



Health and Safety Procedures for Reopening On-Campus Classrooms

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Overview of Red Cottage Montessori Safety & Health Approach

Red Cottage Montessori will implement a comprehensive strategy, in accordance with the MN Department of Human Services Licensing Division and the MN Dept of Health, 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. Please see more information about our heightened Hygiene & Sanitation Processes in Section 8.

Distancing

Staff will continue following social distancing guidelines outside of school, and we are asking enrolled families to continue social distancing practices outside of school as well. At school, students will remain with their set classroom group. 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 new drop-off and pick-up procedures. Please see more information about Separation of Groups in Section 3.

Screening

Daily Health Checks play a crucial role in keeping any infectious diseases, including Covid-19, out of our community. Staff are required to complete a daily self health assessment at home each morning to ensure they have no symptoms of illness, including fever. Staff will wash their hands before starting their work. Parents are required to screen their children at home each morning for new or otherwise unexplained symptoms, including taking their child's temperature. Upon arrival at school, students will be directed to a hand washing station or sanitizer station before joining their class. Please see Section 4 for more information about our Symptom Screening policies.

Masks

Face coverings, especially face masks, are an important piece of our strategy. We have secured adequate PPE, including disposable masks for visitors or staff/students as needed and Face Shields for staff. Per the Governor's Executive Order 20-81, all adults and youth 5 years and older will be required to wear face masks or cloth face coverings while indoors. For full information on face coverings in child care settings, please visit [Masking Requirements for Child Care](#). Please see Section 7 for more information about how we are implementing face covering/mask usage.

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 these best practices for safety and health included in this document.

Section 1 – Signage and Education

1.1. Copies of this Health and Safety Plan can be found on our website www.redcottagemontessori.org, as well as in each cottage.

1.2. All staff will receive hard copies of our Health and Safety Plan. Any other educational materials required will also be made available online and in physical forms.

1.3. 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.

1.4. We will update this Health and Safety Plan as appropriate.

1.5. Signage will be used indoors and out for the following items:

- In all bathrooms to encourage proper hand washing
- On the front of the doors of Cottage 3, 4, 5 to notify visitors, vendors & parents to check in at the office (Cottage 6)
- On the front of Cottage 6 to notify visitors, vendors & parents of the check in procedures and guidelines

Section 2 – Requirement Regarding Personnel

2.1. We will be following the [COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs](#) for guidance in determining when a staff member, their children, a student and their siblings can be at school, need to be quarantined and determining when they can return to school.

The MN Dept of Health states that employees who become ill with a More Common symptom of Covid-like illness at work during a pandemic must leave the workplace.

Any staff exhibiting a More Common symptom (fever greater than or equal to 100.4 F, new onset and/or worsening cough, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell) must be tested and have negative results or have an alternative diagnosis before returning to work OR stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from time symptoms started until symptoms improved AND no fever for 24 hours (without fever reducing medications).

Any staff exhibiting 1 Less Common symptom (sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, muscle pain, excessive fatigue, new onset of severe headache, new onset of nasal congestion or runny nose) will contact Kelsie Kuyath who will evaluate their symptom and determine if they are well enough to attend work or not. If it is determined that the staff member needs to stay home, they may

return to work 24 hours after symptoms have improved. Household contacts do not need to stay home or quarantine.

Any staff exhibiting 2 or more Less Common symptom (sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, muscle pain, excessive fatigue, new onset of severe headache, new onset of nasal congestion or runny nose) must follow the same procedures as they would if they had a More Common symptom- must be tested and have negative results or have an alternative diagnosis before returning to work OR stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from time symptoms started until symptoms improved AND no fever for 24 hours (without fever reducing medications).

If staff have been fully vaccinated and test positive for COVID-19, they still need to stay home and away from others.

The EEOC has provided guidelines for employer/employee rights on [their website](#).

2.2. All staff working on campus will do a self assessment of any symptoms or fever before coming to work. If staff have any symptoms of illness &/or are unable to come into work for any reason, please call Kelsie by 6:00 a.m. at this number: **(651)380-2239**.

When determining if someone is unable to come in, we will be following the [COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs](#)

Do not come to work and contact Kelsie Kuyath if any of these symptoms listed below (that are new or otherwise unexplained) are present:

- a fever (100.4 or higher temp.)
- coughing
- muscle pain that is abnormal
- shortness of breath
- new loss of taste or smell

If living with, or having close contact with, someone who is diagnosed with Covid-19, a staff member may not go to work and must stay home for at least 14 days since the last contact with the positive case. If the staff member is unable to completely isolate from the positive case, they must complete a 14 day quarantine AFTER the positive cases 10 days of isolation. If the staff member develops any symptoms or receive a positive COVID test during their quarantine, they must complete a 10 day isolation starting from the day they test positive (if no symptoms) or the day their symptoms began. We will continue to follow the steps listed on the [COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs](#).

If a staff member becomes sick during the day, they will monitor their temperature and let administration know as soon as possible by calling our Operations Director at 651-380-2239. We will remove the staff member (and their children) from the school as soon as safely possible and replace them with a designated substitute if needed.

2.3. We regularly check [Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) and [Schools and Child Care: COVID-19](#) 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.

2.4. Red Cottage Montessori will be following the procedures listed in [COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs](#), if an employee tests positive for Covid-19.

2.5. All employees are required to wear face coverings when in shared indoor spaces or out in public. This is in compliance with the [Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81](#). In general, people should have multiple Face Coverings (whether reusable or disposable) to ensure they use a clean one 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. Employees are allowed to and encouraged to use their own face coverings to reduce waste, if they bring one that has been cleaned prior to their shift.

For more information on proper mask use and safety, please refer to [How to Safely Wear Your Mask \(PDF\)](#).

2.6. Sinks are available with soap, water, and paper towels in all classrooms and bathrooms. Three portable sinks & three hand sanitizing stations will be placed outdoors for additional hand washing/sanitizing as well. 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 diaper or 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.

2.7. Sanitizer will be made available in all used rooms on campus including: classrooms, breakrooms, kitchens, and offices. Sanitizer will also be available by entrances to the building.

Sanitizing is addressed more thoroughly in Section 8. The regular cleaning schedule has been adapted to include more frequent cleaning and disinfecting of bathrooms, kitchen, door handles, light switches, and other common areas throughout the day. Teachers have also integrated more cleaning practices in their classrooms.

2.8. 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.

When taking breaks, if staff need to leave campus, they will follow proper hygiene protocols to avoid contamination. If using the staff room or the kitchen area, staff must spray and wipe down used items before leaving. Staff must also wash or sanitize hands when moving in and out of any area of the school.

2.9 Staff who choose to travel or attend large gatherings must practice social distancing and masking requirements.

Section 3 – Stable and Separate Groups of Children

3.1. Red Cottage Montessori will maintain separate groups of children. When possible, we may increase a group size depending on our continued ability to follow proper hygiene and social distancing practices. Each child will remain with their same small group cohort during the school day.

3.2. Each classroom will have the number of teachers needed to adhere to the teacher:child ratios set by DHS.

3.3. Children will remain with their assigned cohort 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.

3.4. Some group cohorts may have up to 3-4 adults that they are in contact with daily.

3.5. Each classroom will have their own set schedule. When shared spaces are used, cleaning and disinfecting will happen immediately following the use of the space.

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

- Classrooms will have staggered outdoor time or spaced out outdoor areas.
- At lunch and snack times, staff and children are socially distanced at individual tables, mats or social distanced at larger tables.
- The Montessori classroom environment enables children to work independently. Tables and chairs have been rearranged to encourage distance during the work day.
- At naptime, 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 while being distanced.
- Each classroom will have dedicated outdoor spaces.
- Snacks, lunches and reusable cups, silverware and napkins should be brought from home.
- Baking and food prep as a classwork will be put on hold temporarily.
- Students and staff should bring their own water bottles for use in the classroom and outdoors. Students will ask for assistance when needing their bottle refilled.

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

3.8. We do not permit drop-in childcare.

Section 4 – Symptom Screening for Children:

4.1 Parents will do a daily self assessment of their child's health, checking for any signs of illness or fever. This assessment includes a temperature check. If a child has a temp of 100.4 or higher, they must stay home and parents should contact their child's classroom teacher/assistant and also contact Kelsie at 651-380-2239.

~~**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, 100.4 degrees F or higher, we will ask the guardian to take them home and follow our illness guidelines posted in Section 4.4.~~

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 Most Common Symptoms or 2+ less common symptoms will be sent home (along with any siblings & parents, if they are staff members) and encouraged to seek testing for Covid-19. While waiting for test results, an alternative diagnosis or waiting out symptoms, the child must follow the following steps on the [COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs](#). If a child has 1 Less Common Symptom (sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, muscle pain, excessive fatigue, new onset of severe headache, new onset of nasal congestion or runny nose) contact Kelsie Kuyath who will evaluate their symptom and determine if they are well enough to attend school or not. If it is determined that the student needs to stay home, they may return 24 hours after symptoms have improved. Household contacts do not need to stay home or quarantine.

If testing is done, you must show proof of your child's negative test, for example, the test result or a message from your clinic or test site that the test was negative. When your child gets tested, let the clinic or test site know that you will need this.

DHS has communicated that Red Cottage Montessori is required to let them know if multiple children come down with fevers or if one or more are diagnosed with Covid-19.

4.5. Staff members will maintain distance as much as possible.

4.6. Once a child has been checked for symptoms of illness, they will join their class and classes will utilize hand washing or hand sanitizing stations.

4.7. If a child becomes sick during the day, their teacher will bring the child to their designated sick room as soon as possible and call their guardian for immediate pickup. One of the teachers must wait with the child until they are picked up. The parent must call the teacher that contacted them, when they have arrived, remain in their car and the teacher will bring the student to them. Unless it is an emergency situation, guardians should not enter the building.

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 needed.

Section 5 – Contact Tracing & Program Exclusion

5.1 When there is a confirmed case of Covid-19 at Red Cottage Montessori, we will follow the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Health. Information on this process can be found at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/casenotify.pdf>

5.2 Contact Tracing, to determine who has been in close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with anyone infected with Covid-19, will be conducted by Administration with the help of classroom staff and attendance documentation.

5.3 Red Cottage Montessori staff will work to ensure that all student cohorts are socially distanced from other cohorts throughout the day and are not within close contact with any other cohort for longer than 10 minutes on any given day.

Section 6 – Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

6.1. We are limiting the number of adults on our campus to employees and approved volunteers only, unless in the case of an emergency. If a guardian must enter campus, they are required to wear a face covering at all times and check in at the office, located in Cottage 6.

6.2. When participating in drop-off or pick-up, staff will remain socially distant from guardians who must exit their vehicles. We ask that guardians remain in their vehicle whenever possible.

6.3. Staff will utilize a dedicated walkie talkie channel (channel 1) to release students one by one as parents arrive. Parents should remain in their vehicles and wait in the pick up/drop off line until their child is released to them. Please wait in your vehicle until your child has exited the school building. Once your child is in the vehicle, please slowly pull forward if it is necessary for you to help your child to get buckled. If you must exit your vehicle, keep your distance from other guardians and staff members. Be respectful of others and move forward in line as soon as you can to keep the traffic flowing as fast as possible but also as safe as possible.

6.4. If a parent is late at drop off or picking up early, they must communicate with their child's lead teacher or designated contact person to organize drop-off or pick-up. Parents are not allowed to enter the building unless it is an emergency situation or has been pre-approved by administration. Lead Teachers will let families know how to best communicate with them in these situations.

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

Section 7 – Face Coverings

7.1. All guardians, children 5 years or older, and staff are required to wear face coverings when indoors, or when outdoors if in close proximity of others.

Their are a few exceptions to this:

- Staff may remove their face covering temporarily when alone, including when alone in an office or other enclosed work area, a room, or a cubicle with walls that are higher than face level when social distancing is maintained. Walls separating a room or cubicle must be high enough to block the breathing zone of the person working in a room or cubicle and any person(s) in adjoining rooms or cubicles.
- Anyone with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for them to wear a face mask. They must still wear a face shield.
- Children who are under the age of 2 years, or children who are sleeping, unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering or face shield without

assistance; or who cannot tolerate a shield or covering due to a developmental, medical, or behavioral health condition must not wear a face covering or face shield.

- Staff and children who are required to wear a face covering or face shield under this guidance may remove their face covering temporarily to engage in certain activities listed below that make wearing a face covering or shield difficult, provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent feasible:
 - When eating or drinking.
 - When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with a face covering difficult.
 - When participating in physical activity or when engaged in other activities (e.g., presenting, performing, or playing an instrument) that would make it difficult or impractical to wear a face covering or face shield.
 - When wearing a face covering is problematic (for example, when young children would benefit from viewing staff facial expressions and lip movements to understand what is being said and how words are formed).

For more information on childcare masking guidelines, please go to <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/masks.html>

7.2 We discourage staff from moving throughout the building, however if necessary, when moving through shared spaces, all staff will wear face coverings.

7.3. All children 5 years or older participating indoor classrooms are encouraged to have a minimum of 2 clean face masks packed each day.

7.4. Face masks or coverings are not required for children 4 years or younger, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. If parents of children over age 2 want their child to wear a face covering, they must ensure their child can put it on and remove it without assistance. Red Cottage staff will not require children 4 years and under to wear face coverings if they are uncomfortable as this is not developmentally appropriate.

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

Section 8 – Hygiene and Sanitation

8.1. 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 diapering, or after wiping their nose, coughing, or sneezing. This is also addressed in Section 2.7.

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.

When comforting or assistance with needed cares, 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 to be sent home.

- All students and all providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the classroom.

8.2. 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.

8.3. 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.

8.4. Daily classroom cleaning will be done by the staff.

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 after each use

Outdoor Equipment Cleaning Protocol:

- Disinfect all high-touch surfaces between use
- Remove any toys/materials that are difficult to clean

Indoor Equipment Cleaning Protocol:

- Disinfect all high-touch surfaces between use
- Clean and sanitize children's bathroom
- Disinfect the toilet and all surfaces after each use

Common Areas Cleaning Protocol:

- Sanitize equipment between each class
- Sanitize kitchens and laundry area throughout day and after use
- Clean high-touch areas
 - Door handles
 - Railings
 - Coffee machines/water coolers
 - Door Handles
 - Light switches
- Final clean of classrooms and hallways after all children have left

Laundry Protocol:

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items.

- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance for surfaces.
- Remove gloves, and wash hands right away.

8.5. All materials that are frequently touched are included in our cleaning schedules. This includes toilets, tables, chairs, cubbies, etc.

8.6. All visibly dirty surfaces are cleaned and wiped down before disinfection.

8.7. All staff will use cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfecting, we use Force of Nature. Force of Nature is on EPA's List of Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19.

8.8. All hazardous cleaning supplies will be kept locked and out of reach of children. All products being used are safe and appropriate for use in classroom settings. Stronger products that could potentially produce fumes will be applied at the end of the day to allow for proper drying and ventilation.

8.9. All materials that are not easily cleaned/disinfected have been removed from each classroom environment. Students are required to bring their own non-disposable lunch boxes, cutlery, cups and water bottle every day. Please ensure they are washed thoroughly before the next use. Classrooms that utilize any non-disposable dishes and cutlery for classwork must be cleaned and sanitized before reusing in the commercial kitchen, following the protocols which are posted above the sink.

8.10. When children have finished using materials, they place them on a disinfectant table or bin. Teachers sanitize materials before placing them back on the shelf for use. For materials that have been placed in mouths or that have otherwise been contaminated by body secretions or excretions will also be cleaned, disinfected and dried before being available for use again.

8.11. Any toys that need to be cleaned will be set aside and labeled "soiled toys" until they have been properly disinfected. The cleaning supplies will be kept out of reach from children to prevent risk of ingestion or drowning.

8.12. To the best of their ability, teachers will educate children about not sharing toys or supplies before sanitizing.

8.13. Machine-washable toys will be allowed for use by one child at a time, or will be removed from the environment.

8.14. Books/paper materials do not need additional cleaning or disinfection unless exposed to bodily fluids.

8.15. Bedding will be sent home at least weekly to be washed and whenever they are dirty. Clothing and other personal items will also be sent home to be washed whenever they are dirty.

8.16. Each child's bedding will be kept separate from others.

8.17. Cots or mattresses that touch a child's skin will be cleaned weekly or before use by another child.

8.18. Each cot or mattress is labeled and will only be used for the designated child unless properly cleaned and disinfected between use.

8.19. Daily cleaning information is found in Section 8.4. We have established adequate time throughout the day to allow for proper cleaning and decontamination of the facility.

8.20. Each Cottage is equipped with a REME System. The REME's are installed in the HVAC system and work actively throughout each cottage to reduce bacteria, virus, mold spores, odors and allergens.

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