



Pandemic Policies and Procedures Handbook

2022-2023

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. COVID-19 is spread from person to person through contact that is close enough to share droplets generated by coughing, sneezing, speaking and breathing. Because of this easy manner of transmission, a child who is infected with COVID-19 can spread the infection to others they come in close contact with, such as members of their household, teachers, classmates or other caregivers. Infected persons with mild or even no symptoms can spread COVID-19.

The best way to protect yourself and your family is to get vaccinated and boosted, follow testing guidelines, wear a mask, wash your hands and practice physical distancing.

The Farmhouse School (hereafter referred to as “school) values the safety and well-being of its staff, children and families. For this reason, the school has adopted the following COVID-19 Policies and Procedures. The school forms its policies based on current recommendations and guidance for Early Childcare Settings from the King County Public Health Department and the Center for Disease Control. The requirements outlined in our updated Pandemic Policies and Procedures Handbook are supported by the emergency proclamation 20-25, currently 20-25.19 “Washington Ready,” are required to be followed in accordance to Governor’s proclamation 20-09, currently 20-09.4.

These policies are subject to change as the pandemic continues to evolve. The farmhouse school will maintain flexibility in how layers of mitigation practices are applied. The removal of a layer of protection will be done factoring in considerations such as community levels of transmission, local outbreaks and vaccination rates. The Farmhouse School will ensure an environment that supports individuals who continue a protective practice, like wearing a mask. As disease prevalence increases, we may consider adding back additional layers of prevention or mitigation measures.

Preventative Measures:

We are following all preventative health measures recommended by the King County Department of Health, including:

- Helping children to practice good hygiene
- Requiring strict adherence to our sick policy
- Requiring diagnostic testing in all students with symptoms/exposure

- Running our portable HEPA air cleaner
- Opening doors to improve ventilation when weather permits

Parents/Guardians should monitor the health of their child and not send them to school if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. Parents/guardians should seek COVID-19 testing promptly and report results to the school as soon as possible, given the implications for other children, families and staff. Parents or guardians should protect any vulnerable persons who are members of the same household or come into frequent, close contact with infants, children and youth who attend school.

Masks:

As of August 20th 2022, we ask that families make individual choices in regards to masking indoors and out with the utmost respect being given to all members of our community and the choices they feel most comfortable making. The Farmhouse School reserves the right to make changes to our masking policies throughout the year as we see fit. There may be situations when the use of a well-fitting N95 mask may be temporarily required. Cloth masks are prohibited.

If an individual is required to mask based on our policies below, they will be required to consistently and effectively wear a well-fitting N95 mask. A child who is unable to do so will be required to isolate at home.

You are required to pack a new, clean N95 mask in your child's backpack.

When the CDC COVID-19 Community Level is high, we may consider school-wide masking.

Vaccination:

COVID-19 vaccinations are now available for children 6 months and older and are recommended by CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Vaccination is the best way to protect children from becoming severely ill or having long-lasting health impacts due to COVID-19. Families are encouraged to vaccinate their children, in consultation with their health care provider. Washington State provides all recommended vaccines at no cost for children through age 18. Parents should ask their child's pediatrician or regular clinic if they carry the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Farmhouse School **STRONGLY ENCOURAGES** you to vaccinate your child against COVID-19, but vaccination is not mandatory at this time.

All employees in educational settings are required to be fully vaccinated or have a medical or religious exemption per Governor's proclamation 21-14.3.

If your child has received their COVID-19 vaccination, please submit a copy of their vaccination status.

Individuals who enter the school:

All employees, volunteers and indoor contractors in educational settings are required to be fully vaccinated or have a medical or religious exemption per Governor's proclamation 21-14.3.

An exception will be made for parents/guardians who accompany their child into the classroom in cases of ***extreme separation anxiety***. You must coordinate with your child's teacher via email ***prior to the first day of school*** if you anticipate the need to accompany your child into school. Together, we will formulate a plan that best supports your child through this transition.

Illness:

By signing your child in at the beginning of the day, you are confirming that your child is symptom free. Ill children and staff are required to stay home.

Any staff or child will be sent home if they present with any of the following new or worsening signs of symptoms of possible COVID-19:

- Fever (or temperature of 100.4 or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Chills
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19-19 (Close contact means being a household contact or having close contact within six feet of an individual with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19-19 for at least 10 minutes. The period for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic.)

Students and staff who have ANY of the above symptoms are required to stay home, get tested and follow the protocol laid out below for returning to school. Home tests need to be clearly labelled with your child's name and the date in permanent marker.

IF THE INDIVIDUAL TESTS NEGATIVE FOR COVID-19:

At home isolation and returning to school:

A student or staff who tests negative for COVID-19 does not need to quarantine. The individual may return to the school when all the following criteria have been met:

- The individual tests negative for COVID-19
- The individual provides documentation of a negative covid test. All tests must be clearly labeled with the individuals name and the date the test was given
- Symptoms have SIGNIFICANTLY improved
- The individual is fever-free for 24 hours
- The individual has the self-help skills necessary to be comfortable at school (can cover their coughs, can blow their own nose, can wash their hands, can keep up with the daily routine, etc.)

IF THE INDIVIDUAL TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19:

At-Home Isolation Protocol and Returning to School:

A student or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 is required to isolate at home, regardless of vaccination status. The isolation period is 10 full days from the start of symptoms or the date of positive test. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms. For people without symptoms, day 0 is the day of the positive viral test

The individual may return to school/care after 5 full days of isolation if:

- Their symptoms have greatly improved or they are asymptomatic, AND
- They are without a fever for the past 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications AND
- They test negative for COVID-19 using an at home or antigen test
- Provide documentation of a negative test, clearly labelled with the child's name and date in permanent marker AND
- They can consistently and successfully wear a well-fitting N95 mask. **If the individual is not able to consistently and successfully wear a mask, they are required to continue to isolate for 10 days**
- They will be required to eat snack outdoors and socially distanced from other students and staff
- If we are unable to accommodate an outdoor snack for any reason, parents/guardians will be required to pick up their child prior to meal time.

Returning to school after exposure to someone with Covid-19:

Students, children and staff, regardless of vaccination status, who are potentially exposed to COVID-19 are required to:

- Monitor for symptoms, AND
- Test as soon as possible after exposure and then repeat testing every 24 hours through the 5 days of exposure, AND
- Provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 test, clearly marked with the date and child's name, AND
- Wear a well-fitting N95 mask for 10 days after exposure
- If they test positive, they must isolate according to school isolation policies

Household Exposures:

Household exposures often result in prolonged and repeated contact with positive individuals. A student, child or staff member who is continuously exposed at home, regardless of vaccination status, is required to:

- Test every 24 hours until day 5 after the last positive household members isolation has ended
- Provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 test, clearly marked with the date and child's name, AND
- Wear a well-fitting N95 mask for 10 days after exposure
- If they test positive, they must isolate according to school isolation policies

If COVID-19 is confirmed in an individual who has been in the school, the school will:

- Consider closing the school for 2 days to clean and sanitize
- Open doors and windows to increase air circulation
- Clean and disinfect the school following CDC guidelines
- Inform Families and staff of exposure
- Notify the King County Health Department

Please notify the school immediately if your child tests positive for COVID-19 or was exposed to someone with COVID-19

If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited the school, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.

Responding to an outbreak in childcare setting:

An “outbreak” is when there are at least three suspected, probable or confirmed COVID-19 cases within a 14-day period among people who share the classroom. In the event of an outbreak, the school will report all cases to the Department of Health in accordance with Department of Health Guidance and Washington State Law. The school will be required to cooperate with Public Health authorities. In coordination with local public health, enhanced mitigation efforts may be put into place, including a short-term closure of your child's classroom, a “test to return” policy to ensure all children and teachers returning to school are healthy and the requirement for school wide masking.

Isolation of COVID-19 Cases within a Facility:

Any student, child, or staff who reports or has COVID-19-like symptoms is required to be immediately isolated from others, sent home or where they are currently residing, and referred to diagnostic testing as soon as possible, regardless of vaccination status. While waiting to leave the school or child care, the individual with symptoms is required to be isolated and wear a well-fitting face mask.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting Measures:

The following will be done in addition to existing cleaning protocols:

- The school will follow their regular schedule for cleaning and disinfecting
- The school will use an EPA-registered cleaning product to clean and sanitize the school, paying special attention to high traffic or high touch areas
- If surfaces are dirty, soap and water will be used to clean the surfaces prior to sanitation
- Toys that children have places in their mouths of are otherwise contaminated by body secretions will be set aside until they are cleaned and disinfected

Healthy Hand Hygiene:

All children, staff and anyone entering the school will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Upon arrival at school
- Before and after preparing food
- Before and after eating or handling food
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid

Hands will be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be used.

Mealtime:

- The school will not serve family style meals. Each child will bring their own snack/lunch from home
- Snack/lunch must be brought in an insulated lunch box to keep food fresh
- We will eat indoors
- Children who have been exposed to COVID-19 or are in day 6-10 of COVID-19 infection will be required to eat snack outdoors with social distancing in mind. If weather conditions make eating outside unsafe, parents/guardians may be asked to pick up their child before mealtime.

School Closure:

Our intention is to keep school open as long as it is safe to do so. However, the COVID-19 Pandemic has proven to be unpredictable. We will keep abreast of new directives and guidance from the King County Department of Health and The Washington State Health Department. If directives change on a County, State or National level, we will work with public health authorities to decide how we will move forward.

Please note:

- We will announce all school closures via email.
- We will not make up missed school days due to the pandemic
- There will be no tuition reimbursement for days missed due to school closures as a result of the pandemic

Supplemental Learning:

Should The Farmhouse School be closed for a period longer than two weeks, we will provide supplemental learning materials and opportunities to interact and learn virtually. The teachers have a plan in place, should we need to implement online learning.

Tuition Payments during a Pandemic:

Parents/Guardians will be responsible for tuition in full, regardless of missed days due to illness of school closure. Exceptions will be made to this policy on an “as needed” basis, with consideration given to individual circumstances. We will do our best to accommodate payment plans or offer reduced or excused tuition options if we are financially able.

Should the Farmhouse School be able to secure loans, grants or other financial supplementation in the event of a long-term school closure, we will re-assess all tuition due and make reasonable adjustments.

Moving Forward:

The Farmhouse School and our educators here-within are confident that we are moving closer to a more normal school year! We will continue to update our policies and procedures as the Pandemic evolves and new directives and guidance becomes available to us.

We reserve the right to adjust or amend our policies at any time.