



# COVID-19 RE-ENTRY HANDBOOK

## Scenario 1 – Near Normal Operations

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August 16, 2020

*This document will continue to be updated based on orders from the Chief Medical Officer for Health, recommendations from Alberta Education and the discovery of new evidence.*

Patti van Zeyl

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## Introduction

### Purpose of Handbook

Montessori School of Calgary (MSofC) is at all times committed to the health and safety of its students, staff and community, and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Alberta Education has outlined three scenarios for school re-entry in the Fall of 2020, including:

- **Scenario 1 – In-school classes resume, near-normal operations with health measures**
- **Scenario 2 – In-school classes partially resume with additional health measures**
- **Scenario 3 – At home learning continues, in-school classes are cancelled**

This handbook has been developed to support the safe re-entry to school for the **2020-2021 school year**, under **Scenario 1**, near normal operations, as defined by Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services.

### Audience

This handbook is intended to communicate key re-entry principles to Montessori School of Calgary's parents, MSofC's staff, MSofC's board of directors, Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services.

### Timeline of Handbook

This handbook was created during the COVID-19 Pandemic and is applicable **beginning August 24, 2020**. It remains active for the 2020-2021 school year, or until MSofC's administration announces that it is no longer active.

Where this handbook conflicts with another Montessori School of Calgary policy or procedure, this handbook will take precedence. This handbook may change with time, dependent on the latest government guidance.

### Guiding Principles of Handbook

This handbook was prepared in accordance with the following key principles:

- Student and staff health and safety are a key priority.
- Student learning and interaction with peers during the pandemic is essential.
- Risks of COVID-19 spread should be minimized whenever possible.
- It will require a collective effort to keep the school open and everyone safe. Montessori School of Calgary staff, parents and students are all partners in keeping our community safe – to reiterate the consistent messaging from others, **we are in this together**.

## Handbook Structure

This handbook will outline measures as follows:

- **Health Guidelines** – new expectations for parents and students
- **School Operations** – changes to school operations to manage not eliminate risk
- **Educational Program Changes** – changes to educational planning to manage risk
- **Facilities Cleaning and Personal Protective Equipment** – strategies to keep our facility and community safe during the pandemic
- **Visitor Guidelines** – expectations of visitors to the school
- **Staff Guidelines** – how our staff will be staying safe and encouraging our students to stay safe

## Health Guidelines

### Daily Screening Expectations

Parents/guardians must assess their children daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease by completing the [Alberta Health Questionnaire](#) (Appendix A) at home, before sending the child to school. **Staff will repeat the questions and record answers electronically at the Screening Checkpoint upon arrival at school.** The same assessment must be taken by any parent/guardian/caregiver who is considering entering the school. If the child or family member answer yes to any question in the questionnaire, they **must not** enter the school building. As outlined in the staff section, all staff will need to follow similar screening procedures.

Parents must stay apprised of the latest list of symptoms for COVID-19, provided by Alberta Health Services. At the time of writing, symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing
- Sore throat
- Chills
- Painful swallowing
- Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion
- Feeling unwell / Fatigued
- Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea
- Unexplained loss of appetite
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Muscle/ Joint aches
- Headache
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

## Non-Medical Masks

Masks, including homemade cloth masks or non-medical face masks, are another way to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 in areas where physical distancing (2 metres distance between individuals) may be challenging or not possible. This is only one part of public health measures put in place to keep populations safe. At this time, **MSofC is requiring that students and staff wear masks in school when possible.** The administrative team remains current with advice provided by Alberta Education and Alberta Health and will continue ongoing conversations with government about the use of non-medical masks. Families will be updated if this position changes. Guidance on mask use is available [here](#).

**Reasonable exceptions** on the requirement to wear masks will apply (e.g. staff or students with sensory or medical/breathing/health difficulties). The Head of School will work with families on a case-by-case basis.

Students or staff who take Calgary Transit to school or work must wear masks while on buses or C-trains. The City of Calgary as masks are mandatory on public transit effective Aug. 1, 2020.

## Mask Hygiene and how to care for your face mask...

Staff and students should have several masks available for school. One mask will remain on-site at school with the child's change of clothes, in case they are required to change from a wet/soiled mask. Individual paper bags (lunch size) are available for each of the students to use in the classroom when they are not wearing their mask and need to store it temporarily.

It is best to clean masks in a washing machine or with soap and hot water. The mask should be dried completely - in a hot dryer if possible. Store the clean, dry mask in a clean place in your home or a new paper bag to keep it safe from germs.

A collection of books has been added to the classroom inventory to assist teachers with instruction, normalization of mask wearing and to support easing any uneasiness or anxiety around wearing a mask and/or seeing others in masks.

## Student Illness at School

If a student develops or exhibits COVID-19 related symptoms while at the school, the student will be directed to the school office. The student will be required to wear a non-medical mask if they are able to and will be isolated in a separate space that is 2 meters away from others.

Staff supervising symptomatic students must:

- Keep all other staff and students clear from the space;
- Ensure the student is wearing a face mask;
- Adhere to strict handwashing techniques before and after;
- Maintain physical distancing where possible; and
- Wear gloves, mask and face shield while attending to the student.

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The parent/guardian will be notified to come and pick up the student immediately. It is the expectation that the **student is picked up within one hour**. Montessori School of Calgary encourages parents to have an additional emergency contact available for pick-up if parents/guardians both work and are not able to pick-up within the hour.

All items the student touched will be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the student has been picked up. Items that cannot be disinfected, (e.g. paper, books, cardboard) will be removed from the classroom and stored in a sealed container for 10 days (if not sent home with the student).

Parents must then complete the [COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool for Albertans](#) online, to identify whether or not COVID-19 testing is required for their student. If the assessment indicates that testing is required, the student must be tested. If the student is cleared to return to school, parents must send evidence of the negative test to the school.

### Testing and Demonstrating Clearance to Return

In order for school re-entry to be successful, all students, families and staff must work together to minimize risks. One of the critical strategies is testing in order to determine if self-isolation needs to continue. Should anyone answer “**Yes**” to any of the daily health check questions, they are prohibited from entering the school and your child must stay at home. Please use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool for Albertans](#) to determine whether your child needs to be tested for COVID-19. If they are tested and cleared to return, please bring evidence of the negative test to the school. **The school will not keep a copy of the results but will know and record that it is safe for the student to return.**

### Confirmed cases of COVID-19

If there are cases of COVID-19 identified within the school setting, Montessori School of Calgary’s Zone Medical Officer of Health will work directly with the school administration to provide follow-up recommendations and messaging for staff, parents/guardians and students.

Alberta Health Services may request the school close in-person classes to allow a public health investigation to take place. **The decision to send a class home or to close the school will be made by the local Medical Officer of Health.** If this were to occur, the school will support students and staff to learn and/or work at-home if they are required to self-isolate.

### Students with Pre-Existing Conditions

Individuals who have allergies or ongoing health issues and who are exhibiting COVID-like symptoms must be tested at least once according to the Alberta Health Services guidance. This will establish a baseline for the individual. If symptoms change (worsen, additional symptom, change in baseline) the individual must stay home and be tested and cleared. Montessori School of Calgary will track typical symptoms that may be confused for COVID-19 for students in MSofC’s Student Information System (database), Transparent Classroom as is usually done with other medical conditions (ie: allergies, illnesses requiring medication during school day, etc).

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## Hygiene

Montessori School of Calgary will promote frequent and proper hand hygiene for students. Students must wash or sanitize their hands:

- Before leaving home, on arrival at school, and before leaving school.
- After using the toilet.
- Before and after any transitions within the school setting (e.g. indoor-outdoor transitions).
- After sneezing or coughing.
- Before and after eating any food, including snacks.

Hand washing with soap and water is required if a student has visibly dirty hands. Proper handwashing procedure includes washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Both Purell Instant Hand Sanitizer (DIN/NPN02248868) and Rocky Mountain Soap Co Nomad Hand Sanitizer (DIN/NPN80097907) **approved by Health Canada** for effectiveness against COVID-19 will be available within high traffic areas of the school. The Rocky Mountain Soap Co hand sanitizer is available within the classrooms and was chosen because it is plant-based, causes less skin irritation, and poses less of a threat when accidentally ingested. To reiterate, **the hand sanitizer being used in the school has been approved by Health Canada for effectiveness against COVID-19.**

Signage has been placed throughout the facility to encourage proper hand hygiene and regular practice of hand washing or sanitizing (rubbing hands together for 30 seconds until the product evaporates). Staff will encourage and model proper hand washing, sanitizing, and distancing measures for students to observe and place into practice.

Students will also be expected and encouraged to follow proper respiratory etiquette (e.g., coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow, promptly disposing of used tissues in the trash), if they become symptomatic while at school. **No symptomatic students should be sent to school.**

## School Operations

### Physical Distancing

Particularly with younger students, physical distancing is challenging. As such, the staff will establish different expectations for varying age levels and activities. For example, younger students should be supported to have minimized physical contact with one another, while older students and adults should seek to maintain a safe physical distance **whenever possible.**

As much as possible, physical distancing between students will be maintained to minimize risk. However, there will be times when physical distancing will be unable to be maintained, **which is why mask wearing is key and that anyone showing symptoms stays home.**

### Student and Staff Flow Inside the Building

Inside the school there are directional signage in halls and stairwells to reduce physical interaction. The administration has determined defined procedures and guidelines that all individuals must follow.

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Teachers will teach students about the methods being used in school to minimize risks. In an effort to minimize the number of visitors to the school, deliveries will be accepted at the door by a designated staff member and **visitors to the school, including parents/guardians is restricted.**

### Student Arrival and Entry/Screening Checkpoints

In an effort to minimize physical interactions, MSofC is utilizing as many entry doors as possible by assigning all students an entry point. Students should move directly to their designated entry door with their class cohort and wait for permission to enter the building while staying two metres apart where possible. Teachers/classroom assistants will staff a screening checkpoint upon arrival. The school has developed a schedule that ensures supervision for each entry door and throughout the building. All staff and students must wash their hands or utilize hand sanitizer upon entering the building and before entering their classroom.

**Parents/guardians must remain outside of the school for pick-up and drop-off.** As part of the staggered entry plan, doors will open no earlier than 7:45AM for Before School Care. **For families with students in both Primary and Elementary, students should be dropped off at 8:25AM.** Each class cohort has an assigned door. Students will enter the building through their assigned door at an assigned time in an effort to minimize physical interactions with other classes. Diagrams outlining assigned doors will be sent before school starts.

#### ARRIVAL TIMES

**8:10 – 8:25AM Lilac Room 1** – students enter through the **south door at the back of the school** (closest to the playground structure)

**8:10 – 8:25AM Wild Rose Room 2** – students enter through the **front doors of the school**

**8:10 – 8:25AM Daffodil Room 3** – students enter through the **north door at the back of the school** (closest to the large open field)

**8:30 – 8:40AM Elementary – Fern Room students** enter through the **front doors of the school**

Montessori School of Calgary staff will supervise and encourage physical distancing as students proceed through the mudrooms and hallways, to their classes. Once inside the school, after changing into their indoor shoes, students will head directly to their class. Lockers will only be used for storing outdoor clothing. All school supplies and lunch kits will be kept in the classroom.

### End of School Day

Parents / guardians must remain outside of the school while waiting for their children. They must not enter the school unless approved by the Head of School. Teachers will ensure all students utilize hand sanitizer prior to leaving their classroom. Students exiting the school in an orderly manner with appropriate supervision, maximizing the number of exit doors by leaving through their respective classroom door while adhering to physical distancing guidelines. This means a staggered dismissal schedule.

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## DISMISSAL TIMES

**11:30AM – Half-day preschool** students will exit through their **respective classroom door**

**3:30PM – Kindergarten** students will exit through the **front doors of the school**

**3:45PM – Elementary** students will exit through the **front doors of the school**

**3:45 – 5:30PM After School Care** students through the **front doors of the school**

Parents of Bambini (all day 3 & 4 yr old children) and all After School Care (ASC) students are to be dismissed directly to their parent/guardian at the front door of the school. Parents/guardians are to remain outside of the front doors and will indicate their arrival by ringing the doorbell.

## Classroom Set-up

Classrooms, tabletops, and countertops are decluttered of all non-essential items to allow for continuous custodial cleaning. Area rugs and soft furnishings that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected have been removed. Tables are to be separated from each other to the best of the ability given the size of the classroom and number of students. Students will be assigned a specific seating arrangement that will assist should there be a need to contact trace. Staff and students are to utilize their own personal items (e.g. writing instruments, school supplies, electronic devices) and minimize use of any shared items. Where possible, teachers will organize their curricular content to minimize the need for shared resources at the beginning of the school year. Supported by a staff member, elementary students will be asked to help clean their shared resources between individual use (e.g. electronic devices, microscopes, Montessori material and manipulatives). Each classroom will have its own supply of wipes and sanitizer. The custodial staff member will assist in the Primary classrooms.

Teachers may utilize outdoor learning spaces more frequently and the ventilation will be increased, and windows opened where appropriate.

## Shared School Technology

All shared technology, such as computers and iPads, will be sanitized between each use.

## Learning Groups/Cohorts

As has been communicated by Alberta Health Services, the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is reduced by limiting exposure to others. In light of this, cohorting has been an encouraged form of practice. A cohort is defined as a group of students and staff who remain together. Contact tracing is also more feasible when groups (cohorts) are maintained. **In this scenario, class sizes will be consistent with what MSofC has provided in the past. Staff will work to limit cohort/class interactions where possible.** Montessori School of Calgary's students will be cohorted by classroom whenever feasible, and by age or grade level during shared activities (e.g. recess, lunch, Physical Education, etc). As much as possible, the cohorts will stay in the same space, and teachers will move between spaces if necessary (e.g. French and Music).

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### Hallway Density and Reducing Population Density

To ensure physical distancing within the hallways, floor markings and signage are in place to provide directional flow and reduce congregating in high traffic areas. Students will remain in their classrooms as much as possible, with teachers moving between classes if necessary. There will be exceptions in some subject areas. Large gathering spaces such as the Community Room will be utilized to accommodate physical distancing and may be considered for use for various activities, including lessons, to help mitigate distance requirements.

All physical education classes occur outside, weather permitting, and physical education curriculum will be modified to accommodate for distancing and to avoid sharing of equipment.

The handbell will be rung at staggered times during the lunch recess to reduce density in entrance ways and hallways. During lunch time recess, students will use assigned doors to ensure minimum interaction outside of their cohort.

### Large Gatherings Prohibited

In an effort to reduce interactions between cohorts, typical indoor large gatherings of students, such as assemblies or other multi-class gatherings will not occur.

### Shared School Spaces and Playgrounds

The Community Room, and foyers remain available for instructional use maximizing physical distancing where possible. The playground remains open for student use as long as the [Government of Alberta Guidance for Playgrounds](#) is followed.

### School Office Access

Due to space constraints, **protocols for visiting the school office:**

- Students are free to attend the office on an individual basis as needed
- Staff are to visit the school office as required for administrative purposes
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to dialogue with their child's classroom teacher via email or by way of an end of day telephone call if necessary
- In-person meetings with the Head of School are to occur outside of the school building or at an off-site location (email, telephone or an online meeting are also acceptable means of communication)
- With the exception of a medical emergency, parent/guardian/caregiver **drop-in and unannounced visits are prohibited**

### Washrooms

Regular washroom access will be maintained with measures in place to attempt to reduce the number of students using a washroom at any one time. Classroom assistants will lead and supervise small groups of children requiring the washroom. Washroom capacity will be posted, and students will be expected to wait, while practicing physical distancing from each other, if the washroom capacity is exceeded. Washrooms will be cleaned regularly. Signage will be placed about washing hands and physical distancing.

## Water Fountains and Water Bottles

Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own filled water bottle each and every day. Sinks and water refilling stations can be used to fill personal water bottles.

As per Alberta Health Guidance, water fountains can remain open as mouthpieces of drinking fountains are not a major source of virus transmission however water fountain knobs and push buttons are considered high-touch surfaces and can be a point of exposure. As such, at the time of writing MSofC is exploring the option of installing touchless refill stations for water bottles in place of the existing water fountain.

## Lunch and Recess Breaks

All staff and students are required to wash their hands before and after eating. Cohorts will eat lunch within their respective classrooms, with the area being cleaned and disinfected after each use. Students may be asked to help wipe down their own tables used for eating.

Staff will ensure an orderly exit and entry during recess, using dedicated entry/exit doors. Students will be required to sanitize their hands when leaving for recess and returning to the classroom. Supervisors will encourage students to physically distance as much as possible during the recesses. The playground structures are available to the students with some maximum capacities to ensure physical distancing.

## Food Sharing

No activities that involve sharing food should occur between students or staff. Students must not share utensils, dishes, and water bottles or drink containers. If students are eating snacks or lunches in classrooms, any food brought from home must be stored with the student's belongings until it is time for snack/lunch. Proper hand washing or sanitizing must take place before the consumption of food and after the food has been eaten. As well, desk surfaces will need to be cleaned and disinfected after eating.

## Emergency Procedures

Montessori School of Calgary will continue to practice our safety procedures including fire and lockdown drills with minor modifications to support physical distancing and cohorting (e.g. muster points by classroom). In the instance of a life-threatening incidence, established routine safety protocols and practices will take precedent over COVID-19 mitigation measures.

# Educational Program Changes

## Courses/Subjects

Montessori School of Calgary will maintain its commitment to high quality, Montessori education during the pandemic. Some activities will need to be modified, as outlined in the sections below.

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## Supporting Students Who Require Individual/Specialized Support

Montessori School of Calgary will maintain learning opportunities for students specific to their Individualized Program Plan (IPP) and Learner Support Plan (LSP) using a variety of approaches. Specialized supports, such as **occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists, will provide service following their professional association guidelines**. Some of these services will be face-to-face but physically distanced where possible. These professionals are required to wear non-medical masks and potentially other various personal protective equipment in order to minimize risks.

## Supporting the Mental Health of our Community

Montessori School of Calgary recognizes the negative effect on mental health that this pandemic has had for our staff, students and families. The administration will continue to leverage its existing mental health supports throughout the pandemic. This includes MSofC's preferred child psychologist and a host of Government of Alberta resources. Parents will also have access to recommended mental health supports through the parent portal at [MyMSofC](#). Montessori School of Calgary has also applied for the Mental Health COVID-19 Community funding grant, in order to provide more support to our community.

Additional resources to support families:

- Alberta Health Services [Help in Tough Times](#) and [Healthy Together](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#)
- Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642 *This toll-free helpline provides confidential and anonymous services, crisis intervention, information about mental health services and referrals to other agencies*
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
  - [kidshelphone.ca](#)
  - Text CONNECT TO 686868
- Health Link: Dial 811

## Field Trips

As per Alberta Health Regulations, all field trips and activities requiring group transportation are postponed at this time.

## At-home Support

**Any student exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home.** Montessori School of Calgary recommends that parents of these students complete the online [COVID-19 Assessment Tool for Albertans](#) through AHS, to determine whether or not testing is required. To best support each student's learning, MSofC recommends having students tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible. If the test comes back negative, the student can return to school, and scheduled learning. During the time off for testing, teachers will provide support, similar to how they would have before the pandemic during a student absence.

If a student must self-isolate due to COVID-19, their teacher will provide as much support as possible. It should be noted that this support will not reflect the online learning platform, *Detour to Montessori*

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*Learning*, that occurred in the Spring of 2020 but would instead represent the same level of support that a student would have received before the pandemic.

If an entire class cohort must self-isolate due to COVID-19, **online teaching through *Detour to Montessori Learning* utilizing Microsoft Teams will occur during the isolation period**, similar to the Spring of 2020.

### Parent Advisory Committee

All parents/guardians are members of the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC executive and members at large along with the Head of School will meet via an online environment such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom, and on occasion, in-person face-to-face. If an in-person meeting occurs, the meeting must be timetabled outside the regular school day with participants reviewing the self-screening questionnaire before entering the school. All school and AHS measures for indoor gatherings as well as guidelines and protocols around hand sanitizer use, size of meeting, maintain physical distancing and wiping surfaces must be followed.

### Extra-Curricular Activities Outside of School

In an effort to best protect our Montessori School of Calgary community, parents/guardians are encouraged to limit outside school programming or consider refraining from enrolling students into in-person extra-curricular clubs or activities. Many programs are able to meet while maintaining physical distancing as long as participants disinfect touched surfaces after meeting. Activities that cannot maintain physical distancing are discouraged until further notice. Choirs especially should be reconsidered, considering Alberta Health's advice to avoid singing where possible.

## Facilities Cleaning & Personal Protective Equipment

### Facilities Cleaning

A thorough cleaning of the facilities has taken place prior to re-entry and procedures are in place to ensure increased cleaning practices and efficiencies.

Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of high-touch areas and equipment (e.g. doorknobs, faucets, counters) inside and outside classrooms will be conducted daily. **All washrooms and high-touch areas will be cleaned four times during the school day. Each night, the entire school will be disinfected.**

A full-time custodian was hired to accommodate the increased cleaning of the school and cleaning logs will be kept and maintained to ensure the completion of all cleaning and disinfecting protocols. At the time of writing, the purchase of electrostatic sanitizers to assist in sanitizing large areas efficiently and effectively is under review.

Teachers and students will also be encouraged to sanitize their work areas regularly, and to wipe down any shared equipment or items after each use.

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### HVAC systems

In 2016 Montessori School of Calgary installed Odorox IDUs (Induct Disinfection Unit) on all furnaces supplying heat and airflow to the school facilities. Since then these units have been maintained and operated continuously to serve to eliminate odors, bacteria, viruses, and mold contamination. At the time of writing MSofC is exploring the options for increasing the capacity of these units and possibly purchasing stand-alone units for within classrooms. Montessori School of Calgary will continue maintenance as required to ensure adequate airflow throughout the building.

### Personal Protective Equipment Expectations – Mandatory Masks

Montessori School of Calgary follows AHS guidelines in regard to personal protective equipment and masks. AHS notes that for preK – grade 3 students, *“In circumstances where 2 metres of physical distance is not possible (especially if the circumstance requires prolonged close contact for longer than 15 minutes), teachers, staff and students may choose to wear a non-medical face mask to protect one another.”* Given the age of our students where 2 metres of physical distancing is frequently impossible, **children are to arrive at Montessori School of Calgary wearing a mask. Parents are to send an additional mask with their child’s additional change of clothing to remain at school. Although at the time of writing the Province declared mask wearing mandatory for grade 4 and up, this position is at the discretion of the Montessori School of Calgary school authority.**

Our primary focus is on educating students on the importance of wearing face coverings in indoor spaces rather than being punitive. Teachers will support children with fit and on-going compliance. It is understandable that the adjustments to the new routines will take time and classroom management strategies will reflect the usual care and compassion offered to all students. Masks sent with students must respect the character and nature of the school. **At time of writing, Alberta’s Government will provide 2 re-usable masks for each student and staff member. MSofC has purchased masks with clear transparent mouth windows for staff, so children can see smiles, expressions and mouth movements for learning proper enunciation of sounds.**

## Visitor Guidelines & Drop-off/Pick-up

### Visitors/Parents and Guardians/Volunteers

**In order to minimize risks, volunteers and guest presenters are not permitted until further notice.**

Authorized visitors include parents, delivery personnel, MSofC staff, Alberta Education field services members, Calgary Police Services and Emergency Medical Services personnel, members of Alberta Health Services and other paramedical providers as engaged by the administration (e.g. psychologists, behavioural specialists, speech and occupational therapists). Prior to a visitor entering the school they will use the posted self-screening tool (Appendix A), which is posted on the school’s door. If a visitor answers YES to any of the questions, the individual must not be admitted into the school. **A record of all visitors who remain within the school for more than five minutes must be recorded in the school’s visitor logbook with the pens to be wiped after each use.** Parents will be informed of the process to book a meeting time with the school administration or teachers. These meetings may be face-to-face,

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keeping physical distance, or in most cases will be by internet such as through Microsoft Teams or Zoom meetings.

With advanced notice, on occasion parents/guardians will be allowed to enter the building on a limited basis, having completed the self-screening tool. **For new families/students to the school, a grace period will be extended during the first four weeks of school to assist new students with transitioning at drop-off time.** After this point, it is expected that families will remain outside during drop-off and pick-up.

**Montessori School of Calgary recognizes that certain visits are necessary and unavoidable and request that parents plan their visits to the school during non-rush periods (rush periods to avoid: 8AM – 9AM, 3PM – 4PM).**

Some acceptable reasons to come into the school building include:

- Drop-off of medication or forgotten supplies
- Mid-day pick up of students

To limit the number of people in the building, parent volunteers will not be allowed initially. MSofC will review this as the year progresses and may choose to allow parent volunteers later in the year, if the activity allows for physical distancing.

## Staff Guidelines

### Screening, Time-off, COVID-19 Testing

To minimize the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Alberta recommended that all teachers and staff in the Early Childhood Services (ECS) to Grade 12 education system participate in asymptomatic testing prior to the start of the 2020/21 school year.

Although testing for COVID-19 is voluntary, all MSofC teachers and staff are required to book a test through Alberta Health Services and present a negative result prior to the start of the school year.

This asymptomatic testing program is one more way to provide confidence that our school will be a safe environment for all. This program is in addition to existing public health measures such as daily screening for symptoms, handwashing, physical distancing and the use of non-medical masks where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Staff will not be allowed into the building if exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. All staff are expected to complete the questionnaire in Appendix A before going to work. Staff will be expected to complete the AHS COVID-19 self-assessment if symptomatic and will be asked to provide proof of a negative test before return to school. Time-off policies have been adjusted to ensure that staff are not unduly penalized for staying home due to illness. Further details are outlined in the Staff Handbook.

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### Substitute Teaching

Montessori School of Calgary recognizes that it may incur increased staff absenteeism due to its strict screening policies. As such, the administration has worked to increase its substitute teaching list to ensure availability of substitute teachers. Before reaching out to external substitute teachers, MSofC has restructured staffing for the 2020-2021 school year to first encourage internal coverage where possible. Any teachers who are staying home from work due to illness are encouraged to complete the AHS [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool for Albertans](#) as soon as possible, so that they may get tested and return to work as soon as they've received clearance from AHS to do so.

### Employee Hygiene and Wellness

A healthy staff focused on servicing the needs of our students and families is key to the success of the school's mission during this period of crisis. Employees will be supported to ensure that they are able to prioritize the learning of students.

Employee contact with parents will primarily be through the use of audio and video-conferencing technology to ensure mutual safety.

Montessori School of Calgary promotes frequent and proper hand hygiene for employees. Employees must wash their hands before and after eating, when entering the building, when leaving the building, when entering class spaces and when leaving class spaces. Where handwashing isn't practical, hand sanitizing is required. Proper handwashing procedure includes washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using the provided hand sanitizer and rubbing hands for at least 30 seconds or until product evaporates. Hand washing with soap and water is required if the employee has visibly dirty hands.

Employees will be trained in the appropriate public health and hygiene protocols.

Each employee will receive and use masks and face shields as described by Minister LaGrange.

Hand sanitizer (approved by Health Canada) will be placed at entrances/exits, classrooms and high traffic areas.

Montessori School of Calgary's employees should also follow proper respiratory etiquette (e.g., coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow, promptly disposing of used tissues in the trash).

Signage has been placed throughout the facility to encourage proper hand hygiene and the regular practice of hand washing.

### Illness while at the school

Staff members will not enter the building if they have symptoms of COVID-19. Montessori School of Calgary will maintain a **zero-tolerance policy for illness, for both staff and students.**

If an employee becomes sick while at work, the following requirements apply:

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- Employees who begin having COVID-19 symptoms while at school should leave and begin isolation at home immediately.
  - If unable to leave due to coverage concerns, the staff member will contact the Head of School; it is the expectation that the administrator will personally replace the ill employee or find an internal coverage replacement as soon as possible.
  - After being directed to leave the school, symptomatic employees should follow hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette and maintain at least 2 meters of distance from all others.
  - Once a sick individual has left the workplace, Montessori School of Calgary’s custodial staff will clean and disinfect all surfaces and areas with which they may have come into contact.
  - Montessori School of Calgary’s administration will consider and record the names of all close contacts (employees and students) that the sick worker has been in contact with that day and in the 48 hours prior to when the symptoms started. This information may be necessary if the sick employee later tests positive for COVID-19.

### Staff Safety Protocols

As per direction by Alberta Health, physical distancing will be required in shared spaces such as the staffroom, hallways and classrooms. Montessori School of Calgary will set staffroom occupancy limits as required.

All staff will be required to wipe down high touch surfaces that they use in the staffroom before it is used by another member of staff (e.g. microwave touch panel, toaster, coffee maker). No activities that involve the sharing of food between staff should occur. Increased cleaning measures will ensure that the staffroom is cleaned by the custodial staff member immediately after lunch.

Physical distancing is expected at all meetings (including team meetings). Meetings will be held via Microsoft Teams or Zoom if adequate space is not available for all participants of the meeting to physically distance (e.g. Parent Advisory Committee).

It is an expectation that all staff will model appropriate hand hygiene and physical distancing practices to the students throughout the day and encourage students to adhere to these practices.

## References

Alberta Education (2020). K to 12 school re-entry.

<https://www.alberta.ca/k-to-12-school-re-entry-2020-21-school-year.aspx>

Rocky View Schools (2020). Scenario 1: In-School Learning classes resume, near-normal operations with health measures (2020).

<https://www.rockyview.ab.ca/school-re-entry-plan/scenario-one>

Jones, E., Young, A., Clevenger, K., et al., (2020). Healthy Schools: Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Healthy Buildings program.

<https://schools.forhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/06/Harvard-Healthy-Buildings-Program-Schools-For-Health-Reopening-Covid19-June2020.pdf>

Sick Kids. (2020). Updated Covid-19: Guidance for School Reopening.

<https://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf>

## Appendix A – COVID-19 Self Screening Questionnaire

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENTS MUST USE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE DAILY TO DECIDE IF THE STUDENT SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL**

Attendees should fill out this checklist prior entering school daily. If an individual answers YES to any of the questions, they must not be allowed to attend school. Children and youth will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

### Screening Questions

1.	Does the attendee have any new onset (or worsening) of any of the following	CIRCLE ONE	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Fever	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cough	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Chills	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling unwell / Fatigued	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Muscle/ Joint aches	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Headache	YES	NO
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	YES	NO
2.	Has the attendee travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Has the attendee had close contact* with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
4.	Has the attendee had close contact with a symptomatic** close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	YES	NO

\* Face-to-face contact within 2 metres. A health care worker in a occupational setting wearing the recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact.

\*\* 'Ill/symptomatic' means someone with COVID-19 symptoms on the list above