



COVID-19 Supplementary Handbook

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Response to COVID-19

This Supplementary Handbook is for the purpose of addressing policies and procedures as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Enquiring Minds Montessori is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of your child(ren), our staff, partners and the community. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 and base our responses and actions on the recommendations from Toronto Public Health, the Ministry of Health, Health Canada and additional relevant authorities.

We will do our best to provide childcare and Montessori education to your child, subject to the limitations required by the current circumstances, including government directives. While infection prevention and control (IPAC) has always been an integral part of our childcare and School culture, we have adapted and enhanced our policies and procedures in response to COVID-19, to mitigate risk and ensure the health and safety of all. This Supplement works in conjunction with our Parent Handbook and existing School policies and procedures. If we determine that we are unable to meet the needs of your child, despite our best efforts to accommodate them, we reserve the right to decline or withdraw our childcare and educational services.

Enquiring Minds Montessori will be incorporating the following practices:

- Staff will complete a health check by telephone, prior to each shift and will be screened again prior to entry into the School,
- A screening area is isolated at the entrance of the School,
- Only one parent can enter the screening area with their child(ren),
- Children will be screened before entering the School and monitored throughout the day for COVID-19 related symptoms,
- Children will be excluded from School and care if they develop any symptoms related to COVID-19,
- Policies and procedures have been developed specifically to COVID-19 in order to increase the health and safety of children, staff and families,
- Staff will monitor children to ensure social distancing and infection prevention. Control practices are prioritized,
- Staff will receive thorough enhanced infection prevention and control and health and safety training. Training will be frequently updated and provided to ensure best practices and consistency,
- Only one entrance and one exit will be used to ensure effective screening practices
- Regular communications on health and safety and infection, prevention and control practices will be shared with families for use at the School and at home,
- Procedures will be updated and revised regularly to ensure best practices in accordance with Public Health authorities.
- Any member of staff that is interacting and/or within 6 feet of the students, indoors and outdoors, will be wearing a medical mask and face shield.

Despite the restrictions and policies and procedures in place for the health and safety of children, we will continue to aim to create an environment that is joyful, nurturing and that allows for freedom whenever and wherever possible.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of children, parents/guardians and staff except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons. This includes but is not limited to Toronto Public Health, the Ministry of Health, Health Canada, the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities and Children's Aid Society.

Immunization

We are required to collect and retain up-to-date immunization for all children in our School. Please provide us with current immunization information.

If your child has not been immunized, please provide The Statement of Medical Exemption Form completed by your health practitioner. You may also complete the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief which requires a signature by a Commissioner of Oath. If you cannot provide either of these documents we are unable to provide you with childcare. Further, if an outbreak occurs, a child who is not adequately immunized will not be able to attend the School, unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

Operating Hours

The School will be open from 7:30 am to 6:15 pm daily, Monday to Friday. Hours for Drop-Off and Pick-Up range according to age level and program registration. For the purpose of social distancing, during these times, the School will be asking for assigned time frames for Drop-Off and Pick-Up. Time frames will be available on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please arrange this through the School office. We ask for your patience during this time, to maintain a safe Drop-Off and Pick-Up time.

Drop-Off Procedure

To ensure health and safety as well as stringent infection prevention and control practices, we will receive your child(ren) at the front entrance of our School. At this time, our staff will greet you and health screen your child(ren). We understand that this might be unsettling; however, this step will ensure the School setting remains free of infection. Unfortunately, parents will not be allowed past the front reception area where the screening is conducted.

For the purpose of social distancing, during these times, the School will be asking for assigned time frames for Drop-Off. Time frames will be available on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please arrange this through the School office. We ask for your patience during this time, to maintain a safe Drop-Off time.

Pick-Up Procedure

All childcare and School Pick-Ups will be handled through the rear playground until further notice. For the purpose of social distancing, during these times, the School will be asking for assigned time frames for Pick-Up. Time frames will be available on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please arrange this through the School office. We ask for your patience during this time, to maintain a safe Pick-Up time. To assist in the speed of dismissal, please ensure that the person picking up your child is on the approved pick-up list. Please ensure the ID is readily available for identification.

Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting

Surfaces and materials will be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected in accordance with Public Health Policy. These include:

- Continued daily cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of high touch surfaces in and outside the Classroom
- Continued daily cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of Kitchen surfaces including appliances
- Continued daily laundering and maintenance of linens
- Daily cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting cots

Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting cont.

- Continued daily cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting materials and activities
- Daily cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting playground equipment and toys

Public health guidance document:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la= en>

Hand Hygiene

The following steps will be followed when cleaning hands:

- Wet hands
- Apply soap
- Lather for at least 20 seconds; Rub between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, under nails
- Rinse well under running water
- Dry hands well with paper towel
- Turn taps off with paper towel

A staff member will be monitoring children and assisting children to ensure that proper handwashing techniques are in place. To ensure that staff are using proper hand hygiene methods, the school will review hand hygiene practices on a regular basis and provide feedback to staff as required. Staff members will be using gloves when necessary such as changing diapers, assisting in the bathroom, caring for an injury with broken skin, and disinfecting.

Quiet Time - Rest Time

All children requiring rest/sleep time will be assigned a cot labeled with their name. We will continue with our preCOVID procedure of cleaning and sanitizing cots and linens after each use. Cots will be socially distanced and children will continue to sleep in arrangement so as to minimize the spread of respiratory infections - head to toe.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play time will be used to support our efforts to maintain physical distance requirements and support children's immune systems. It is important that children/students be dressed for various types of weather to ensure they can actively participate in the outdoor program. Please ensure that adequate and suitable clothing and footwear is provided as well as individually labeled sunscreen.

Attendance Reporting

The School will maintain a daily attendance record of all individuals entering the School. This includes, but is not limited to, staff, students, maintenance workers, cleaning staff, food services workers and government agency employees. Records will include all relevant information for contact tracing should this be required. A follow-up will be initiated for all unplanned absences of staff and students. Parents/guardians should contact the school if their child will be absent from School. Parents/guardians must inform the School if the absence is due to illness and provide details of the illness. Non-essential visitors will not be permitted in the School, until further notice.

Cohorting

Instructional staff and students will be assigned to a designated cohort or group. The cohorts will be assigned to a specific "home room" or area. The maximum cohort size of each room will be consistent with the most current numbers provided by the Ministry of Education and Toronto Public Health. Programming will be planned in a manner to prevent cohorts from mixing throughout the day and over the course of their program. Staff members breaks are scattered to encourage social distancing.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is considered to be a space of 2 metres between children and students. The School will endeavor to practice physical distancing as best possible during activities while still permitting interaction and socialization to occur between children/students. Physical distancing must not compromise supervision or child safety, emotional or psychological wellbeing. Staff will continue to reinforce not sharing policies and procedures.

Food Safety Practices

Food safety practices will be modified to ensure there is no self-serving or sharing of food at snack and meal time. Children will not be allowed to prepare nor provide food that will be shared with others.

Ill Children and Staff

Staff will complete a basic health check and screening to ensure your child is asymptomatic when they arrive. Your child will also be monitored throughout the day. If your child becomes sick at the School, they will be separated to an isolation area and supervised by a staff member. We will notify you to pick up your child. If it is appropriate and feasible, we will place a mask on your child. If your child requires immediate medical attention, your child will be taken to the hospital by EMS and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner.

If your child is showing ill symptoms at home (e.g. sore throat, stomach ache, head ache, cough, lethargy, change in appetite) your child should not attend School and should remain home and isolate for 14 days. If symptoms persist on the 14th day, please contact the School for further direction.

Symptomatic staff and children should be referred for testing. Testing of asymptomatic persons should only be performed as directed by the local public health unit as part of outbreak management. A list of symptoms, including atypical signs and symptoms, can be also be found in the 'COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms' on the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 website. Those who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded until 24 hours after symptom resolution. Those who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from school for 14 days after the onset of symptoms and clearance has been received from the local public health unit.

If you or your child are being managed by Toronto Public Health, (e.g. confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) follow instructions from Toronto Public Health to determine when to return to School.

Children must be free from all symptoms for 24 hours prior to returning to School

Management of Cases and Outbreaks of COVID-19

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the School, the School will immediately report to Toronto Public Health Surveillance Unit. Other children and staff in the school who were present while a child or staff member became ill should be identified as a close contact and cohorted (i.e., grouped together). Toronto Public Health will provide any further direction on testing and isolation of these close contacts. Children or staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be excluded from the school for 14 days.

Communication Plan

The School will continue to use the Zoom platform - "Open Office", as a means of providing program information and protocols on health and safety measures. Any confirmed cases of COVID-19 outbreaks will be communicated via email to the primary contact for the student. The weekly OTM will also continue to provide information. The School will make use of poster at the main entrance to the School to further communicate information. Toronto Public Health will also provide advise about informtion that should be shared with other staff and parents/guardians in the event there is a case or outbreak of COVID-19 in the School.

Continuation of Service

If the School is mandated to close for the health and safety of the community, an assessment and response will be formulated. All families and staff will be contacted via email regarding the closure and any pertinent information. An online learning program - EMVE, will replace the in class program for the duration of the quarantine period - 14 days. If the closure is longer than 14 days, the School will continue to offer the EMVE online platform and will initiate an online rate of tuition that will apply and replace the inclass tuition fee until such a time as the inclass program resumes. These online sessions are optional for Toddler and Casa students. Refunds will be calculated starting on the 15th day of the closure, until the end of the closure. A reconciliation and payment of refunds will be done at the end of the School year (June). Students that miss classes due to illness, will follow the Illness Policy for missed classes.

Serious Occurrence Reporting of Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

As an Ontario Ministry of Education requirement, all suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 must be reported to the Ministry as a Serious Occurrence. This is to say that anytime a student or staff member are sent for COVID testing, a Serious Occurrence report is sent to the Ministry of Education. When updates are received, i.e. negative test results, this information is included in the Serious Occurrence Report.

The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted in a conspicuous place when a serious occurrence happens within 24 hours of becoming aware of an occurrence or when the School staff have deemed the occurrence to be serious. The form will be updated if additional action or investigation takes place. It will be posted for a minimum of 10 business days or 10 business days from the last update or additional action. No identifying information will be included (e.g. Child name; staff name; age or birth date of child; age group/room, preschool room). The form will be retained for at least two years from the date of the occurrence and will be made available to current and prospective parents, licensing and municipal children's services staff upon request.

Planned Guests & Field Trips

At this time, only essential visitors will be admitted into the facility, therefore we have restructured the portion of our curriculum that would allow Special Guests to enter the facility or Excursions that would have our students leave the facility. Special Guests will continue to join us each month via Zoom and Excursions will take place virtually and through more interactive learning i.e. In-House stream study through exploration of aquatic plants and froglets.

Additional Resources and Information

- The City of Toronto's Official COVID-19 Website - <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/>
- Public Health Ontario - <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>
- Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Website - http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx
- Ontario's COVID-19 Response - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-ontario-is-responding-covid-19>
- Toronto COVID-19 Dashboard - <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-latest-city-of-toronto-news/covid-19-status-of-cases-in-toronto/>
- Toronto Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings - <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/9571-COVID-19-Guidance-for-Child-Care-Settings.pdf>
- Toronto COVID-19 Community and Workplace Settings for Child Care - <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-protect-yourself-others/community-settings-workplaces/?accordion=child-care-centres>

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PLEASE DETACH AND SUBMIT THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE TO THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

*This is to verify that I have read, understood and agree to abide by the parent information booklet as outlined in the **Enquiring Minds Montessori COVID-19 Supplementary Handbook***

Child's First & Last Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Signed Date: _____

For Office Only:

Received Date:

Signature: