



# School in the Hills

## COVID-19 Updated Procedures

Summer 2021

As we get ready to return to a new normal, we are excited to welcome you all to Summer in the Hills. Our lives have changed over the last year, but our focus has not. The safety and emotional wellbeing of our children is and always has been our first priority. While the below procedures will be best practices we are continuously following, working with children is unpredictable. There will be times when a child is hurt or sad, and they will need a hug for comfort. Young children may get close or take something out of each other's hands. We will be reinforcing best practices, and will have more teachers than usual working with smaller groups of children to mitigate risks as best we can. However, no environment is perfect, and we cannot promise that the school will be 100% socially distant. We will, as always, be 100% there for the children.

### ➤ Schedules and Classroom Routines:

- Updated operating hours of 7:00-5:45 with extended care options available. Academic hours are 8-3:30 p.m., with drop off from 8:00-8:30 and pickup from 3:30-4:00. Extended day option hours are 7-8 a.m. (morning) and 3:30 - 5:45 p.m. (afternoon).
- Updated half-day hours of 8:00-12:30 for Primary, and 8:00-12:00 for Toddlers, with these children going home before nap.
- Each classroom will have smaller, stable groups of children that will remain with the same teachers as much as possible throughout the day. Any mixing between classroom groups will be limited, and will remain consistent with the same groups crossing over as much as possible.
- Hand washing and additional hand sanitizer stations have been added throughout the school. Increased frequency of handwashing and careful monitoring for proper handwashing technique will be implemented.
- Lunch will be eaten inside the classrooms. Lunch and snacks will be served directly to the children, there will be no family style or self-serving of food.
- Lunch and snack menus are available at [www.schoolinthehills.com](http://www.schoolinthehills.com).
- Each group will have staggered outside play times in separate zones.
- Extra-curricular classes provided by outside vendors continue to be suspended through summer but we are anticipating these classes being reinstated for our Fall semester with reduced numbers and extra precautions in place.

## ➤ Drop Off/Pick Up Times and Health Screenings

- Drop off and pick up is done outside the school building – parents and other visitors are discouraged from entering the school building unless necessary.
- All children and staff will complete a health screening and temperature check before entering the building each day. Parents must wait until the health screening is complete and children are allowed to enter before leaving the campus. Children and staff may not enter the building if they have a temperature of 99.6 degrees or above, or are exhibiting symptoms consistent with Covid-19.
- Once cleared for entry, all children and staff will sanitize their hands before entering the building.
- Extended day options are available for both morning and afternoon times. Please note that you have to sign up separately for these sessions. We understand that afternoon schedules may vary. You are always welcome to pick up earlier in the day for appointments or other activities.

## ➤ Masks and Face Coverings:

- Teachers and staff will continue to wear masks, please prepare your child for this by familiarizing them with the sight of people in face masks.
- If leaving your car at drop off or pick up time, parents are also required to wear masks.
- Toddler Community – per CDC guidance, children over the age of 2 are strongly encouraged to wear masks, but it is not mandatory.
- Primary Community – children are strongly encouraged to wear masks if they are able to successfully. Kindergarteners are required to bring a mask to wear minimally during the Kinder period in the middle of the day.
- Elementary Community – children will be required to wear masks when inside the classroom or when social distancing cannot be maintained. Masks will not be required during P.E. or outside times.

## ➤ Vaccinations:

- While all SitH staff members have been vaccinated, the vast majority of our student population is under the age of 12 and therefore not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. The safety of our students is always our highest priority and our masking policy will remain in effect for all staff.

## ➤ Social Distancing:

- Larger tables that allow for multiple children to be seated will have a tabletop sneeze guard in place for added protection.
- Room divider partitions have been purchased for the common spaces so that each classroom can use a designated extended area outside of their classroom in order to further distance students as needed.
- While social distancing is an important part of minimizing risk for transmission of COVID-19, the developmental needs of the child, including their social and emotional wellbeing, will be taken into account. Children will need to be comforted when hurt or sad, children will need to move around the classroom and outdoor environments. We will make balanced, conscious decisions that keep children and staff health and safety as a top priority, while staying true to who we are as a Montessori program.

➤ **Increased Cleaning and Sanitizing:**

- Materials will be sanitized and disinfected frequently throughout the day and environments as a whole will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected each day.
- High touch surfaces and bathrooms will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected multiple times a day and deep cleaned each evening. Children will return to their own classroom bathroom instead of using public restrooms whenever possible.

➤ **Illness Policy:**

- If your child becomes ill while at school, we will call you to come pick them up. We ask that a parent or other authorized pick up person arrive as quickly as possible, and within 30 minutes.
- If your child is showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or has a temperature of 99.6 degrees or above, they must stay home. Children and staff with fever or other COVID-19 symptoms are required to stay home until they are free of these symptoms or fever, without the use of medication, for 24 hours, or they provide a doctor's note clearing them for return.
- Children presenting with two or more symptoms of COVID-19 will be required to get a note from a doctor clearing them before returning to school.
- In the event that a child or staff member tests positive for Covid-19, that person's classroom will be closed down for a minimum of 24 hours before it is deep cleaned and disinfected to prepare for the children's return. The group of children will be moved to the gym or other suitable space for the remainder of the day and alternate instruction and activities will be provided while the classroom is closed off. We will work directly with the Austin Public Health department and they will guide us step-by-step on what precautions need to take place given the circumstances of the infected person and their time on campus. Parents and staff will be notified so that anyone who had contact with that person can quarantine and be monitored closely for symptoms, while respecting the infected individual's confidentiality.