



# **Fernwood Montessori COVID-19 Handbook 2021-2022**

*Updated 8/19/2021*

*Please note that the Handbook is subject to change based on guidance from the district and local health agencies. Please see the [MPS Family Guide Return to School](#) for additional information*

**Fernwood Montessori School will inspire all children to achieve their fullest potential through Montessori philosophy, principles, and specialized materials. Students will be prepared for active global citizenship through intrinsic development in an environment that fosters equity, inquiry, flexibility and responsibility.**

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## Introduction

At Fernwood Montessori, the health and safety of our students, staff and families will remain our top priority as we continue to carry out our mission during the 2021-2022 school year. The purpose of this handbook is to outline COVID-19 health and safety guidelines in response to current guidance from the CDC, MHD, MPS and medical advisors. Updates to procedures may be made in response to guidance as necessary. Our approach to providing a safe and quality experience at Fernwood Montessori will focus on people, places and procedures. Key areas of focus will include physical distancing, mask wearing, handwashing, air quality, and sanitation. Please read this handbook carefully.

We are grateful for the ability to maintain key aspects of our quality programming including the social and emotional opportunities for our children while working within the current requirements and guidelines for health and safety. **Our ability to keep students, staff and families safe depends on the actions of each community member and their dedication to safety within the community at large.** Each family is expected to understand and respect their role in the safety of our school community and to follow the procedures herein. Questions related to these procedures should be forwarded directly to John A. Sanchez, Principal, [sancheja@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:sancheja@milwaukee.k12.wi.us) or Kristy Lowell, Assistant Principal, [lowellkm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:lowellkm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us).

## Drop Off

The bell schedule for Fernwood Montessori is as follows:

7:20am-10:15am- K3 and K4 Day

7:20am-2:20pm- K5- 8th Grade Day

- Non-Bus Students

Please follow the guidance below on “Health and Safety Screening” to make the daily decision to bring your child to school.

Children who either walk to school or are dropped off by parents must wait on the east playground until 7:20am. We ask that no parents utilize the staff parking lot to drop off children. Please note that Fernwood staff will provide limited supervision prior to 7:20am and it is therefore the responsibility of the parents to monitor their children. In the event of inclement weather, we are not able to allow students into the building until 7:20am, so ask that you plan accordingly with clothing, drop-off time, and additional items like umbrellas. Masks will not be required outdoors but we ask that parents and children please keep physical distance of at least 3 ft. Please see more details in the Mask Wearing section of the handbook.

Breakfast will be offered in the cafeteria for students grades K3-6th grade between 7:00am and 7:35am. If a student arrives before 7:20am, they should ring the doorbell at the Falling Heath or Door 2 entrance to be let in, and report immediately to the cafeteria. Adolescent students will be offered breakfast in their classrooms.

When the bell rings to invite students into the school building, children will line up in single file to begin entering once the morning bell rings.

- Primary students, K3-K5 will enter through Door 2. Students will line up and be greeted by an adult from their room.
- Adolescent students and students in Ms. Jean, Ms. Caitlyn and Ms. Sangita’s classrooms will enter through the Falling Heath doors
- Students in Ms. Kari, Ms. Kat, Ms. Natasha, and Ms. Mary Ellen’s rooms will enter through Door 6 by the West Playground
- Students in Mr. Tomter, Ms. Jen, Mrs. Clay, Mr. Jeremy, Nikolai, Ms. Lisa and Ms. Jessica’s rooms will enter through Door 1

Staff members will be available to assist in the process. **Masked visitors will only be allowed in the building if they have made an appointment with the main office or with administration, so we kindly ask that parents wait outside and say goodbye to their children before they enter the building.** This also aligns to our desire to foster child independence.

Upon entry into the building, children will report directly to their classrooms maintaining at least 3 ft. distance. Staff members will be available to assist in transitioning children to their classrooms in a safe and physically distanced manner.

If a child is tardy (after 7:35am when doors close), they should report to the Falling Heath doors where a secretary will buzz them into the main office and ensure they arrive safely to their classroom or assigned space.

- Bus Students

Many transportation protocols have been put in place including managed capacity to promote at least 3 ft. of distance, assigned seating of students, safety and cleaning precautions, and required masks. Students who arrive on the bus without a mask will be provided one by the bus driver, and are required to wear their mask at all times. Bus route information will be communicated with families by MPS.

Once the buses arrive at Fernwood, a staff member will be available to greet the students and help to escort them safely off the bus and onto the playground to await the entry into the school building.

Prior to your child getting onto the bus, please review the safety pre-screening checklist below (see "Health and Safety Screening") to make the decision to send your child on the bus to school or not each morning.

## Pick Up

While masks are not required outside, we ask that parents please maintain at least 3 ft. of distance.

- K3 and K4 Pick Up  
Please wait on the east playground for your child and teacher to arrive by 10:15am. Parking is limited to the street and around the school; please do not utilize the staff parking lot for parking. When you have connected with your child(ren), please promptly leave the playground to eliminate crowds. *We ask that no children utilize the playground equipment/tot lot to allow for usage for K5 students immediately after pick up and to continue to promote social distancing.*
- K5-8th Grade Pick Up  
Please wait on the east playground for your child and teacher to arrive by 2:20pm. **We ask that you do not wait by the Falling Heath entrance or greenhouse for your child, as this backs up walking traffic.** Parking is limited to the street and around the school; please do not utilize the staff parking lot for parking. When you have connected with your child, please promptly leave the playground to eliminate crowds. We ask that no children utilize the playground equipment/tot lot.

## Health and Safety Screening

Every morning, families should check their children for signs of illness. Use these guidelines to understand when to keep children home from school.

Stay Home (COVID-19 Symptoms)	Return to School
<p>If <b>ONE</b> of these symptoms is present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Cough</b></li> <li>● <b>Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing</b></li> <li>● <b>New loss of taste or smell</b></li> </ul> <p>If <b>TWO</b> or more symptoms are present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Fever of 100.4° F or above</b></li> <li>● <b>Chills</b></li> <li>● <b>Sore throat</b></li> <li>● <b>Muscle or body aches</b></li> <li>● <b>New onset of headache</b></li> <li>● <b>Congestion or runny nose</b></li> <li>● <b>Fatigue</b></li> <li>● <b>Diarrhea</b></li> <li>● <b>Nausea or vomiting</b></li> </ul> <p>Siblings and all individuals who live in your home and attend an MPS school must also stay home. Fully vaccinated siblings/ household members (12 years of age or older) who are NOT showing symptoms are NOT required to quarantine or test and may return to school.</p>	<p>If a child shows COVID-19 symptoms but is not tested or does not see a health care provider, they cannot return to school for 10 days.</p> <p>If a child tests positive or a health care provider diagnoses COVID-19, they may return to school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>After 24 hours with no sign of fever (without fever-reducing medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen)</b></li> <li>● <b>And symptoms show improvement</b></li> <li>● <b>And at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared</b></li> </ul> <p>If a child shows symptoms but tests negative for COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Keep your child home until they are without symptoms (including no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication). Upon return, you must provide documentation of a negative test.</b></li> </ul> <p>If a student is exposed to someone with COVID-19, they may return to school when all the following are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Quarantine for 14 days</b></li> <li>● <b>Monitor for COVID-19 symptoms</b></li> <li>● <b>If your child becomes symptomatic during quarantine, talk to your health care provider or local health department about testing and next steps.</b></li> </ul>

**General Symptoms:** Child is sick due to another illness and/or tests negative for COVID-19.

Stay Home (General Symptoms)	Return to School
Fever of 100.4° F or above →	Fever has ended for at least 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
Vomiting →	Vomiting has ended for at least 24 hours and child can hold down food.
Diarrhea →	Diarrhea has ended for at least 12 hours.
Persistent cough →	Child is able to sleep without waking to cough.
Rash →	Rash has a diagnosis, is being treated, or has healed.
Headache →	Headache does not affect ability to open eyes and focus on schoolwork.
Any health concern making the child unable to learn →	Child is able to focus; feels strong and energetic enough to learn.

Contact your health department, health care provider, or school nurse if you have questions.

## Procedures for Illness

### Children Who Become Sick at School

If a child becomes sick at school, the teacher or staff member will notify the nurse and administrators and the child will be moved to an isolation room. Sick is identified as:

**One of the following:** cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell

**Any two of the following:** temperature of 100.4F or higher, chills, muscle/body ache, congestion or runny nose, diarrhea, sore throat, new onset of headache, fatigue, nausea/vomiting

The parent/guardian will be called to pick up sick children. Students who have signed consent forms on file may be eligible to be tested for COVID-19 (information will be forthcoming).

Students will not be allowed to return home unaccompanied.

We ask for parent support in keeping our school and community safe and appreciate your timeliness in picking up your child if they are sick.

If your child becomes sick at school, you will receive a copy of this letter.



Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that your child is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is suspected of having an infectious illness.

**Does my child need to stay home?** Yes. Your child should stay home if they have symptoms of COVID-19, have been tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting results, or have been exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19. Siblings and other people who live in your home and attend school will also need to stay home. Fully vaccinated siblings/household members (12 years of age or older) who are not experiencing symptoms are not required to quarantine or test and may remain in school.

**What should I do next?** Consult with your health care provider or local health department (call 211).

**What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

- Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure to the virus.
- Fever (temperature of 100.4° F or higher). If you don't have a thermometer, watch for symptoms of fever like feeling hot, chills, or sweats.
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

Seek emergency treatment (call 911) if your child is having trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or lips or face that appear blue in color.

**Will my child still receive instruction?** Yes. Your child will receive instruction virtually. Please contact the principal/school leader if you have any questions or need assistance with virtual instruction or technology access.

**When can I send my child back to school?** If your child was not tested or did not see their primary health care provider, they cannot return to school for 10 days.

If your child tests positive OR your health care provider diagnosed COVID-19:

- 24 hours fever free (without fever reducing medication) and improvement of symptoms AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, OR
- Negative test result is obtained OR acceptable medical documentation is obtained from a health provider.

If your child is sick but tests negative for COVID-19:

- Keep your child home until they are without symptoms, including no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of any fever-reducing medication to lower temperature.
- Your child must have a note from a health care provider or health department stating they are no longer contagious and can return to school.

If you have questions, contact your school nurse, COVID-19 coordinator, or visit the Wisconsin Department of Health Services COVID-19 page at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>

**COVID-19 Symptoms**

- Temperature of 100.4° F or higher
- Sore throat
- Cough (for students with chronic cough due to allergies or asthma, a change from their normal coughing)
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing (for students with asthma, a change from their normal breathing)
- New loss of taste or smell
- New onset of severe headache
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

### *Quarantine Guidance*

Fernwood Montessori will follow quarantine guidance followed by MPS in alignment with current CDC/MHD guidance that includes vaccine status. A child exposed to COVID-19 or in close contact must quarantine for 10-14 days from the date of last exposure before returning to school. If the exposure is with a household member and the positive case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of exposure may be the last day of isolation for the sick individual.

Fully vaccinated siblings/household members (12 years of age or older) who are not experiencing symptoms are not required to quarantine or test and may remain in school.

In the event that a student is excused from school due to illness or exposure, a team will create a virtual schedule for the student and provide daily support. Assignments will be posted for the student in Google Classroom or Seesaw.

### *Cases of COVID-19 Identified in a School*

Children identified at close contacts to a positive case will be contacted by the school or local health department and given instructions on quarantine. Staff will be contacted by MPS nursing and given instructions.

Currently, MPS may consider flexible scheduling if 3% or more of a total school population tests positive for COVID-19 within a 14-day period.

### *Contact Tracing*

MPS Nurses, in partnership with the Milwaukee Health Department will continue to support accurate and thorough contact tracing for close contacts and/or positive COVID-19 cases.

### *COVID-19 Testing at School*

COVID-19 testing may be available at schools if parents sign permission. This is not mandatory.

## **Hand Hygiene**

As part of the Montessori curriculum, we focus on practical life skills that encourage safety and health of all. Staff have been provided with proper hand washing training and will be providing students with regular hand washing lessons, reminders, and coaching. Signage will also be posted at entrances and sinks reminding students and staff of the protocols and best practices.

Restrooms are stocked with soap and paper towels for student use, and hand sanitizer is available throughout the school and in the classrooms.

## **Physical Distancing**

Children will be supported in maintaining a physical distance of 3 feet between people to the greatest extent possible.

Furniture placement and clear markings will accommodate safe work spaces that allow for adequate physical distancing. Children will work from predesignated work spaces a safe distance away from each other. All children will be provided with a moveable plexi-glass barrier that they will use throughout the day. Movement within the classrooms will be limited to getting materials and attending lessons.

Outdoor classroom extensions will be offered as often as possible for each classroom and will provide children the opportunity to work outdoors in most weather, maintaining physical distancing of 3 feet or more to the greatest extent possible.

Masks will be required indoors as another mitigation measure. Please see the “Mask Wearing” section of the handbook for more information.

Signage will be posted in the classrooms and around the building to remind and enforce this mitigation measure with specific traffic flow signs throughout the hallways and entrance ways.

## Mask Wearing

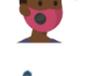
All staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear a mask in all indoor spaces unless during snack or lunch or when drinking water. Face coverings are not required outdoors; however, physical distancing of 3 feet or more will be required.

Masks must fit your child properly and comfortably by covering their nose and mouth, and a clean mask should be used every day. Cloth masks must be at least double layer. We recommend that children have an additional mask that they bring with them to school. The school will also be able to provide children with 2 masks per day if needed. We have both child and adult-sized masks that will be provided, if needed, based on the size of the child.

Due to the nature of our learning environment which involves significant movement, a well fitting mask (versus a face shield or gaiter) will be the accepted face covering.

Signage related to masks will be posted at entrances and all classrooms.

We encourage parents to practice wearing masks with their children. [Here](#) are some helpful tips for practicing. For more information, please visit the CDC's guidance for wearing masks: [CDC Guidance for Wearing Masks](#) and the helpful graphic below from this site:

Recommended	Not Recommended
 <p>Medical procedure masks (sometimes referred to as surgical masks or disposable face masks)</p>	 <p>Masks that do not fit properly (large gaps, too loose or too tight)</p>
 <p>Masks that fit properly (snugly around the nose and chin with no large gaps around the sides of the face)</p>	 <p>Masks made from materials that are hard to breathe through (such as plastic or leather)</p>
 <p>Masks made with breathable fabric (such as cotton)</p>	 <p>Masks made from fabric that is loosely woven or knitted, such as fabrics that let light pass through</p>
 <p>Masks made with tightly woven fabric (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source)</p>	 <p>Masks with one layer</p>
 <p>Masks with two or three layers</p>	 <p>Masks with exhalation valves or vents</p>
 <p>Masks with inner filter pockets</p>	 <p>Wearing a scarf/ski mask</p>

Any child who refuses to adhere to the mask expectations will be removed from the group, relocated to an area away from other students, and the parent or guardian will be contacted. We will do this in a restorative way that respects the child, and ask for parent support in reinforcing the health and safety of our entire school community.

## **Air Quality**

MPS is following guidance from the CDC, which uses standards developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), to include the following:

- MPS has worked with a consultant, Rivion, for a ventilation audit
- MPS HVAC units are supplying the maximum amount of outside air the unit can safely provide and windows have been made operational
- MPS is running HVAC units two hours before and two hours after buildings are occupied
- HVAC Air Filters
  - MPS is using the maximum rating that will not overburden the ventilation system or reduce air flow
  - Air filters are changed monthly to enhance air cleaning and checked for appropriate installation
  - Portable HEPA filtration units have been added to all classrooms, including special education classrooms, for improved air quality

## **Vaccine**

All individuals age 12 and older are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. MPS encourages students and families to get vaccinated. Please visit the City of Milwaukee Health Department website at <https://city.milwaukee.gov/CovidVax> or call 414-286-6800 for more information.

## **Cleaning and Sanitation**

Please be sure to visit the Fernwood website for information on classroom supplies. Contrary to prior years where supplies are shared and used communally in the Montessori classrooms, supplies will be used more individually to prevent sharing a multitude of materials.

Each classroom will identify key areas and frequencies for regular cleaning within their environment such as high-touch surfaces, sinks, handles, bathrooms, materials, etc...and will maintain room-specific cleaning logs. As always in the Montessori classroom, children will be invited to clean their own work spaces as part of practical life.

Materials that cannot be cleaned easily may not be made available to students or may be rotated to ensure safety. Upon preparing shelves, teachers will use their discretion and will be mindful of the potential for materials as fomites under the current health considerations..

Chromebooks at Fernwood Montessori will be available to each classroom for use, if needed, throughout the day. ChromeBooks will be properly sanitized under the guidance of an adult between uses.

All water fountains are discontinued for use throughout the school unless being used to fill up a cup or water bottle. Please see "Snack, Lunch, and Drinks" below for more information.

Regular daytime cleaning will be done using chemicals that may be safely used in the presence of children. The active ingredients are effective virucides. We have additional staff that will be cleaning commonly touched surfaces and materials such as counters, door handles, light switches, etc. throughout the school day. Bathrooms will be inspected regularly and cleaning supplies will be replenished.

Our custodial staff will support more intense daily cleaning procedures after normal operating hours using a Quat Disinfectant Cleaner. Using a different chemical during the night supports an additional kill step for the virus in case it was missed during the day and facilitates an integrated disinfecting approach.

After students leave for the day, bathrooms, hallways, and other areas commonly used in the building will receive an additional deep cleaning with Quat Disinfectant Cleaner disinfectant to ensure a clean and safe environment for all students.

## **Classroom Cohorts**

Classrooms will remain as cohorts throughout the day as much as possible. Integration of some cohorts may be permitted. The lunchroom and playground will have a reduced number of classrooms in the space at a time in order to promote distancing and to minimize cohort mixing to the greatest extent possible.

Adolescent students will switch between 4 classrooms. Desks will be properly wiped before use of the next student, and traffic flow will be monitored throughout the hallways to ensure social distancing. Lockers will be utilized and will be spaced out to allow for distancing.

Specials (art, music, and physical education) will be held in the art room, music room, and gym (or outside, when weather permits). Surfaces will be wiped down between classes and windows and ventilation units will be utilized.

It is necessary for some staff members to lend support across cohorts. When transitioning to a new cohort, they are required to wash their hands and abide by all safety precautions.

When utilizing public spaces like bathrooms, maintaining physical distancing of at least 3 feet will be required and spaces will be blocked off to accommodate this. Most bathrooms in our school building will only allow capacity of 1 student at a time in the facility. Signage will be posted to enforce this.

If a student requires support from administration, nursing services, special education, or mental health personnel, an internal procedure will be followed; no more than 1 student will be in any small office at a time, and cleaning will occur after that student is seen to allow for the highest level of precaution and safety.

Students requiring Special Education services may work in-person in small groups with children from other classrooms. Groups will never be larger than 6 children and physical distancing and mask wearing will be expected and enforced at all times.

## **Breakfast, Snack, Lunch and Drinks**

Students are encouraged to bring a clean water bottle and healthy snack each day. There will be no communal snacks offered. Parents will be expected to follow the allergy and snack guidelines provided by the classroom teacher in preparing the snack for their child. Be sure to clearly label all of your child's containers and items with their name.

Students who wish to eat breakfast should enter at Door 2 or the Falling Heath Entrance between 7:00am and 7:30am and report immediately to the cafeteria, where they will be seated at least 3 feet from other students. Breakfast will finish at 7:35am. Adolescent students will be offered the option to eat breakfast in their classrooms once the school day begins.

Students in K5-8th grade may bring their own cold lunch, or may sign up for a hot lunch provided by the school each day. Please note that in order to encourage physical distancing, classrooms will rotate utilizing the cafeteria and eating in their classrooms. While we do not require it, we highly recommend that you send your child with a cold lunch on the days they are eating in their classroom (teachers will communicate this schedule with you). Otherwise, students who ordered hot lunch in the morning will be sent to the cafeteria to get their lunch and report back to their classroom to eat it on classroom lunch days. K5 students will always eat lunch in the cafeteria, appropriately spaced and monitored by adults to ensure safety. A minimum of 3 of physical distancing will be provided for each student during lunch. Air circulation will be encouraged, when possible, especially during lunch with the use of fans and open windows.

All water fountains are discontinued unless they are used to refill cups or water bottles.

## **Outdoor Time**

Outdoor time, commonly known as recess, will be provided to all students K5-8th grade, and will be scheduled on a staggered basis to limit exposure and mixing of cohorts. Classrooms will be provided with outdoor time that will be supervised by either the classroom teacher or another adult. Children will not be required to wear a mask outside, but may do so if they choose. They will be monitored to ensure a distance of at least 3 feet. No more than 4 classrooms will be allowed outside together at a time and these will remain consistent throughout the school year. Students will be asked to wash their hands upon entering the classroom or building following their outdoor time.

## **Chromebooks**

During the first weeks of school, each child will be issued an MPS Chromebook that will be sent home with them. More information will be shared in the coming weeks about this. Please note that staff would be happy to provide some ideas and support around after-hours school work, but will not be responsible for monitoring appropriate Chromebook usage after school hours. MPS continues to have inappropriate websites blocked.

Please note that no Chromebooks or other electronic computers/devices should be brought to school. Extra ChromeBooks will be available in each classroom for students to use if necessary during their in-person learning days. Chromebooks will be properly sanitized between uses and at the end of the day as a mitigation measure and this will be supervised by a staff member. Students will be expected to utilize their Chromebooks for school work and school-appropriate content. The program Go Guardian may be utilized to monitor student activity.

We ask that all parents purchase or provide a pair of earbuds or headphones with their student's name that are clearly labeled that children leave at school.

We ask that no cellphones are brought to school by any student. If a student in the Adolescent level brings a cellphone, it will be locked up for the school day in the student's homeroom, and given back at the end of the day.

## **Specials, Special Education and Interventions**

As stated above, classrooms will be escorted to the art room, music room, and gym for specials. Physical education will take place outside weather permitting.

Special education teachers will follow IEPs to provide the appropriate services to each child who qualifies for special education. Annual IEP meeting and tri-annual re-evaluations will take place virtually via Google Meet unless a parent requests for an in-person meeting.

In some cases, IEPs may need to be reviewed and revised. Please contact your child's special education teacher if you feel like your child needs additional or different support following the communication of schedules.

Children who qualify may be given extra support in reading, math or writing using academic interventions. Please reach out to your child's teacher if you feel like your child is struggling and needs some additional support to discuss options.

## **Nursing Supports and Medication Distribution**

The nurse will be at Fernwood every day from 7:30 a.m. until noon. The nurse will be available to provide necessary care, first aid and to distribute prescription medication.

If you need to drop off medication, please contact Nurse Gretchen Kuhnen to arrange a time.

To ensure social distancing, only one student at a time will be seen in the nurse's office. Students will be triaged and seen by the nurse in order of acuity. Please plan on giving prescription medications at home whenever possible to help prevent overcrowding in the nurse's small space. Some students will require lunch doses of medications at school. The nurse will arrange with teachers to meet discreetly, one on one with these students to administer necessary medications. If your child is in 5th grade or above please consider having their medical provider complete the epi-pen/albuterol self carry order form so that your child can keep their emergency medication with them and self administer when necessary.

Tylenol, ibuprofen and albuterol have been available in the past for students whose parents completed the protocol medication consent form. At this time, to limit congestion in the nurse's office and movement in the building, these protocol medications will not be available to students. If your child has a chronic or acute issue that requires over the counter medication at school, please contact the nurse so that arrangements can be made.

Please do not send your child to school with any prescription or non prescription medications without the necessary forms. Prescription medications require a prescribers signature and a parent/guardian signature. Over the counter medications require a parent/guardian signature. All medications must be brought to school by an adult in the labeled container that they came in. The necessary forms are available at :

<https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/en/Families/Family-Services/Nursing--Health-Services.htm>

Once in the link, you must scroll to the bottom of the page and click on Medication Forms/Policy Procedure to access the forms. Please contact the nurse if you have difficulty accessing the forms.

Nurse Gretchen can be reached at [kuhnenga@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:kuhnenga@milwaukee.k12.wi.us) or 414-294-1388.

## **Social and Emotional Services/Supports**

Given the events of the past year and a half, Fernwood Montessori staff are aware of many unique challenges that families and students have faced and are committed to not only the physical health and safety of students and families, but the mental health of all community members.

We understand that the transition to in-person school 5-days a week may be challenging for some students so we ask that families best prepare their students for what to expect by reviewing components of this handbook that are appropriate and as parents see fit. Teachers will also review guidelines and expectations with students in an age/developmentally appropriate way.

Through the use of grace and courtesy and social and emotional development and curriculum (Second Step), Fernwood Montessori staff are committed to working together with students to meet their emotional and mental health needs. A large emphasis will be placed on community building, reacclimation to in-person school and in-person school routines, and self-regulation. We believe this instruction and these supports will be beneficial in the healing process that many of our students require.

We plan to welcome students back by creating predictability, establishing community, processing emotions, using responsive instructional practices, and identifying vulnerable students.

For students who have additional mental health or social and emotional health needs that are not being met, we ask that families reach out to our school-wide experts for advice, suggestions, and to understand services that our school community can provide. In the case that your child will be seen in-person by either our counselor, school psychologist, or social worker, please note that your child will remain alone with this individual to prevent cohort mixing as much as possible. Appropriate cleaning measures will be taken between seeing students as an additional mitigation measure.

Teachers may also reach out to support staff as needed if they identify specific needs or areas of concern.

Please reach out to the following support staff:

Bianca Willingham, School Counselor, [willinbc@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:willinbc@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

Tracy Redlich, School Psychologist, [redlicta@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:redlicta@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

Manee Jadolon, School Social Worker, [inthirm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:inthirm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

## **Camp/Wrap-Around**

The before and after school program is our Child Care Camp through the MPS Department of Recreation and Community Services. Students must be registered prior to attending Child Care camp. Registration forms are available on our website. We plan to start camp on Thursday, September 2, 2021 but we are still hiring staff and may have to start on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

Before School Camp hours are 6:45 a.m.-7:20 a.m.

K4 Wrap Around is from 10:20 a.m.-2:20 p.m.

After School Camp is from 2:20 p.m. -6:00 p.m.

Camp will follow the same guidelines as during the school day including masking, physical distancing, cleaning and hand washing. Please note that children attending camp will be with other students from classrooms throughout the building, as we do not have the space or staffing to separate students by cohort. Outdoor space and activities will be utilized to the greatest extent possible with extensions from the Montessori curriculum.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Athletics and extracurricular activities will be offered this school year, maintaining the same guidelines as the school day regarding health and safety. Please continue to watch the parent newsletter sent on Tuesdays for more information and details on upcoming activities.

## **School Events and Visitor Policy**

We continue to monitor the health and safety data and will keep families informed on school events. As of Fall 2021, in-person events will be limited to prevent congregations of people with potential virus spread. Please stay tuned to our weekly newsletters for up to date information on upcoming events.

All visitors and volunteers are welcomed to our school building; however, individuals must make appointments with the school office in order to come into the building. We ask this in order to maintain a safe environment for our students and to keep track of all traffic in our building for potential contact tracing if needed. All visitors must be masked at all times.

## **Community Expectations**

At Fernwood Montessori, we provide children with an educational program that is rooted in the philosophy of Maria Montessori that nurtures a love of learning and fosters respect for self, others and the environment.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, our ability to fulfill the entirety of our mission relies on our community's commitment to foster respect for self, others and the environment. This will be the foundation for protecting each other through the COVID-19 pandemic. By embarking on a return to school, each Fernwood family is expected to exercise extreme care in protecting themselves and others in our school environment and community. We expect the highest level of commitment to each other and to these procedures by all members of our community in order to stay safe and remain open. General expectations for our community are outlined below.

Health Monitoring: Exercise extreme caution when monitoring the health of children and determining if they are healthy enough for school. Fernwood staff will be using a high level of caution to determine admission each day and throughout the day. When questioning the health of your child prior to arrival, please proceed with caution and keep your child home for the safety of everyone in our school community.

Communication: In addition to the health of your child, we expect transparency from families regarding exposure outside of school, symptoms, diagnosis and high-risk individuals. It is your responsibility to inform anyone that you have designated to pick up or drop off your child of these policies as their compliance is also required. Our ability to provide a safe environment for students and staff as well as maintain onsite operations relies on the daily decisions and communication of each of our community members. Notify the school IMMEDIATELY if you, your child, or anyone in your household has symptoms or is confirmed positive for COVID-19. Report any noncompliance directly to the school so that it can be addressed.

Exercise Caution: If you, your child, anyone you have been in close contact with, or anyone in your household has symptoms related to COVID-19, remain home for 10 days or until it is determined without a doubt that the person is no longer contagious or does not have COVID-19.

Practice Consistency: Practice physical distancing, mask wearing, and healthy hygiene outside of the school community. Stay informed and abide by all state and local safety guidelines.

Be Collaborative: Communicate immediately, maturely, openly, and honestly about any concerns you may have about your family's experience at school. Recognize that staff may not have all of the answers to your questions immediately, and will consult the appropriate

resources to determine the best course of action. Trust that the school has everyone's best interests in mind when making decisions.

Commitment to Fernwood Montessori: Fernwood has been forced to reimagine our learning spaces and staffing and adapt and invest in additional materials to enhance the safety of our campus. Your commitment is not only necessary to the success of our plans, but also for the long-term sustainability of our school.

Fernwood Montessori will continue to adapt to the challenges of the current novel COVID-19 pandemic. Updates to the procedures will be made as necessary to uphold the safety and quality of our programming. **Our ability to keep students, staff, and families safe while at school depends on the actions of each community member and their dedication to safety within the community at large.** We appreciate your attention to the details in this handbook and your commitment to the health and safety of all members of our school community.

## **Important Contact Information**

Fernwood Main Office: 414-294-1300

Secretaries:

China Triggs: 414-294-1312

Cynthia Arias: 414-294-1310

School Nurse:

Gretchen Kuhnen: 414-294-1388, [kuhnenga@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:kuhnenga@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

School Administration:

John Sanchez, Principal: 414-294-1305, [sancheja@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:sancheja@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

Kristy Lowell, Assistant Principal: 414-294-1306, [lowellkm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:lowellkm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

## References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

Guidance for Wearing Masks:  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschools-childcare%2Fcloth-face-cover.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschools-childcare%2Fcloth-face-cover.html)

Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19:  
<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

Milwaukee Cares Mask Ordinance: <https://city.milwaukee.gov/coronavirus>

Milwaukee Public Schools Family Guide:  
[https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/MPS-Public/Webmaster/Documents/MPS-Reopening-Website/2021-22-Family-Guide/MPS\\_FamilyGuide\\_ReturnToSchool\\_August2021.pdf](https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/MPS-Public/Webmaster/Documents/MPS-Reopening-Website/2021-22-Family-Guide/MPS_FamilyGuide_ReturnToSchool_August2021.pdf)

Moving Milwaukee Forward Safely Order 4.1:  
<https://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/MKE-Health1/COVID-19/MediaReleaseTheCityofMilwaukeePhase4.1UpdateFinal.pdf>

Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html#additional-prevention-schools>

Wisconsin Immunization Program requirements for schools:  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/reqs.htm>

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Education Forward:  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/schools.htm>

