



LANIAKEA
Montessori School

Health and Safety Procedures for Reopening On-Campus Classrooms

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Overview of Laniakea Montessori School Safety & Health Approach

Laniakea Montessori School will implement a comprehensive strategy, in accordance with Department of Public Health Best Practices, to do as much as possible to limit exposure to infectious diseases, including but not limited to Covid-19.

The four pillars of our strategy include hygiene, distancing, screening, and masks.

Hygiene

Increased diligence in cleaning and sanitizing our campus is already being implemented. We understand that good hygiene practices are among the most effective ways to prevent the spread of illness, especially in a school environment. All on-campus staff will be trained before opening classes on basic measures to prevent the spread of infection, including covering one's coughs and sneezes and washing hands frequently. Teachers will give lessons in class to students about these measures, as well as monitor student hand washing and sanitizing throughout the day.

Distancing

We will be continuing social distancing per the city of Gainesville order, and have asked enrolled families to continue social distancing practices outside of school. At school, students will remain with their set classroom group and will be assigned seating areas that allow ample movement for work related activities while maintaining social distancing. Teachers will stay with their assigned group throughout the day, unless a substitute is needed due to non-Covid related illness or other emergency. We are also implementing staggered drop-off and pick-up schedules and staggered outdoor play timeframes to avoid any class groups interacting throughout the school day.

Screening

Daily Health Checks play a crucial role in keeping any infectious diseases, including Covid-19, out of our community. Staff are required to self-assess their health for signs of symptoms each morning before the start of their shift. Responses and communication between staff members will be a part of our daily self-checks. We will also be requesting that staff be tested for Covid-19 if they are exhibiting any signs or symptoms. Parents are required to screen their children each morning for new or otherwise unexplained symptoms. Upon arrival at school, students will have their temperature taken by staff. Once a child has been checked and has no elevated temperature or other symptoms of illness, she will be directed to a hand washing station or sanitizer station before joining her class.

Masks

Face coverings, especially face masks and face shields, are an important piece of our strategy. We have secured adequate PPE, including masks with a clear covering over the mouth which will enable our teachers to communicate effectively with students of all ages. All adults and youth 10 years and older that are not members of staff will be required to wear face masks or cloth face coverings at all times while on campus. This includes family members and caregivers waiting outside to drop-off or pick-up children. Students aged 3 years or older are encouraged to wear masks. Students will not wear masks at nap time. During playground time, students will be given choices for wearing their face covering based on the activity. Example: sitting on top of the Jungle Gym to talk (directly next to each other) will require a face mask. Activities of running and games that maintain space will not require face coverings.

There's a fifth pillar: Culture. Our goal is to use the four pillars above to create a culture among our community in which staff, students, and parents are proudly participating in keeping one another safe and healthy. Through frequent communication with parents, thorough training for staff, and modeling for our students, we will educate our school community on how to implement the Department of Public Health's best practices for safety and health included in this document.



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Section 1 – Signage and Education

1.1. Our Social Distancing Protocol can be found at the front gate, as well as this manual. All parents will receive a copy of this manual via upload onto their TADS account/portal under “Documents.”

1.2. All on-campus staff will receive dedicated safety and sanitation training before beginning to work on campus. We will provide access to needed resources and provide continued support throughout the school year.

1.3. We will update this Health and Safety Plan as appropriate while the Directive is in effect.

Section 2 – Requirement Regarding Personnel

2.1. The CDC states that employees who become ill with symptoms of Covid-like illness at work during a pandemic should leave the workplace. Any staff exhibiting Covid-like symptoms must be tested and have negative results before returning to work.

2.2. Staff will **not come to work** if any of these symptoms listed below (that are new or otherwise unexplained) are present.

If experiencing any of these symptoms, staff should get tested as soon as possible.

- a fever (99.9 or higher temp.)
- coughing/sore throat
- muscle pain that is abnormal
- shortness of breath
- new loss of taste or smell

2.3. If living with, or having close contact with, someone who is diagnosed with Covid-19, a staff member is subject to the Health Quarantine Directive and will not come to work.

If a staff member becomes sick during the day, they will monitor their temperature and let administration know as soon as possible. We will remove the teacher from the room as soon as safely possible and replace them with a designated substitute if needed.

2.4. We regularly check <http://alachua.floridahealth.gov/> and <https://www.sbac.edu/> for any updated guidelines and ensure that the Health and Safety Plan is up-to-date. Any news impacting our community will be shared via email and updates to this document.



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2.5. All employees are required to wear face coverings when in shared spaces on campus or out in public. This is in compliance with the [city of Gainesville mandate](#). Staff and students should ensure they **use a clean mask each day**. We will be providing disposable masks for those that need them, as well as face shields for added protection or in the event a member of staff is medically unable to wear a mask. Parents should wash and disinfect their child's mask at the end of each day to ensure that it is thoroughly clean for the next morning drop off.

2.6. All sinks will be available with automatic soap and paper towels in all bathrooms. All classrooms will be stocked with hand sanitizer. All employees are required to wash hands at the start and end of each shift, after sneezing, coughing, eating, drinking, using the restroom, changing a child's soiled clothes, when changing tasks, and otherwise frequently during each shift.

Children are also required to wash their hands or use sanitizer when entering the building for the first time, coughing, sneezing, using the restroom, coming into contact with soiled clothes, when moving between locations, and otherwise frequently throughout their school day.

A daily handwashing schedule will be implemented for students during the day to ensure cleanliness.

Sanitizer stations will be set up at regular intervals.

2.7. Sanitizer will be made available in all used rooms on campus including: classrooms, breakrooms, kitchen, supply rooms/closets, and offices. Sanitizer will also be available by outside entrances to the building, including each gate.

2.8. The regular school cleaning schedule has been adapted to include more frequent cleaning and disinfecting of bathrooms, kitchen and break areas, stair railings, both playgrounds and other common areas throughout the day. Teachers have also integrated more cleaning practices in their classrooms.

2.9. We recommend, but do not enforce, that all on-campus staff change clothes and shoes before or upon arriving at home after a shift. This can reduce the chance of exposure to anyone in a household. Such clothing should be cleaned before being used again.

While on campus, staff can protect themselves by wearing an over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.

When taking breaks, if staff needs to leave campus, they will follow proper hygiene protocols to avoid contamination. If using the kitchen area, staff will be sure to spray and wipe down the kitchen counters. Staff will be sure to wash or sanitize hands when moving in and out of the classroom.

The Parent Room is unavailable currently.



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Section 3 – Stable and Separate Groups of Children

3.1. Starting August 24th, LMS will have 2 classrooms open on campus.

Lower and Upper Elementary class will be limited to 15 children (in-person attendance) for the first 9 weeks of school. LMS will re-evaluate conditions for proper assessment for each quarter. The Primary classroom will be limited to 9 children (in-person attendance) for the entire school year. Each child is enrolled full time, and no mixing of the assigned groups is allowed.

3.2. Children will remain with their assigned classroom for the entirety of their time on campus and will not be moved unless a change is needed for a child's overall safety and wellness.

3.3. All siblings will be placed with each other where feasible.

3.4. Teachers will stay with their assigned group throughout the day, unless a substitute is needed due to illness or unavoidable absence.

3.5. Each classroom will have their own set schedule and will not combine with any other class during the academic day. When shared spaces are used, cleaning and disinfecting will happen between classes.

3.6. We will implement strategies to limit the mixing of children. For example:

- Classrooms will have staggered playground time to avoid mixing and allow disinfecting in between groups.
- At lunch and snack times, staff and children are socially distanced at individual tables or mats.
- The Montessori classroom environment enables children to work independently. Tables and chairs have been rearranged to encourage distance during the workday.
- At naptime (3-year-olds), cots will be distanced throughout the room and will be ordered head-to-toe when possible.
- Teachers will work with children to develop and implement social distancing plans and practices. Strategies include segmenting areas for children to play, modeling social distancing behaviors, and talking with the children about ways to interact with one another 6 feet apart.
- Each classroom will have dedicated time outside.
- All special events that involve parents and families have been cancelled, postponed, or moved to a virtual event.
- We will not hold any gatherings that bring large groups of children together.
- Snacks and lunches should be brought from home.
- Baking and food prep as a classwork will be put on hold temporarily.
- Children should bring their own water bottles for use in the classroom.

3.7. All materials that are not easily cleaned/disinfected have been removed from each classroom environment. Cleaning schedules are being implemented daily to sanitize/disinfect materials and surfaces in classrooms and public spaces.

3.8. Morning care and aftercare will not be provided for the first 9 weeks.



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Section 4 – Symptom Screening for Children:

4.1. When children arrive at drop-off, before they are allowed through the gate, a staff member will ask the parents if their child has shown any of these listed symptoms associated with Covid-19 within the past 24 hours, which are new or not explained by a pre-existing condition:

- Fever or Chills
- Shaking/Shivering
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Shortness of Breath or trouble breathing
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty Breathing
- Feeling Unusually Weak or Fatigued
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Muscle pain
- Seems sick or like they are starting to get sick
- Headache

4.2. At drop-off, a staff member will take each child's temperature with either a no-touch thermometer or a forehead thermometer. The thermometer will be cleaned between each use if it touches the child. If a child has an elevated temperature, we will ask the guardian to take them home and follow our illness guidelines.

4.3. At drop-off, the staff member will visually check the child for signs of illness like flushed cheeks, rapid breathing, difficulty breathing, fatigue, or extreme fussiness.

4.4. Children that have any of the listed symptoms or a fever will be sent home and encouraged to seek testing for Covid-19. While waiting for test results, the child must follow the isolation steps at home.

If the child is not tested, they can return after 10 -14 days (weekends included) have passed since symptoms first appeared. A note from the doctor is not needed, unless the clinic states that the child may return sooner than the time stipulated above as symptoms are clearly due to another cause.

4.5. The staff member conducting the temperature and symptom check will be wearing a mask with face shield. They will maintain distance as much as possible before moving on to the next child for a temperature check.

4.6. Once a child has been checked for elevated temperature and other symptoms of illness, they will be directed to a hand washing station or sanitizer station before joining their class.

4.7. If a child becomes sick during the day, their teacher will bring the child to the sick room as soon as possible and call their guardian for immediate pickup. The parent will call when they have arrived at the gate, and the teacher will bring the student to them. Unless it is an emergency situation, guardians should not enter the building.



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The sick room will be: the Parent Room

If there is a case of Covid-19 confirmed on campus in children or staff, we will notify families of students participating in on-campus classes with any next steps and close for 10-14 days to quarantine, clean and disinfect.

Section 5 – Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

We realize that it is not possible to always be on time, however it is imperative that parents make every effort to arrive on time daily for drop off and pick up. Efficiency will be necessary to ensure that daily procedures run smoothly and safely.

5.1. All guardians and staff members are required to wear face coverings when participating in drop-off or pick-up. We are limiting the number of adults on our campus to employees only, unless in the case of an emergency. If a guardian must enter campus, they are always required to wear a face covering.

5.2. When participating in drop-off or pick-up, staff will remain socially distant from guardians at the gate. When waiting to be checked in, guardians must stand 6 feet apart.

5.3. Drop-off and pick-up times will be staggered to limit contact between classes. Classrooms arriving at the same time will be dropped off and picked up at separate gates. Please refer to this schedule:

Drop-off

8:15 am - 8:25am → elementary students at side gate (classroom entrance through back door.)

8:20 am - 8:30am → primary students at front gate (primary entrance through front door.)

All families should wait outside of both gates, keeping 6 feet of distance from others.

After the health check and hand sanitizing has been completed, elementary students will walk to their classroom and enter through the back door. Primary students will be escorted by the assistant teacher to their classroom using the front door.



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Pick-up

2:25 pm – 2:30 pm → primary students at front gate

2:25 pm – 2:30 pm → elementary students at side gate

5.6. We encourage the same family member or guardian to drop off and pick up the child each day.

Section 6 – Face Coverings

6.1. All guardians, children, and staff not assigned to a classroom are required to wear face masks or face coverings at all times when on campus or participating in drop-off/pick-up. Teachers in classrooms will choose the appropriate face coverings when in their classroom with their designated group of children (mask or shield, or both.) When moving through shared spaces, all teachers will wear face coverings.

6.2. Please no masks with superheroes or trademarked characters.

6.3. All children 3 years or older participating in on-campus classrooms are required to wear a face mask during the academic day. We encourage parents to pack an extra mask in case the one they are wearing becomes soiled, wet, or dirty. We realize children will need breaks and might experience discomfort. We will make every effort for children to take breaks outside when necessary. Staff and teachers will facilitate outside, safe workspaces for children to work or study mask-free. Children will need to place their masks on again before entering the classroom.

6.4. Face masks or coverings will not be used for anyone who has trouble breathing, or is asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Staff members unable to wear face masks for medical reasons will be required to wear face shields.

6.5. Children will not be wearing face coverings at nap times. Cots and mattresses will be distanced and organized head to toe when possible.

Section 7 – Hygiene and Sanitation

7.1. We will encourage children and staff to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with hand sanitizer, especially before eating, after going to the bathroom or after wiping their nose, coughing, or sneezing.

For any injuries, ice packs are single-use and should be thrown out. First aid of any kind should be administered while wearing gloves. All wounds should be cleaned and covered.



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When comforting, washing, or assisting a child with food, staff will follow [these guidelines](#):

- Staff will wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by bodily fluids.
- Staff will change the child's clothes if fluids are on the child's clothes.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag and sent home to be washed and disinfected in a washing machine.

7.2. All on-campus staff will be trained before opening classes on basic measures to prevent the spread of infection, including covering one's coughs and sneezes and washing hands frequently. Teachers will give lessons in class to students about these measures, as well as monitor hand washing and sanitizing throughout the day.

7.3. Teachers provide lessons on how to sneeze and cough into your elbow, encourage proper hygiene, and provide consistent handwashing lessons. Handwashing signs can be found in each classroom and bathroom.

7.4. Daily classroom cleaning will be done by the teachers. The Director will ensure that thorough cleanings such as floors/major surfaces and deep cleanings are completed each night.

Classroom Cleaning Protocol:

- Check cleaning checklist from the previous day to ensure the room is clean and disinfected
- Prepare the environment
- Prepare cleaning stations
- Disinfect tables after use
- Disinfect Montessori materials after use
- Disinfect all touched surfaces (tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, faucets, sinks, etc.)
- Clean and sanitize children's bathroom
- Disinfect the toilet and all surfaces with Lysol after each use

Outdoor Playground Cleaning Protocol:

- Disinfect all high-touch surfaces between use
 - Jungle Gym
 - Picnic tables, handrails & doorknobs
- Keep the sandbox off-limits with the exception of personal sandbox bins
- Remove any toys/materials that are difficult to clean

Indoor Playground Cleaning Protocol:

- Disinfect all high-touch surfaces between use
 - All manipulative materials
 - Picnic tables, handrails & doorknobs
- Clean and sanitize children's bathroom
- Disinfect the toilet and all surfaces with Lysol after each use

Common Areas Cleaning Protocol:

- Sweep of playground and building



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- Sanitize drop-off areas
 - Gates
 - Handwashing and sanitizing stations
 - Restock gloves and other PPE equipment
- Sanitize playground equipment between each class
- Sanitize kitchens throughout day and after use
- Clean high-touch areas
 - Door handles
 - Railings
 - Coffee machines/classroom refrigerator
 - Light switches
- Sanitize pick-up areas
- Final clean of classrooms and hallways after all children have left

Section 8 – Tuition and Distance Learning

If our state or county experiences a mandated school closure, **LMS will shift to distance learning for all elementary students.** Parents will still be responsible for paying your child's tuition in full. Our teachers work extremely hard and have spent the summer attending workshops to facilitate the safest work and learning environment possible. We continue to learn ways in which to improve the distance education process. In order to keep the school operational and continue paying our faculty, staff and operational expenses, tuition remains due even when classes are held remotely.

For all primary students (ages 3 – Kindergarten), in-person attendance will continue per usual, and will be monitored and regulated by the Department of Children and Families and CDC guidelines. If the Primary classroom must temporarily close or quarantine, we will follow the guidelines outlined in Section 4 and will re-open after quarantine.

Laniakea Montessori School reserves the right to physically close the building or suspend classes to implement our Health and Safety Approach as outlined in this document.