

Guidelines for Health and Well-Being at School

St. Matthew's Day school prides itself on offering a developmentally appropriate program that provides for the cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical needs of our young students through our play-based program. We are committed to the health and wellbeing of our students, and staff. We know that our parents are well-informed and are looking for continued guidance in what our school year will look like during this continued season of COVID.

This is new for all of us, and we know that everyone is doing the best they can with the information they have on any given day. While we can make some plans based on what we know, making long term plans or planning for every contingency (both physical and financial) is simply impossible given that the situation will continue to rapidly unfold in ways that are yet unknown and that we can't predict for the foreseeable future.

We are faced with the impossible task of blending what we know are developmentally appropriate practices with the current mandates that are being provided to us by the CDC and DSS and that serves as a guideline to our approach for the school year. We do not want to lose what is so wonderful about our program due to the mandates. We have highly skilled staff who will make every effort to combine these two divergent demands while maintaining the elements of our program that has allowed St. Matthew's to be a beloved institution of early childhood for the last 45 years.

As we look ahead, none of this will be easy or always comfortable. And while none of us would have chosen it, life is currently presenting us all with an opportunity to practice what we ask of our young children when they begin learning what it means to be part of a community here at St. Matthew's: to be thoughtful, brave, and flexible in facing and trying to solve problems.

Meeting your Teacher:

Traditionally, our staff has visited students and families at their homes; this year we are going to have a school/classroom visit. The students will have the opportunity to engage in a small activity with their teacher and choose their letter link.

At Home Guidance:

Parents will be asked to look for any signs of illness at home before school. We are asking that you err on the side of caution and keep your child at home if they display any symptoms, especially those of COVID-19.

At School Guidance:

During carline, your child will have their temperature taken and the teacher will ask you the screening questions.

We are asking that you provide a child's size mask or face shield covering for your child. Masks will be sent home daily for washing. At the current time, masks are not required, but we will encourage them to be worn in situations when social distancing is not possible. Staff members will be wearing masks throughout the day and should parents/guardians need to enter the building you will be required to wear a mask.

Upon entry into the building, the children will wash their hands. Handwashing will be encouraged, and hand sanitizer will be provided as needed throughout the day.

We will continue to organize the daily routine around the High Scope curriculum. The routine includes large group time, center time, playground, story time, small group, and snack.

Normally, the children are taught to pour water into their cup for snack, but to limit the contact, we are asking that students use refillable water containers, such as no spill sippy cups or water bottles.

Teachers will continue to clean classrooms extensively to include high touch spaces, and toys.

There will be increased cleaning of common spaces and bathrooms.

Music and Movement is a favorite activity and we are planning on it continuing; adjusting as needed.

With the mandates of not having mixed groups, we are exploring different ways to make Lunch Bunch happen and be successful. It may look different, but the core of the program will remain the same.

With many thanks,

St. Matthew's Day School