

# Mountain Village School

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## Family and Staff Handbook: Health Emergency 2020

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We have created a specific handbook to address our policies and procedures during the health emergency our community is currently facing. We will update this handbook and distribute it as needed.

## Philosophy

Mountain Village School is a place for growing, learning, and exploration. We encourage a supportive relationship between parents and teachers. This handbook is a guide providing information to familiarize you with our center. We have included information about our philosophy, policies and procedures, and our practices to make you feel at home.

Mountain Village School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, or disabilities. We accept each child where he/she stands in social, physical, emotional and intellectual development.

We believe that nature, community, harmony, and discovery are the most important attributes of early childhood. We also believe early childhood is a crucial aspect of an individual's development. Children deserve attention during this period in their lives. We also believe that each child has their own unique style of development and it is our responsibility to observe and recognize their individuality.

It is the overall objective of our school to provide an environment and experiences that foster all areas of development in order to:

- Build healthy and positive self-concepts and to be a self-advocate
- Enhance social skills and emotional regulation
- Consistently think, reason, question, and experiment
- Be respectful, aware, and embrace diversity
- Develop initiative and decision-making skills
- Be independent, competent, and self-sufficient
- Make healthy choices regarding nutrition and physical activity

**Please take time to read the entire handbook. It covers all aspects of our program during this time and you are responsible for all written policies included in this document.**

## General Program Information

### Ratios of Children to Teachers

Infants, 6 weeks through 23 months: 4:1

Toddlers, 24-35 months: 5:1

Preschoolers, 3-6 years: 10:1

The following individuals will not provide care and education during this time unless discussed with their healthcare provider. We also strongly encourage any family member with these conditions to avoid pick up and drop off.

- Adults 65 years or older
- People who have serious underlying medical conditions such as:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Underlying immune disorders/people with compromised immune systems/people taking immunosuppressant (examples of these disorders include Rheumatoid Arthritis, Crohn's Disease, recent cancer treatment)
  - Pregnant women
  - People with HIV
  - *If individuals have specific questions about their own health conditions they should contact their medical provider before providing childcare, summer, or afterschool programs.*

**Any staff member or teacher age 65 or older, or with serious underlying health conditions are encouraged to talk to their healthcare provider to assess their risk and to determine if they should stay home.**

### Communication with Families

We remain committed to building strong partnerships with families through on-going communication. However, we need to limit direct face-to-face contact and conversations between families and teachers. Please remain outside of classrooms and limit drop off and pick up times to a maximum of five minutes. We also ask that teachers and family members wear cloth facial coverings during these times. Please use email or phone calls to communicate whenever possible.

Infant and toddler teachers will continue to use notebooks to update families on each child's development, changes in routine, behavioral challenges, and emerging interests at school. Families are welcome to write in these notebooks to update teachers on their home life or any big changes. Whiteboards with daily nap and toileting information will be viewable from the hallway.

Teachers in the preschool classrooms will continue to use Teaching Strategies GOLD to document

children's development and communicate with families as needed.

### Cell Phone Use

Mountain Village School is a **CELL PHONE FREE ZONE**. We ask that you do not use your phone while at the center. Please step outside if you do need to use your phone.

### Closures

The center will close when there is a State of an Emergency, unless we are given proper authority to operate. We will not operate if we do not have heat, electricity, or water. In the event that enough staff members are absent or fall ill during the day that the center is not able to maintain legal child to teacher ratios, we will close. We will also close if advised or mandated to do so by the Governor due to local pandemic conditions. If any of those conditions occur we will notify families by phone and email immediately. Children may remain at the center only so long as it is needed for arrangements for pick up to be made. Other closures include major holidays, professional development days, and a few vacation days.

### Closures Due to Inclement Weather

MVS strives to remain open during all regularly scheduled times despite inclement weather. We typically follow the decision of Lamoille South regarding weather closures. In the event of weather related closures, you will be notified of the program's closing by listening to VPR, viewing local TV stations, and by emailing us at [info@mountainvillageschool.com](mailto:info@mountainvillageschool.com). When MVS is closed due to weather, tuition is not refunded or credited because teacher salaries are still paid during these closures.

### Tuition

Tuition is due regardless of absences, closures, sickness, or vacation. If you have any questions regarding your payments, please contact our business manager, Nick Crandall, at [nick@mountainvillageschool.com](mailto:nick@mountainvillageschool.com). **There will be a \$25.00 fee for any returned payment.** Full tuition is required even if your child is not at school due to sickness or vacation. **A minimum of forty-five days notice is required prior to termination of enrollment or to change your schedule.**

### Arrival and Pick Up

All children, family members, and staff are required to complete a daily health screening before entering the school. Signs are posted at all entrances clearly indicating that no one may enter if they have symptoms of respiratory illness. Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child each day. We are asking that only one parent or guardian assist with drop off and pick up. If possible, older people, such as grandparents, should not pick up their children due to increased risk. We are limiting our direct contact with parents and designated persons as much as possible.

As of June 1, 2020, drop off will occur between 7:30 am - 9:00 am only. There are cones set up at the

entrance to help families wait at safe distances. Please make sure that all adults are wearing a mask during drop off. We have set up a screening room to take temperatures, provide hand sanitizer, and to ask if your child has any symptoms related to COVID-19. Once cleared children are able to be dropped off in their classroom. We are asking the designated adult to stay outside of the classroom and allow the teacher to assist the child with the normal drop off routine of changing their shoes and washing their hands. If your child's classroom is outside, please make sure they are properly dressed and leave their personal items at the bottom of the stairs for teachers to put away.

Parents or designated adults who are self-quarantining due to close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual should NOT do drop-off or pick-up. Ideally children should be self-quarantining with the family members if possible.

If you are transporting your child into school using a car seat please do not store the car seat at school.

### Health and Safety Policies

We will maintain our normal expectations for health and safety including updating records of immunizations, annual documentation of a physical exam, and any updates regarding specific health conditions. We are required to have documentation that all children enrolled in our center have received full and appropriate immunizations for their age. If the immunizations are not completed we need the appropriate documentation from the child's health care provider.

Please always consider your child's health prior to sending them to school. If you feel that your child is not healthy enough to participate in normal daily activities please keep them home and monitor their symptoms.

We are increasing our exclusion policies.

Any child diagnosed with COVID-19 or awaiting test results should self-isolate until:

1. It has been 3 full days with no fever or without the use of fever reducing medication and
2. Other symptoms have improved, and
3. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

If symptoms begin while at school, the child will be sent home as soon as possible. Sick children will be kept separate from well children and be limited in their exposure to any staff members while ensuring the safety and supervision of the child until they leave.

- Staff can protect themselves by wearing additional layers that can easily be changed if needed
- Wear long hair up or tucked away
- Thorough hand washing and wearing protective equipment such as gloves, face coverings, and face shields
- Changing children's clothing when there are secretions

**Anyone with a fever of 100.4 F or higher will be sent home until they are fever free for a minimum of 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.**

If a child or staff member is sent home due to sickness, all materials, toys, and furniture that were touched by the individual will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

The health department encourages families and the school 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.

Children who arrive from out-of-state need to quarantine for a minimum of 14 days. We **strongly** encourage all family members to be tested at day 7 of quarantine prior to returning to school.

We are increasing our exclusion criteria during this time. Children may not attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath; serious sustained cough
- Green, yellow, or brown discharge from the nose
- Colored discharge from the eyes or ears
- Diarrhea (more than 1 episode in a day)
- Fever of 100.4 F or higher
- Stiff neck with headache or fever
- Muscle pain or weakness
- Heightened levels of fatigue
- Sore throat
- Rash with or without a fever
- Vomiting
- Symptoms or complaints that prevent the child from participating in normal school activities
- If a child requires more care than we are safely able to provide

We understand that this may be difficult as children often catch the common cold but we must adhere to these policies during this time due to the increased risk of spreading additional disease and sickness. We are considering the health and safety of our entire community in adhering to these policies.

**Daily Health Screenings**

All staff members and children will go through a daily health screening upon arrival each morning. We will ask about the following symptoms, take temperatures, and ask that you clean your hands. We will also make a visual inspection of the children for signs of infection, which could include flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, etc. These lists will be updated as more research and information is shared

with us from the Vermont Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Does the child have the following symptoms?	YES	NO
A temperature of 100.4 F or above?		
Cough?		
Shortness of breath?		
Sore throat?		
Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting)?		
New nasal congestion or new runny nose?		
New loss of smell or taste?		
New muscle aches?		
Rash anywhere on the body?		
Any other signs of illness?		
Has the child had contact with someone in the previous 14 days with a confirmed or presumptive diagnosis of COVID-19 or someone who is ill with a respiratory illness?		

- **If ALL of the above are NO, the child may attend care. If the child shows signs of any of the above during the day, follow exclusion protocol and call the child's parent/guardian to come and pick them up.**
- **If ANY of the above are YES, the child SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED to enter the child care building. The child should return home with the parent/guardian. Families should be encouraged to consult with their child's health care provider for further guidance.**

**Child care programs should be strictly enforcing the guidelines below with regards to child and/or staff re-entry following illness or exposure:**

- If a child or staff member have a **positive test** for COVID-19 or their doctor tells them that they probably have COVID-19, they should stay home and away from others for a minimum of 7 days from the first day symptoms appeared AND have been fever-free for 72 hours (with no fever-reducing medications) and had significant improvement in other symptoms.
- If a child or staff member **tests negative** for COVID-19 or their doctor tells them that they do not have COVID-19, they should stay home for at least 72 hours after the fever is gone (with no fever-reducing medications) and symptoms improve.
- If a child or staff member has had **close contact** with someone with COVID-19, but are not currently sick, the child or staff member should stay home and monitor for fever, cough, and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day of contact with the person sick with COVID-19. They should NOT go to work or child care and should avoid public places for at least 14 days.

During the health emergency we will have reduced hours. Hours will be posted and updated by email with any changes. We will not return to our normal operating hours until the increased safety and cleaning measures have been lifted.

### Close Contact and COVID Cases

If a staff person, child, or parent/caregiver has been identified as close contact to someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, they should self-quarantine: stay home. Please refer to the [Vermont Department of Health Website](#) for what it means to be in close contact and for instructions on [isolation, quarantine, and self-observation](#).

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-19, and therefore at higher risk of becoming infected themselves, can help prevent further spread of the virus. A contact tracing team from the Vermont Department of Health calls anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19. They ask the patient questions about activities within a certain timeframe - to help identify anyone with whom they have had close contact. (Close contact means being closer than 6 feet apart for a long time while the person was infectious.) Those contacts might include family members, co-workers, or health care providers.

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our school, we will consult with the contact tracing team at the Vermont Department of Health. To reach this team directly, you may call 802-863-7240.

All staff are encouraged to keep a daily list of other people they are in close contact with. As the state reopens, we should all consider keeping a contact journal. If you do get sick, this will make it easier to get in touch with those people so they can take proper precautions to prevent further spreading of the coronavirus.

If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member we will:

- Close off areas used by the child or staff member who is sick
- Inform all families and staff members
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas
- Wait up to 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the child or staff member who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
- If more than 7 days have passed since the child or staff member who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
  - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection
- We will continue to communicate with staff and parents/guardians with general information about the situation.

- At no point will we share the identity of the person or persons that were identified as sick.

Decisions regarding extended closures will be made in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health.

If there is any notification of a staff member or child in our care being tested for COVID-19 with symptoms, anyone considered a close contact should quarantine for 48 hours or until test results come back. If the test results are:

- **Positive:** continue to quarantine for 14 days
- **Negative:** then complete self-observation as defined by the Vermont Department of Health

### Testing

Testing is available for anyone to be tested for the coronavirus, even if they don't have any symptoms. You can first consult their primary care providers for a referral or find one of the pop up testing sites that are being held throughout the state. Anyone who does not have a primary care provider should call 2-1-1 to be connected with one. Coronavirus testing is not required for reopening and is offered on a voluntary basis. However, we appreciate and support any family or staff member that is interested in being tested and will help in any way we can. Please check the Vermont Department of Health's website for additional information [VT Testing Schedule](#).

### Facial Coverings

Face coverings are strongly encouraged for all adults, staff, and parents. We are asking that all adults doing drop-off and pick-up wear a facial covering. We have plenty of extras for you to use if needed. Instructions for wearing and making cloth facial coverings can be found on the [CDC website](#). Staff will wear face coverings when necessary and as often as possible. Face coverings must be laundered or discarded on a daily basis. If a face covering becomes soiled during the day it must be laundered or discarded.

Facial coverings are also recommended for some children. It is developmentally appropriate for children to wear facial coverings only when children can properly put on, take off, and not touch or suck on the covering. Facial coverings are not safe for children under two years of age, and children who have a medical reason for not wearing a cloth facial covering will not be asked to wear one.

For children leaving MVS on walks or field trips, we will have them take a face covering to wear when other people are present in order to reduce any community-based transmission.

### Household Activities Outside of School

We urge families who are bringing children to school to remain cautious in their behavior outside of school in order to avoid unnecessary exposure to the virus. Current recommendations on safe social

behavior can be found on the Vermont [Department of Health](#) website. If anyone in your household travels outside the state or if your child has close contact with visitors from outside the state, please notify the director and inquire about the recommended quarantine period.

### Physical Distancing Strategies

It is almost impossible for children to practice physical distancing. We are aware of the limitations to keeping children separated and are instead working on developing cleaning procedures and activities that encourage more independent play. We are also increasing the amount of time we are spending outside in order to decrease risk. We are working to do the following:

1. Children will be kept in smaller than usual groups. We will isolate specific classrooms and groups of children so that there is limited overlap or mixing of groups.
2. Whenever possible, we will keep the same groups of children and teachers together.
3. We will have no large group activities.
4. We will not be sharing common spaces such as the kitchen, office, or hallways. We will limit those spaces to specific groups and disinfect them after use.
5. We will increase the spacing between children while working at the table.
6. We will plan activities that do not require close contact.
7. Limit our use of sensory tables as a group activity, instead making individual stations for children to use independently.
8. Increase our outdoor time and keep windows open as much as possible.
9. Make use of fans to circulate air more frequently.
10. At nap time, cots will be placed further apart and children will lie head to toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
11. We will not allow any outside visitors or volunteers except for employees or contracted service providers for the purpose of special education or required support services, as authorized by the school or district.
12. Conversations about a child's day will happen through phone calls, emails, or written notes shared with parents and guardians.

### Caring for Infants and Toddlers

During the health emergency we will keep our classroom size smaller than normal. We will limit our drop off and pick up locations so that children are not exposed to unnecessary germs. We will keep our youngest children isolated to the Pikler classroom utilizing the back door as an entrance and exit. The only staff members allowed in the Pikler classroom are the classroom teachers and kitchen staff. We acknowledge that physical distancing is impossible and not healthy or safe with infants. We will continue our same level of care and responsiveness to children that we typically do. We will maintain our exposure to germs and minimize risk by:

- Wearing clothing layers that can be easily changed if needed
- Washing hands, neck, or other areas touched by child's secretions,

- Keep our hair up and out of the way
- Putting all contaminated clothing in a sealed bag to go home for laundering
- Maintaining a high level of cleanliness in the classroom at all times

### Hand Washing

All children, staff, contracted service providers, and parents or guardians should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival at school
- After staff breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding children
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- Before and after diapering
- After using the bathroom
- Before and after helping a child in the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After handling animals or cleaning animal waste
- After playing outside
- After play with sand or engaging in sensory play
- After handling garbage
- After cleaning

As much as possible we have plenty of hand lotion to support healthy skin for children and staff. Please feel free to leave a labeled bottle of hand lotion with your child's teacher to use after hand washing.

### Hand Washing Procedure

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available. Follow these steps for hand washing or hand sanitizing every time.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap with a towel and apply soap.
2. Lather hands by vigorously rubbing together with soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub hands for a minimum of 20 seconds
4. Rinse hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel.
6. Turn off tap with the towel and discard.

Children under the age of 3 must be monitored while using hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion. All children will be monitored during hand washing. There are posters with pictures and descriptions at all hand washing sinks.

### Health Resources

The Vermont Department of Health has public health nurses available to answer health related childcare questions from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM Monday through Friday. They can be reached at 802-863-7240, select the option “Childcare Programs”. After hours there will be a childcare mailbox to leave a message and the Health Staff will return calls the following business day.

### Medication Policies

If you are leaving medication (either prescription or over the counter) for us to administer to your child, you must fill out and sign a medication permission form stating the reason, correct dosage, and the time it should be administered. We cannot give any medicine without the form being completely filled out and signed. For any prescription medication we need the label and prescription from the pharmacy with physician’s contact information listed. All medications must go home at the end of each day. **A child may not receive the first dose of any medication at school.** Please make sure that you administer the first dose and allow for sufficient time to observe any reactions prior to sending the child and the medication to school. We will not administer any cough drops, lozenges, or similar medications because of the potential choking hazard. All medications are kept in a locked cabinet out of reach of children.

If your child is taking antibiotics during this time, we will ask that you keep your child out of care until they are completely finished with the medication.

### Emergency and Medical Information

Copley Hospital is the closest hospital located in Morrisville and is the primary site for emergency care for all children and staff. In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called. Parents are required to provide relevant health insurance information for emergency medical or dental treatment. All staff are current in first aid and CPR training which includes rescue breathing, management of a blocked airway, and any special procedures that physicians of enrolled children have documented for the child. Emergency care plans for children with known medical problems that might require special care are kept on file. Staff members who administer care to children requiring special medical procedures are competent in the procedure and guided in writing by the prescribing health care provider.

### Emergency Evacuations

Emergency evacuation procedures are posted next to each classroom door leading to the outside. Evacuation procedures are practiced each month with children. Evacuation drills will be practiced more often during a health crisis by the staff members. We have established secure locations across the parking lot for groups of children to gather that are separated from one another. We will continue practicing these drills as long as necessary.

### Cleaning Procedures

We will clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as:

- All surfaces, especially where children or staff eat
- Bathrooms
- Frequently used equipment including electronic devices
- Door handles and handrails
- Items that children place in their mouths, including toys
- Playground equipment to the best of our ability

For shared bathrooms:

- Whenever possible, bathrooms will be designated for specific groups of staff and children
- Bathroom sinks, faucets, countertops, paper towel dispensers, soap dispensers, and all other surfaces will be cleaned after each group of children have used the bathroom or more often if needed

Classroom Materials:

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used during this time, this includes items such as soft toys, dress-up clothes, or puppets.
- All nap linens will be sent home at the end of each day
- Dirty laundry is not to be shaken, this minimizes the possibility of respiratory droplets spreading through the air

Cleaning Procedures:

- Wash first with a solution of soap and water or vinegar and water. Use a fresh towel or cloth for each cleaning.
- Apply a disinfectant (bleach and water or other approved disinfectant per the EPA)
- Follow directions contact time for disinfectant solution

We will use the following products for disinfecting:

- Diluted bleach
- Alcohol solutions with a minimum of 70% alcohol
- Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants
- [CDC List for Approved Disinfectants against SARS-CoV-2](#)

### Weather and Disease Protection

To protect against cold, heat, sun, injury, and insect-borne illness we ensure that:

- Children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather
- Children always have the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun, they wear sun-protective clothing, applied skin protection, or both. Applied skin protection (provided by each family) will be either sunscreen or sunblock with both UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher and is applied to all exposed skin (each child must have written permission for sunscreen or sunblock). Sunscreen or sunblock will be applied 20 minutes prior to outdoor play and every hour thereafter.
- It is recommended parents provide skin protection for cold weather as well. Dermatone, Aquafor, or coconut oil are good options for children's skin during winter to protect against frostbite.

- When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to high risk of insect-borne disease, we will apply insect repellent that is provided by each family. There is a very low risk in Vermont of this occurring but if we were required, repellent would be applied no more than once per day and only with written permission.

### Protection from Hazards

MVS is a smoke free facility, both indoors and out. No smoking is ever permitted in the presence of children. Program staff protect children and adults from high levels of air pollution from smog or heavy traffic by limiting outdoor and physical activity as a precaution during smog or other air pollution alerts from the Vermont Department of Health. We also ask that parents do not leave their cars running while dropping off or picking up children. Vermont has a statewide idling law for motor vehicles on school grounds. Help us to preserve our environment, protect small developing lungs, and individuals suffering from asthma. For more information on this law visit: [www.idlefreevt.org](http://www.idlefreevt.org)

### First Aid Kits

Fully equipped first-aid kits are readily available and maintained for each group of children. There is a kit in each classroom that is labeled and is accessible by adults. First aid kits travel with each group of children for outdoor play and any field trips or outings.

### Lost or Missing Child Procedure

Children are always grouped and counted whenever they move from one environment to another. If a child is missing, staff will notify other staff and the director immediately. A minimum of 2 adults will be designated to search the facility. Parents and/or police will be notified for further action if the child is not found within 10-15 minutes.

### Parental Custody

For each child with a custody agreement, we require that a copy remain within the child's file. It is the responsibility of parents to update it as needed. Children are only released to parents who have legal custody and those people listed on the approved pick up list. It is the policy of Mountain Village School to release a child to either parent unless otherwise stipulated in a court agreement. It is our policy not to provide information on a voluntary basis to any party involved in a custody dispute unless it is related to the child's safety. Our ultimate goal is for staff to sustain and develop positive relationships with both parents of the child.

### Transportation Safety

Your child's safety is a primary concern to us. This concern extends through the release of the child to her/his parent or guardian at the end of each day. Children must be placed in an appropriate car restraint system in the vehicle in which they leave. In the event that a person comes to pick up a child and is visibly impaired (having difficulty walking and/or slurred or incoherent speech), staff will encourage

that person to refrain from driving and suggest that a relative, friend or taxi be called for transportation. If the parent insists on driving, staff may call the Stowe Police Department with the name of the driver, passenger(s), vehicle description, and license plate number. Parents are responsible for notifying anyone designated to pick up their child of these policies.

### Child Abuse and Neglect

All MVS staff are mandated reporters and are required by the State of Vermont to report to the Department of Children and Families any suspected case of child abuse or neglect within 24 hours - this policy complies with federal, state, and local laws. The director at MVS is notified prior to any reports being made.

## Daily Routines and Practices

### Field Trips

We will continue to take our preschool and school aged children on field trips. The school bus will be sanitized before and after each group of children. We will take as few as possible on each trip in order to space children out on the bus. This may result in children having fewer trips overall but this will increase the health and safety for all children. We will only take field trips to outdoor locations that have a low and controlled number of occupants. For State parks we will call ahead to get permission and to ensure that we will have a safe place to play.

### Nap Time

Every classroom has rest time each day. For our infants and toddlers this is a set time where cots are set out and they are given adequate time and support to fall asleep. For preschoolers and school aged children, a rest time is offered. The option for sleep is available but for those who are not interested in sleeping quiet independent activities are provided. During this time of high risk, all bedding will be sent home on a daily basis. Cots are sanitized daily. During nap times, children are spaced out as much as possible and sleep in alternating head-to-toe directions to maximize air flow.

### Outdoor Play

Children are outdoors every day, during this time we will be spending even more time outside than usual. **Reminder, we do get dirty!** Clothing that is durable, washable, and comfortable is a must. Make sure to send your child dressed appropriately for the weather each day. We go out in the rain, mud, snow, and cold. We also have several blog posts regarding recommended outdoor clothing as well as our Gear List that is part of our enrollment packet. Spending more time outdoors has shown to significantly decrease risk associated with COVID-19. For meals outdoors the same table cleaning and hand washing procedures will be followed.

### Cubbies and Extra Clothing

Each child has their own cubby. It is labeled with their name and a photograph. We will space out children's cubbies as much as possible during this time. **Please label all items to discourage loss.** Personalized name stickers are fantastic to keep your child's items labeled. Your child will need a minimum of two changes of clothing, including socks. To simplify cleaning and sanitation, please take home the majority of items each day.

### Sick and Vacation Days

If your child is sick and will not be coming to school, please make sure to call or email and let us know in the morning. If you will be going on vacation please let us know at least one week in advance.

### Personal Items

We ask that children leave toys and other items from home at home. Personal toys often cause problems when they get lost or when children do not want to share. We have plenty of things to play with here at school. Security items are often needed for children during transitions when starting school or life changes, i.e. a new sibling. We support security items being brought to school but they will be kept in children's cubbies unless needed for emotional support or at naptime. Typically we encourage children to bring items to share such as collections, items they have found, or pictures of places they have traveled to. However, during this time we ask that nothing come into school that isn't essential. This is especially true while we are being extra sensitive to the spreading

### Parking and Building Access

During the health emergency time period we ask that all families enter and exit school through the main entrance (the double glass doors to the left of the infant playground). This high-traffic area will be sanitized a minimum of three times a day. We ask that all family members limit their time inside and avoid going into any classrooms. Make sure to always hold your child's hand in the parking lot. All internal entrances are locked with the key code. The code for all the doors is the same and may be changed at any time. If the code is changed you will be notified via email. If you are ever unable to open the doors due to a malfunction of the locking system, call the main school number and someone will be there to assist you as soon as they are able.

### Food Program

During this time we will not be asking families to participate in group snack. We are providing lunch and snacks for all children. Our menu is organic and vegetarian, and we work to accommodate all food allergies and sensitivities. We will continue to provide Fruit Salad Friday but ask that families do not contribute during this time. We offer water for all of the children at snacks and lunch.

Please provide a water bottle for outdoor use daily. Water bottles will be stored outside and must be taken home on a daily basis for cleaning.

Please do not send food from home to school at this time. Kitchen staff will be following strict safety and sanitation protocols, and masks and gloves must be worn at all times during food preparation and distribution. Many lunch and snack foods will be delivered family-style to each classroom, but teachers will then serve children individual portions to avoid contamination of serving utensils. Children will be spaced apart as much as possible while they are eating.

### Pacifiers

If your child is able to go without their pacifier, please leave it at home. Pacifiers will only be given to children during nap time. Once children enter the two year old classroom we ask that pacifiers stay at home. If you need support in transitioning away from a pacifier please feel free to ask your child's teacher for suggestions and support.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. MVS takes confidentiality very seriously and makes every effort to protect each family's privacy. Communications among staff and parents about children should be kept confidential at all times. MVS recommends that conversations about a child, behavior, or incident should be conducted in private, away from the child and other members of the MVS community. Discussions in the hallways should be kept to a minimum. If a parent has a question or concern, we suggest that this parent first contact the teacher or director to arrange a time to discuss. Staff members are also required to keep information about children confidential. We cannot share information such as children's health or behaviors. We will only share that information with the direct family. At no point will any child's or family's health condition be shared or made public.

### Additional Strategies

- We will stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation. We will stay up to date regarding news and information coming from the CDC, Vermont Department of Health, and the Child Development Division.
- Update emergency contact list: find approved pick up list and emergency contact form on our website: [MVS Forms](#)
- We are prepared to communicate with families with any news, information, or updates through email, phone, our blog, social media pages, etc.
- We will continue to communicate with our local and state authorities to determine the current spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- We ask that families continue to practice safe distancing and stay at home measures during this time to minimize the exposure of our community.
- All employees are required to complete the VOSHA training on health and safety during this time.

## Resources

[CDC COVID-19 Website](#)

[EPA Approved Disinfectants for SARS-CoV-2](#)

[VT Department of Health COVID-19](#)

[CDC Childcare Guidance](#)

[CDC COVID-19 FAQ](#)

[VT Child Development Division COVID-19 Information](#)

[Let's Grow Kids Coronavirus Information](#)

[CDC Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines](#)

[MVS Forms](#)