will be taken at least two times, five minutes apart with two separate devices.
- Cough - including a persistent dry cough without the documentation from a physician about an allergic condition
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea

Note: The school reserves the right to send a child home for illness even in the absence of fever and regardless of a note from a physician.

COVID SYMPTOMS AND COVID CASES IN SCHOOL

This section provides details and procedures for the COVID Symptoms, Exposure, and Diagnosis within the school community:

COVID SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL - CHILDREN

If COVID symptoms begin while at school, the child must be sent home as soon as possible. Sick children will be kept separate from well children and staff contact will be limited as much as



reasonably possible, while ensuring the safety and supervision of the child until they leave.

- Classroom staff will follow these isolation procedures:
 - Classroom staff will take the child to the Isolation location in the school office or our additional Primary classroom:
 - Isolation location #1: School office
 - Isolation location #2: Southlake Montessori's additional Primary room which is not in daily use this school year
 - The classroom staff will inform the administrative staff of symptoms exhibited.
- Staff will contact parents to come to school to pick up their child. Pickup should occur within 45 minutes. If a parent is unavailable, we will call others on the emergency contact list.
 - Staff will supervise the child until the parent arrives.
 - Once a parent has left with the ill child, the Isolation room is cleaned and sanitized by administrative staff.
- Materials and furniture touched by the child who is sent home will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- Families are encouraged to coordinate decision-making around the child's care with the family health care provider if there are specific health concerns, chronic disease, or complex social or emotional dynamics in the home.
- In the case of a child who has symptoms that could be COVID and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID, the child is assumed to have COVID, and cannot return to the community until the individual has met the criteria for return.
- A child who has exhibited symptoms that could be COVID can return to school if the parent has obtained a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on a negative COVID test and an alternative diagnosis.

COVID SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL - STAFF

Staff is encouraged to monitor their health and required to perform daily health screenings for symptoms of COVID. Staff is required to stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID and to contact their healthcare provider.



Staff exhibiting new or worsening symptoms of possible COVID-19 at school should:

- Put on a disposable face covering
- Leave the classroom
- Follow the recommendations of their healthcare provider
- In the case of a staff member who has symptoms that could be COVID and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID, the individual is assumed to have COVID, and the individual may not return to work until the individual has met the return criteria.
- If the staff member has symptoms that could be COVID and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for the return based on a negative nucleic acid COVID test and an alternative diagnosis.

COVID EXPOSURE - STAFF AND CHILDREN

If a staff member or child is in a household where there is a positive COVID diagnosis, an unvaccinated staff member or child will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of the most recent positive test within the household and return with a negative COVID test. Vaccinated staff will be required to self-quarantine for 3 days from the date of the most recent positive test within the household, but if symptom free, can return to work after that period.

If an unvaccinated or vaccinated staff member or child has been identified as in close contact to someone outside the classroom community who is diagnosed with COVID, that staff member or child will be required to self-quarantine for a minimum of 3 calendar days. Close contact means being closer than 6 feet apart for more than 15 minutes to the person who was infectious.

POSITIVE CASE OF COVID IN THE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY - CHILDREN

If COVID is confirmed in a child or staff member in a classroom community, all persons regularly in that community will be required to self-quarantine for a minimum of 3 calendar days and the following actions will be taken by school administration:

- Notify staff and parents/caregivers that a member of the classroom community has been diagnosed with COVID. Confidentiality will be maintained.



- Notify the school community that a child in the school (not their community) has been diagnosed with COVID. Confidentiality will be maintained.
- Close the specific classroom community for a minimum of 3 calendar days. Children and staff will be expected to self-quarantine during the dismissal period.
- Complete disinfecting procedures

Note: Six extra school days have been built into the calendar in case any short-term closures are necessary. If it becomes obvious that longer community closures are warranted, then Southlake Montessori's Distance Learning program will be considered. It is our earnest desire and goal to have the children in-person throughout the 2021-2022 School Year.

Children or Staff with a Positive Case of COVID, who have exhibited symptoms and who have stayed home (home isolated) can return to school/work when all of the following criteria are met:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
- The child or staff member has improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, or Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from a respiratory specimen.



QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION - DEFINITIONS

Quarantine

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Isolation

Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in

CONTACT TRACING

Contact tracing is a strategy used to determine the source of an infection and how it is spreading. Finding people who are close contacts to a person who has tested positive for COVID, and therefore at higher risk of becoming infected themselves, can help prevent further spread of the virus. Those contacts might include family members, co-workers, or health care providers.

COMMUNICATION

Southlake Montessori will communicate:

- With families, if their child has been in close contact with someone at school who has then tested positive for COVID.
- With staff, if they have been in close contact with someone at school who has tested positive for COVID.
- With the entire school community if a classroom community has been closed temporarily due to COVID exposure.



MONITORING ABSENTEEISM

Southlake Montessori staff will monitor absenteeism among children and staff. Any unusual patterns will be considered when evaluating the need for temporary or long-term building or campus closure.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING STRATEGIES

Southlake Montessori does not expect that children will consistently distance themselves from other children or adults while at school. Our children learn by engaging with their environment, which includes the other people in it. However, Southlake Montessori will employ the following strategies for limiting the spread of COVID in our communities:

- Children shall not change from one classroom to another during the day while inside.
- Classes shall not mix with each other while inside with the exception to limited interactions during arrival and dismissal times.
- The guide and assistant will remain with a single group each day. In the case of illness, a screened substitute for the group will assist with caregiving.
- Table and floor spaces will be spaced as far from each other as possible while engaged in activities at school. Primary children will have a “spot marker” which will be used during gatherings to allow for physical distancing.
- The physical distance between children will be increased in daily work locations, group gatherings, meals, and snacks.
- At rest time (for our youngest Primary children), cots will be spaced out as much as possible, with alternating head to toe arrangements to reduce the distance between children. Bedding will be supplied by the school and stored in individual plastic bags with regular washing. No outside bedding is allowed to be sent to school with your child.



HEALTHY HAND HYGIENE

Washing hands can keep you healthy and prevent the spread of infections from one person to the next. All children and staff will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival to the classroom and after breaks
- Before and after each work choice
- Before and after eating or handling food
- After using the toilet or assisting a child at the restroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After playing outdoors or in dirt
- After handling garbage

Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their own hands.

Use Hand Sanitizer for Adults & Students When You Can't Use Soap and Water

With the arrival of COVID, regulations regarding hand sanitizer and its suggested use in schools have changed. Washing hands with soap and water remains the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. Wall dispensers of hand sanitizer have been added to all entry points



to the building, as well as at classroom entrances. All staff will use hand sanitizer or soap and water upon entering and exiting a classroom community.

How to use hand sanitizer

1. Locate the nearest wall mount hand sanitizer station (at entry points to each classroom as well as all entry points to the building).
2. Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
3. Rub your hands together.
4. Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Southlake Montessori follows a thorough cleaning and sanitization practice and has a detailed plan for each community, including staff responsibilities, which are stored in our Cleaning and Sanitization binder.

These efforts include the following:

- Staff will routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially materials.
- All bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.
- Electrostatic Spraying Technology will be used to disinfect and sanitize our environments at the end of each day. The electrostatic charge ensures that even the hard-to-reach places are coated evenly and effectively.

Clean and Sanitize Materials

- Materials that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Materials will be cleaned and sanitized between each use.
- Materials that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. These materials will be sanitized prior to use by the next person.



- Machine washable cloth materials will be used by one individual at a time and will be laundered before being used by another child.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Clean and Disinfect Bedding (Only for Napping Children)

Each child’s bedding is kept separate and stored in individually labeled plastic bags. Cots and mats are labeled for each child. Bedding is cleaned at least weekly.

Cleaning and School Building

Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID and wait 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize the potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors to increase air circulation in the area.

Staff will clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Products

Southlake Montessori uses disinfecting products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID.

FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING

Southlake Montessori will not serve family-style snacks or meals. Each child will bring their own lunch from home. The exceptions will be Pizza Friday which will be served by staff wearing gloves to children ordering it.

- Individual snacks prepared for the Primary children will be prepared by an adult.
- Staff will ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- Staff must wash their hands before assisting children and after helping children to eat.
- Food serving and preparation equipment, including those items used in individual practical lifelessons for children, must be washed and then sanitized in the campus sanitizing dishwasher between uses. If this step is not feasible throughout the school day, the activity and its tools will be suspended until safe to resume.



VULNERABLE / HIGH-RISK GROUPS

Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. To protect those at higher risk, it's important that everyone practices healthy hygiene behaviors.

RESOURCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
- COVID Data Tracker: www.covid.cdc.gov
- American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org

