



Plum Hill School COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan

2020-2021

Introduction

In considering the return to campus during the current phase of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, it is important to balance the risk of direct infection and transmission of COVID-19 in the Plum Hill and Island community with the challenges of school closure on our community's physical and mental health. We acknowledge that the daily routine for students, parents, and teachers will be different than before. With diligent effort from our community, we hope and expect to keep our school building open and safe so that our students can reap the benefits of a Waldorf education and in-person learning.

This Health and Safety Plan is intended to provide the details of the health and safety strategies and provide guidance to the Plum Hill community during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to understand that this plan is subject to change as new information becomes available and mandates are put in place from national, state, and local public health officials or as Plum Hill Administrative staff and the Board of Directors deem necessary for the safety of the students, employees, and community.

The Health and Safety Plan addresses the following areas:

1. Daily Health Assessments/Symptom Monitoring
2. Illness and Absence
3. Physical Distancing
4. Face Coverings
5. Personal Hygiene
6. Outdoor Learning
7. Shared Materials
8. Cleaning Protocols
9. Building Use and Access
10. Mental Health Considerations
11. Distance Learning

1. Daily Health Assessments/Symptom Monitoring at School

In order to prevent the spread of infection, students, teachers, and other employees who have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home. Parents/guardians are expected to screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms and check their child's temperature prior to coming to

school each day. School personnel are expected to screen themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and check their own temperature prior to coming to work each day. **Students and school personnel must remain at home if they have a fever above 100°F or experience any of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.** Parents/guardians should have a low threshold for keeping their child home from school if any of the above symptoms are present.

Plum Hill staff will perform daily health screening and temperature checks:

All parents will be required to text ahead of drop off or answer health screening questions at the time of entry into play-yard in the morning. Also at time of entry, each child will have their temperature scanned to ensure the absence of fever.

Teachers and staff will monitor students for symptoms of COVID-19 throughout the day. They will have a low threshold to request assessment for students who develop persistent symptoms while at school unless the symptoms can be clearly attributed to another non-infectious factor or illness. If a student displays COVID-19 symptoms then the teacher will assess the child in a designated sick room appropriate for COVID-19 isolation. A parent/guardian will be called to pick up the student. While waiting to go home, ill students will wear a face mask and be cared for in the sick room monitored by school personnel utilizing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). The parent/guardian will be referred to seek advice from their child's healthcare provider (MD/DO, CNP, PA) and a release will be required before returning to school. Plum Hill employees displaying symptoms of COVID-19 while at school will be sent home immediately. School administration will contact West Tisbury Public Health Department and The Department of EEC for any confirmed case of COVID-19 that was present on school grounds to receive guidance and recommendations on further action.

Resources:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#clean>
2. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html#anchor_1589932027380
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-testing.html>
4. https://eelead.force.com/resource/1591036172000/Min_Req

2. Illness and Absence

Any student or employee who has symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 (see section 1) or has been exposed to someone infected with COVID-19 must remain at home and not attend school. Despite the strategies Plum Hill enacts to mitigate risk of transmission, they will not completely prevent an employee or student from contracting an illness. Many illnesses overlap with similar

symptoms to COVID-19. Due to the wide range of possible symptoms, it is expected that there will be an increase in absences from school and work. Plum Hill is instituting a requirement for parents/guardians to report the reason for all student absences from school.

Based on recommendations by the CDC and local Health Department, the following steps will be required to help limit the spread of COVID-19 in our school community.

1. Student absence must be reported by phone or email on the morning of the absence. Please include the reason for the absence. When appropriate, Plum Hill recommends that ill students seek the advice of a healthcare provider to rule out COVID-19. Students must provide a release from a healthcare provider to return to school.
2. All confirmed cases of COVID-19 must be reported to the school. In turn, Plum Hill Administration will work with local Health Departments to support contact tracing.
3. Employees are expected to follow the same guidance by Plum Hill detailed above including a release to return to work.

Resources:

1. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fwhen-its-safe.html
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

3. Physical Distancing

Considerable effort will be made to maintain the minimum distance between teachers and families on the school grounds as often as it is feasible and appropriate. Additionally, physical distancing is expected during arrival to and departure from school. Parents/guardians are required to wear face coverings during drop-off and pick-up. At this time parents/guardians will not be allowed in the building barring emergencies. Plum Hill will designate an “in” gate and “out” gate for families to drop off and maintain physical distance from one another. At this time Plum Hill will only be allowing two families in the play yard at a time for drop-off and pick-up. If you arrive and see two families in the play yard please wait in your car until one has departed. Siblings and other family members will not be allowed on school property until further notice.

Plum Hill will follow recommendations to reduce the student-to-teacher ratio to mitigate risk of virus transmission. It is not expected that 6 feet of physical distance is feasible in the Early Childhood age group without significant impact on the social, emotional, and mental health of the children. However, during snack, lunch, and rest periods, physical distancing is required at a minimum of 3 feet.

Resources:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
2. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
3. https://eeclead.force.com/resource/1591036172000/Min_Req

4. Face Coverings

Face coverings decrease the risk of transmission of COVID-19 from infected individuals to others. They can protect someone from inhaling droplets and reduce the emission of droplets into the environment to infect others in close proximity. In other words, they protect an individual and those around them. CDC recommends that staff and students wear face coverings “as feasible and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.” The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations state that the detrimental effects on the health and learning experience of younger-aged school children (preschool-elementary age) that are wearing face coverings may outweigh their potential benefits. Young children are likely to have difficulty putting on and taking off their face covering properly as well as more likely to touch their face covering which can unknowingly contaminate their hands. In an effort to balance the goal of reducing the risk of viral transmission between students and staff against the potential negative impacts of face coverings on a student’s learning experience, the following recommendations and requirements will be implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Requirements/Recommendations:

1. All Plum Hill employees are **advised** to wear a face covering unless there is a health-related concern that prohibits one from being worn. Employees are required to provide documentation from a healthcare provider if they believe they have a medical exemption from wearing a face covering.
2. Plum Hill students are **not required** to wear face coverings. Parents/guardians who wish to have their child wear a face covering should discuss that with their child’s teacher
3. Face coverings can be removed when outdoors
4. All adults who enter the building are **required** to wear face coverings
5. CDC recommends that the general population wear cloth face coverings (unless otherwise recommended by a healthcare provider) so that N95 and surgical-type masks are reserved for healthcare workers. The cloth face covering should fit snugly yet comfortably on the face, covering the nose, mouth and chin and reach from before the ear around to the other side of the face. Face coverings with a translucent, plastic window that show a person’s mouth are permitted.
6. Face coverings should be washed regularly at home.

7. A staff member may remove their face covering if they are sitting at their own desk in an otherwise empty classroom or office, while eating, and if they are outside at a distance of 6 feet or greater from all other individuals. Face coverings should be worn if staff members are working in an indoor communal space and any other individual is present. Teachers and staff should have their face covering accessible at all times.

Resources:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
4. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
5. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Cloth-Face-Coverings-for-Children-During-COVID-19.aspx>

6. Personal Hygiene

COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses are spread by respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of most respiratory viruses including COVID-19, particularly during the pre-symptomatic phase of illness.

The following protocols must be followed by teachers, staff, and students:

1. Hand washing stations are available in multiple locations inside. Hand sanitizing stations are located at all building entrances. Students and teachers must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If using sanitizer, apply to hands and rub hands together about 20 seconds or until dry. Student and teachers will wash hands:
 - When arriving in the classroom for the day
 - After returning inside from outdoor work or play
 - After toileting or after helping a child to use the bathroom
 - Before eating, serving or preparing food or drinks
 - After eating
 - After touching their face, blowing their nose
 - Prior to departure
 - After assisting a child to wash their hands
 - When visibly soiled (must use soap and water).
 - After contact with bodily fluids
 - After cleaning or sanitizing or using any chemical products

- After handling pets, pet cages, pet waste or other pet objects that have come in contact with the pet
- Before and after completing a medical procedure or administering medication

2. Children will be taught by teachers how to clean their hands properly. This should be done in an age appropriate, non-judgmental, and positive manner. Children should be reminded to avoid touching their nose, eyes, face, and mouth and to wash hands after touching their face.

3. Children should be reminded to sneeze or cough into a tissue or their elbow/sleeve. Used tissues are to be put in the trash and hands washed after tissue use.

Resources:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

7. **Outdoor Learning**

Plum Hill teachers and administration are planning to move the majority of programming outdoors using a forest kindergarten model to mitigate the risk of Covid-19. We are designating multiple, specific spaces to be used for outdoor learning, gathering, meals, and free play.

8. **Shared materials**

Faculty and staff will minimize the use of shared materials as much as possible. If shared materials are used, the materials must be cleaned and disinfected between use. Additionally, efforts should be made to reduce the need to touch objects and doors. Faculty and staff will also streamline materials and equipment used in the classroom to reduce the need for cleaning.

Toys:

- Recess toys, such as balls and jump ropes, must be stored, maintained, and kept separate for each class. Balls and jump rope handles should be cleaned and sanitized daily when in use.
- Early childhood should create sets of toys that can be rotated through cleanings. Use one set of toys each day. Rotate in a new set each day.
 - After use, wooden toys must be cleaned with alcohol based wipes (70% concentration) and allow to dry overnight before adding into play rotation.
 - Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with alcohol based wipes (70% concentration) and allow to dry overnight before adding into play rotation.
 - Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time. These toys should be laundered before being used by another child.

- Silks and cloths should be washed and dried after use. If hand washing is required, the cloth must be ironed before adding into the play rotation.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Bedding:

- Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Each child’s bedding will be stored separately in individual cubbies. Mats will be labeled for each child. Bedding that touches a child’s skin should be cleaned weekly.

Resources:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

9. Cleaning Protocols

Routine cleaning and disinfecting are key to maintaining a safe environment for faculty, and students. Cleaning removes dirt and most germs and is usually done with soap and water. Disinfecting kills most germs, depending on the type of chemical, and only when the chemical product is used as directed on the label. Cleaning and disinfecting reduce the chance that faculty and students will come into contact with viruses on surfaces.

Daily Cleaning of the Building

The building is cleaned and disinfected after each school day by the teachers and weekly by a cleaning service. The daily cleaning includes cleaning and disinfecting of bathrooms, high touch surfaces, cleaning of floors, and trash removal.

Day Time Cleaning of High Touch Surfaces

- The following high touch surfaces must be cleaned by the teacher or staff member after each use: tables, shared desks, and any shared materials.
- The following high touch surfaces should be cleaned in the morning, at midday and at the end of the day: all door knobs/plates, light switches, faucets, toilet seats.

Cleaning and disinfecting outdoor areas

- Outdoor areas are difficult to clean and disinfect.
- Do not spray disinfectant on outdoor playgrounds - it is not an efficient use of supplies and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 spread.
- Recess areas do not need to be cleaned.
- If tables or other touch surfaces are used for outdoor learning, teachers will clean and sanitize after use.
- Student chairs brought outside for individual use should remain in the care of the student and do not need to be cleaned unless visibly soiled. Each child will have their own chair.

- Cleaning and disinfection of other wooden surfaces (play structures or benches) or ground covers (mulch, sand) is not recommended.

Special cleaning procedures

The Administrative Staff/ Director will clean and disinfect the designated sick room and PPE after each use following protocols recommended by CDC. Additionally, the cleaning service will follow CDC protocols to clean and disinfect areas of the building when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Resources:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

10. Building Use and Access

In order to provide the safest environment and limit the number of individuals at the school, the use of the building will be limited to faculty, staff, and students. Meetings of teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, board members, and other school committees should take place via video conference or outdoors when possible. Large, all school gatherings will be held virtually or cancelled for the immediate future.

Contractors and other visitors to the building will be limited to those needed for essential operations. Parents will not have daily access to the school building unless requested by the administration to pick up an ill student. Contractors, parents, and other visitors must be accompanied by a staff member and follow these guidelines:

- All guests and visitors should remain at home and not visit the school if they exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19. Per the CDC, symptoms include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (temp > 100°F), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.
- A staff member is responsible to screen any visitor by asking if they have any symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath or other COVID-19 related symptoms.
- All visits should be planned in advance and only as needed for operations.
- Visitors are required to wear face coverings while in the school building.
- Visitors are not permitted to use the restroom.

11. Emotional/Behavioral Health Considerations

It is well known that emotional, mental and behavioral health challenges have increased in children, adolescents and adults in the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic. The AAP states “[that] the emotional impact of the pandemic, financial/employment concerns, social isolation,

and growing concerns about systemic racial inequity demands careful attention and planning.” It is understandable for students, parents and employees to feel nervous about the return to school. They will be faced with new routines in order to help keep everyone as safe as possible. These changes may bring about feelings of fear, anxiety, worry, and depression that can impair the learning process. Especially as we begin the school year, teachers expect to spend more time establishing new habits and recreating our Plum Hill community.

Teachers and staff will be educated on and attentive to warning signs that a student may be struggling emotionally, mentally, or behaviorally. They will bring those concerns to the student’s parent/guardian and work together to determine the best action plan for the student. Parents and guardians should make teachers aware of any concerns they have about their child’s transition back into the classroom.

Resources:

1. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

12. Distance Learning

In the event that schools are asked to close Plum Hill will not be moving any programing online. We have not found the benefits of meeting virtually to outweigh the risks of increased screen time for the children. We will be offering contact free craft pick-ups, resources for activities parents/guardians can do with their children at home and guidance/meetings/parent education for families online. In the event of school closures, tuition will be adjusted to reflect these changes.

Thank you for your support and understanding during these challenging times. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns or feedback hello@plumhillschool.com