

Parents: Health First Covid-19 Policy and Acknowledgment Agreement

We take your trust in us, to care for your child, very seriously. We need your help to keep everyone as safe as possible. Central is only as healthy as the sickest person that arrives at school. Central and parents must work very closely together to implement health behaviors at home and school. We must monitor ourselves and children carefully, both at home and at school, and keep in close communication with each other.

These current policies and procedures below are implemented in response to current information from health and government officials about Covid-19 disruptions. They will change but for now, we view them as the “New Practical Life” lessons and they will stay in effect until future notice. The screening measures may be a bit time consuming, at first for parents and Central thanks you for your willingness to assist our larger community by embracing these measures.

In this document, please find a short narrative about the general considerations for our reopening of our campuses. Also find information about how parents can positively impact the well-being of our community. Finally, there is an Acknowledgement document that should be read, signed and returned to school before or on the day of your child’s return.

Please also take a moment to read this wonderful article from NPR about [What Parents Can Learn From Child Care Centers That Stayed Open During Lockdowns](#)

Child Pods

Smaller fixed groups of children and their teachers might be the answer to the challenges of having children wear masks and maintain social distancing. One POD doesn’t interact or share spaces with other PODS but may be in the same room depending on Virginia’s phase of reopening. Should a member of one POD become ill, there may be an increased ability to contain illness within the one POD and reduce the risk of infection for members of other PODS. The configuration of classrooms and PODS may change over time. We will work hard to keep everything as consistent as possible for our children. Children, while they are in their PODS, are encouraged, but not required to social distance and/or wear masks. The class room arrangements and designs encourage social distancing.

Masks

Children over the age of two, within these groups, will be consistently encouraged to wear masks (when they cannot social distance for some reason) unless they are at their own individual spaces.

Of course, ideally, all children, like adults will become familiar and comfortable with wearing masks if they see others engaged in this behavior. It is now considered good hygiene and essential for the well-being of ourselves and others to develop the ability to tolerate masks. When children are in their PODS and not interacting with children in other PODS, they may have their masks off. Adults will keep theirs on anytime social distancing cannot be maintained.

Please help your child practice wearing masks at home. Please have/encourage your child to wear a mask as they enter the building each morning. At this time, all adults will wear masks while caring for children and practice social distancing with other adults.

Games, training, possessive directives, and classroom materials/experiences will all be of assistance to children as they become familiar with this new social/health expectation.

Social Distancing

Children in their PODS will be encouraged and directed to adhere to social distancing as much as possible. Their individual areas, tables, rugs, chairs/stools, and personal belongings, have been spaced 6 feet apart within the classroom.

Central has always had a “no touch” policy but social distancing presents very real challenges in a school setting. Children will be children, after all. They will come close to friends. They will need, and seek out, physical comfort from others. It may be necessary for teachers to come close and/or touch children in order to assist the children throughout the day.

Returning to Campus and Normalization

As we return to campus, we may all, once again, go through a period of adjustment. Montessori called this normalization. It is the period when we enter a “new” environment and learn about the new expectations, the new relationships we will have. We learn about where resources are, what the new routine or schedule will be. It takes time. Montessori said that this normalization period ran, on average, about 6 weeks. Because the children have so closely bonded with parents, this transition may take a bit longer for children.

In this document, please find

1. How Parents Can Help Their Child Return to Central’s Campuses
2. Two Types of Required Daily Screenings: Home
3. Daily Preparation for School Checklist
4. Communications about Health and Well-Being
5. Acknowledgement Statement to be Signed and Returned

1. How Parents Can Help Their Child Return to Central’s Campuses

- Model and help your child develop pro-health behaviors and habits

A child’s readjustment back into the classrooms can be eased with the help from our parents. The more similar the following expectations are, the smoother this transition may go. We can do it together! While in the home, please, when possible,

1. Encourage your child to wear a mask. Taking time to have everyone in your family practice wearing a mask each day inside and outside of your home may

help your child feel more comfortable about wearing a mask at school and in public. Unfortunately, this may be a new health behavior we all should use now and from time to time in the future.

2. Have your family implement, as much as possible, appropriate hand washing behaviors, social distancing, and mask wearing. They will allow children to return to playdates and visit relatives with less stress and more consideration.
3. Move into the daily school and sleep schedules now to reduce fatigue which elevates stressors.
4. Print, and follow, the Exposure (Family) Screening and Symptom (Child) Screening Guidelines
5. Print, and follow, the Daily Preparation for School Checklist
6. Set your thermostat to 78 or a bit warmer. This will help children acclimate and be comfortable at school with doors and windows open and extended outdoor time. (Also saves energy.)
7. Please sign and return the Acknowledgement Document. This document is included just to give everyone a moment to fully assess our good decisions.

Special Note: Central staff is trained to help children (and parents) during transitional phases. We know that routine and consistency has great value and we encourage our staff and parents to build these into the child's everyday experiences.

2. Three Types of Required Daily Health Screenings

- Exposure (Family) Screening: Before leaving home

Parents should assess their family's health and determine that the family is not at increased risk of illness, each day before leaving their home and bringing their child to school. If a family is experiencing increased risk, they should notify the director before bringing their child into school.

- Have you or anyone in your household had any of the following symptoms in the last 21 days: sore throat, cough, chills, body aches for unknown reasons, shortness of breath for unknown reasons, loss of smell, loss of taste, fever at or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit?
- Have you or anyone in your household been tested positive for COVID-19?
- Have you or anyone in your household visited or received treatment in a hospital, nursing home, long-term care, or other health care facility in the past 14 days?
- Have you or anyone in your household traveled outside of Virginia in the past 14 days?
- Have you or anyone in your household traveled on a cruise ship in the last 14 days?
- Are you or anyone in your household a health care provider or emergency responder?
- Have you or anyone in your household cared for an individual who is in quarantine or is a presumptive positive or has tested positive for COVID-19?

- Do you have any reason to believe you or anyone in your household has been exposed to or acquired COVID-19?
- To the best of your knowledge have you been in close proximity to any individual who tested positive for COVID-19?

If you answered **NO** to all of the above, please bring your child to school!

If you answered **YES** to any of the items above, please contact the director before bringing your child to school and continue with the following child health screening.

- **Symptom (Child) Screening: before leaving home each day**

Parents should screen their child each morning, before leaving their home. Children should not arrive at school if they are exhibiting any of these symptoms for unknown reasons. If a child has one of these symptoms, and the cause is known to be something other than Covid-19, please notify the director before bringing your child to school. The director may ask you to take your child to the doctor to determine appropriate, if any, exclusion or treatment. This list may not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update and revise this list.

Does your child

- Report not feeling well
- Appear unwell
- Have any of the following
 - Temperature of 100.4 or higher (take temperature reading each day before bringing your child to school)
 - 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

If your child has **NONE** of these symptoms and you determine that they are able to fully participate in their day at school, then bring your child to school! If your child or anyone in your family, **HAS ANY OF THE SYMPTOMS** listed above, please feel free to use the CDC Self-Checker and/or contact your Dr. to determine if exclusion is necessary. Please provide this information to Central upon your child's arrival.

- [Self-Checker: CDC](#)
- [A guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care.](#)

Special Note: If you feel that your child's diarrhea and/or fever is due to teething, please ask your pediatrician to fax/email information about a need (or no need) for exclusion.

3. Daily Preparation for School

If both of the daily screenings indicate good health and do not indicate high risk, please complete this checklist before leaving your home each day.

1. Take everyone’s temperature and determine that fevers are not present and below 100.4 degrees
2. Check to be certain that everyone has washed their hands for 20 seconds before leaving the house.
3. Be certain that each family member has a mask with them and are prepared to put them on before exiting the care.
4. Be certain all children have all the items they will need for their school day. This reduces the likelihood that a parent will need to enter the buildings to hand items to staff members.

- Health First: Covid-19 Morning Checklist for Family and Staff

Daily Preparation Tasks	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Take temperature (less than 100.4 degrees)					
No evidence of illness (staff notify director)					
Apply sunscreen, and insect repellent					
Wash hands					
Gather all belongings					
Get mask (please label with name)					

Special Note: By fully preparing to bring our little ones to school, we reduce the number of times we might need to drop something off later. This reduces the number of possible exposures our school community experiences.

4. Communications about Health and Well-Being

- Notifications

It is possible that even with a safety and strong health Covid-19 mitigation policy in place that a member of our school may come in contact with someone diagnosed with Covid-19, and/or may become ill with Covid-19 because this disease is currently known to be in our community.

We ask that parents notify the school by sending an email to Central if your child is diagnosed with Covid-19 and/or other communicable disease.

Central may request that you provide a pediatric statement regarding exclusion or the lack of exclusion that is appropriate for a child.

- Covid-19 related information

In the event that any member of our school community is confirmed to have been diagnosed with Covid-19, we will notify

- All members of our school community through email by the end of the school day
- The Department of Social Services and VDSS who will provide instructions about possible quarantine or school closures. Central will inform our community if directives differ than the general notifications indicated here.
- Front desk staff who will maintain an accessible list of all communicable diseases in each office

Please note: Central cannot provide identifying information (including classroom or campus) about any person diagnosed or quarantined with any disease, because of privacy concerns. We also must assume that if one member of our community has a communicable disease, that we have all been exposed to the illness. We must heighten our monitoring for symptoms.

VDH and VDSS will inform us if an exception will be made to this guideline.

- Isolation of a sick child and parent contact

A child who reports not feeling well, and/or has symptoms of illness, will be immediately isolated in a front office, away from other children.

Central will email both parents at the same time to come and take their child home or to the Drs. If we have not received confirmation that a parent has read the email, we will call the first name and number listed on the child's emergency form after 15 minutes. If we have not heard from the first contact person within 15 minutes of placing a call, we will contact the second contact person. Central will continue to call emergency contact persons until we have been able to talk to someone about the child's well-being.

Please remember that sick children are usually uncomfortable, stressed, and unhappy. Although we isolate a sick child in the front offices, offer water, and comfort, our efforts are no substitute for the care of a parent and the comfort of home. Please come to school within 30 minutes of receiving the first email or phone call.

Central will clean and sanitize any area that an ill child or adult has been in as soon as possible.

Acknowledgement of Inherent Risk of Exposure to Infection

The undersigned acknowledges the inherent risk of exposure to infection is higher in schools and other social groupings than in homes with little or no outside contact with others.

Central works hard to mitigate these risks as much as possible by collaborating with our parents, and among other things, grouping our children and teachers into set groups, adherence to social distancing, and implementing and sustaining good personal and environmental health practices.

Central respectfully asks that if, for any reason, you are not able to adhere to these guidelines, that you delay your return, or your child's return, to Central until the possibility of Covid-19 infection has passed or been reduced by effective treatment or immunization.

Furthermore, I understand that my adherence to these guidelines can help with disease mitigation and agree to comply with them to my fullest ability.

Please contact Anita if you would like to discuss possible delayed re-entry options for your family or any aspect of Central's Health First Covid-19 Policy.

Please sign and return this document upon you, or your child's, return to Central.

Your name _____

Signature _____

Date _____