



**BETH MONTESSORI**

**SUPPLEMENTAL COVID-19**

**HANDBOOK**

## **Table of Contents**

This supplemental handbook covers logistics, procedures, and policies specifically related to COVID-19, and includes the following topics:

- 1. Preparation for Opening**
- 2. COMMUNITY COMMITMENT**
- 3. Sanitation, Disinfecting, Ventilation**
- 4. Class Sizes and Stable Cohorts**
- 5. Snacks and Food Preparation in the Classroom**
- 6. Drop Off and Pick Up Logistics**
- 7. Face Masks**
- 8. Handwashing**
- 9. Physical Distancing**
- 10. ILLNESS POLICY**
- 11. Parents and Visitors on Campus**
- 12. Tuition Policy**

As a reminder, this information continues to develop; we will update you accordingly.

### **1. Preparation for Opening**

Beth Montessori is doing everything in its power to reopen in the safest manner possible. We are responsible for the health and well being of our children, our staff, and our community. And we do not take this responsibility lightly.

As we prepare our school for re-opening, we continually monitor and stay up to date with the most updated information. We rely on guidance from the following reliable sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services
- California Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing
- California Department of Education
- California Department of Public Health
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Consultation with experts in relevant medical fields

### **2. Community Commitment**

Beth Montessori is doing everything in our power to keep our community safe. And as a community, it is important that this be a team effort built on trust and cooperation. With that said, we are calling on our Beth Montessori Families, to take on the commitment of being safe while outside of the school. Your commitment, honesty, and continued vigilance is what will make the difference in keeping us all safe. In an effort to protect the community at large, we will be asking all our participating families to commit (through a signed document) to the following safety measure while outside of school:

- Continue to respect and practice social distancing guidelines.
- Continue to wear a face mask while out in public or within 6 feet of others.

- Avoid indoor public spaces, to the best of your ability.
- Avoid social gatherings.
- Avoid playdates to the best of your ability. Be particularly prudent with mixing children from different “cohorts”.
- Avoid extra-curricular activities. Just because school resumes, this does not mean your children should resume their regular extra-curricular activities.
- Avoid Traveling on commercial flights. If you have traveled outside of the country recently, please wait 14 days after your arrival to return to school.
- **Maintain TRANSPARENCY and HONESTY about your exposure to COVID-19 and about your child’s/family’s health and symptoms.**

One thing is clear: The COVID-19 is not going away anytime soon. We must therefore learn to manage this situation in the healthiest and safest way possible. Our driving force is the well-being of the children; it is only through our personal vigilance that we can be successful in our reopening and remain safe as a community

### **3. Sanitation, Disinfecting, & Ventilation**

We will implement and follow best practices for cleaning and sanitation, creating a detailed cleaning schedule. All cleaning supplies used will be EPA-registered and in compliance with Health and Licensing agencies. Classroom materials will be disinfected throughout the day, especially those materials with high usage. Materials may be limited/restricted in class to better keep up with cleaning. Materials that come into contact with bodily fluids will be removed for thorough disinfecting.

We have hired a cleaning company that has provided us with a non-toxic disinfectant that can be sprayed throughout the day (<https://www.aquaox.com/>). The guides will be using this product to clean and disinfect the classroom materials on a daily basis. They will be spraying materials as needed throughout the day, and then disinfecting everything thoroughly at the end of each day.

Additionally, Maria, our on-site Janitor will also be supporting the daily disinfecting routine of all common spaces, including bathrooms, gates, handles, door knobs, faucets, etc.

The Playground will also be sanitized between each classroom's use.

Lastly, there is our nightly Janitorial Service that will also be cleaning and disinfecting daily (<http://www.acejanitorialsd.com/>).

As for ventilation, all our classrooms have an outdoor space that can be utilized on a daily basis to promote fresh air and constant airflow into the classroom. The classrooms all have more than one door and many windows, all of which will be kept open. Additionally, each classroom has an independent AC unit that pulls fresh air from the outside, so the same air will never be recirculated.

#### **4. Class Sizes and Stable Cohorts**

Community Care Licensing has allowed us to reopen at full capacity. But due to our strong sense of responsibility, we have chosen to limit our capacity significantly.

Toddler Classrooms will be capped at 10 students (instead of 12).

Primary will be capped at 16-18 students (instead of 24).

Each classroom will be a “Stable Cohort” of children, that will not mix with any other cohort. Children may not visit other classrooms or mingle with other children. Consider each classroom a quarantining home; a place for students to be together without outside exposure. Siblings who are in the *same program* will be placed in the same classroom.

Classrooms may not mix on the playground. We will create a schedule for each classroom to have its own time on the playground.

Additionally, in order to limit exposure, teachers may not travel from classroom to classroom. Each teacher must stay with their students throughout the day, including to supervise lunch. A dedicated staff member will give breaks to classroom teacher. All staff will wear masks throughout the day. In addition to frequent hand washing, staff will have access to hand sanitizer to use in between lessons with children.

Because current safety regulations do not allow us to mix children from different classrooms, this presents a challenge in the way we operate our Extended Care program. Therefore, for the time being, we will be having to suspend our formal Extended Care program and can only offer care until 3:00pm for those families who communicate their needs ahead of time. We expect this to change at some point in the future, but for now, the Extended Care Program is not an option.

#### **5. Snacks and Food Preparation in the Classroom**

To reduce the accidental spread of germs, we are removing the use of our glass cups, and are instead asking each child to bring their own Thermos/water bottle, **clearly labeled with their name.**

We have also removed the cold-food preparation activities from the classroom (for example, cutting an apple, spreading cream cheese, etc.). Therefore, each child is now responsible for bringing their own snack. Snacks should be in a separate snack container in their lunch box, labeled “snack”, so the child knows what to pick out at snack time.

Even though we are removing the snack preparation activities, Cooking will still be an important part of our curriculum. We will continue offering baking activities and Challah baking. We are calm that once baked, there is no risk of contagion, as all baked goods will be packed, by the Guide, using gloves.

#### **6. Drop Off and Pick Up Logistics**

Our Morning Drop-off will run from 8:15-8:45am. This should allow enough time to spread out everyone’s arrivals. If we see that it is necessary, we will stagger arrivals by more specific groups; but initially you may arrive anytime within that window.

Our drop-off and pick-ups will both take place at our Front Gate. You must park in the lower parking lot and walk up to our front gate. Please do not park in the turn-around or in Handicap spots (unless you have a Handicap Placard). Our walkways and stairs will be marked to indicate the direction and flow of traffic, so that we have a designated route to enter and one to exit.

As you walk and once at the Front Gate, we ask that parents respect social distancing guidelines, and keep 6 feet away from each other. There will be markings on the floor to guide you.

Parents will *not be allowed inside the gate/building* or closer than six feet to the teachers.

**Parents must wear masks at drop off and pick up.**

Designated staff will assist during drop off. These staff will take both the child's and the adult's temperatures and conduct health checks.

As the children come in, we will have them sanitize their hands at the front gate, and then proceed to wash their hands as soon as they enter the classroom. We will also have a disinfecting mat, for them to wipe their feet before entering the school. Staff will escort children to each classroom's entrance.

For pick up, parents should follow the same routes as they did for drop off. Staff will escort children to the front gate.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN PEN in order to Sign-in/Sign-out your child.

Once you pick up your child, please refrain from congregating in the stairs/parking lot.

**Daily Health Screening**

Staff, children, and adults will have their temperature taken and recorded upon arrival at school using a no-touch thermometer. The children will be checked for runny nose and any signs of illness. Children or staff with a 100.0°F degree temperature or higher will be sent home. Children and staff who show signs of illness will be sent home.

We will not allow sick children or staff to be at school. If a staff member or child has a runny nose due to allergies, we will need to have a Doctor's note stating that fact.

Our Staff's Health will be constantly monitored as well. There will be daily screenings and strict protocols in place. Let's not forget that we are putting ourselves on the frontline of this and will obviously want to protect ourselves and our own families. You can be sure that we will be doing EVERYTHING in our power to keep EVERYONE safe.

**7. Face Coverings**

Face masks must be worn by BOTH ADULT AND CHILDREN (over the age of 3) during drop off and pick up procedures.

Staff will be required to wear masks at all times, while with the children and around each other.

Children will not be obligated to wear masks during school, however, we will be **STRONGLY ENCOURAGING CHILDREN OVER THE AGE OF 3** to wear a mask, for as long as they can tolerate it. We know that this may be difficult for some children and will respect individual thresholds. Be aware that the official recommendations state: Never to place face coverings on babies or children under 2 because of danger of suffocation.

If you opt for a reusable cloth mask, note they need to be washed daily before being re-worn. Additional information from the California Department of Public Health regarding face coverings can be found [here](#).

### **8. Handwashing**

Teachers will instill good habits by monitoring student handwashing, doing it themselves, and talking about its importance. Twenty-second hand washing will be required of students before meals, after restroom use, and at regular intervals throughout the day; including after being outside and anytime their hands are in their mouths.

Hand sanitizing/washing will occur before entering any classroom, while inside a classroom, and before leaving the classroom for any reason. In addition, hand sanitizer will be available and utilized at various locations around the school.

### **9. Physical Distancing**

Each classroom will practice physical distancing to the best of their ability. Tables and chairs will be assigned per child. Children will gather their work from the shelf and return to their assigned table to work.

*As mentioned above, we expect families to be physically distancing too.* Beyond attending work and visiting the grocery store, families should remain home whenever possible, in order to continue their care at our school.

### **Naps**

Children who nap should bring a clean sheet and blanket on Monday in a new, reusable bag (that can be used, consistently each week). Each child will have their own assigned mat. Mats will be socially distanced and positioned with heads in opposite directions. Each day, the assigned mat, sheet and blankets will be stored in separate compartments (that will also be assigned). At the end of the week, sheets and blankets will be sent home for cleaning and mats will be sanitized.

### **10. ILLNESS POLICY:**

During these delicate times, we will be extremely strict with our Illness Policies, in some cases even stricter than our Regulatory Agencies require. It is relevant to mention that the guidelines continue to evolve, and we may need to modify our policies as time passes. But in the meantime, we prefer to always err on the side of caution with the sole purpose of protecting our community.

Students may not come to school if **they or anyone in their household** exhibits any of the COVID-19 symptoms below:

- Fever (Temperature of 100.0°F or above)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Loss of taste and/or smell

Any child exhibiting any of the above symptoms, cannot be at school. And they can only return to school if **ALL** of the following requirements are met:

- 1) It has been 10 days since the start of symptoms
- 2) **AND** symptoms must be improving
- 3) **AND** they have been fever-free for 24-hrs **WITHOUT FEVER-REDUCING MEDICINE**
- 4) **AND** they have a Physician's note confirming they are clear to return to school.

If a child has a runny nose that may be caused by a Chronic Illness (such as Allergies), we will require a Physician's Letter confirming the child's diagnosis, as well as confirmation that they are clear to attend school.

Our Illness Policy states that if "any one in their household" exhibits the above symptoms, a child cannot attend school. Therefore, it follows that **SIBLINGS** must also stay home anytime a child is sick.

Community Care Licensing recently shared a very useful decision-making flowchart that was designed by the County of SD Health and Human Service Agency, to help guide different illness scenarios. [You can reference that flowchart here.](#)

Because children are more likely to manifest mild symptoms or be asymptomatic, it is vital that we also monitor the adults in each household as well. Please be mindful of your own health status and be prudent anytime you have a doubt about you or any of your family member's health.

**And please remember, YOUR HONESTY AND TRANSPARENCY REGARDING YOUR CHILD'S OR FAMILY MEMBER'S SYMPTOMS IS VITAL TO ENSURING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY AT LARGE.**

### **Immunizations and the Influenza Vaccine**

The State of California and Licensing Regulations mandate that all children who attend a childcare setting must remain up to date with all required Immunizations.

The Influenza vaccine has always been recommended, but never mandatory. These unprecedented times require unprecedented measures. And so, Beth Montessori is, for the first time ever, **STRONGLY RECOMMENDING that all our children get their Influenza Vaccine**. This recommendation was firmly backed by the medical professionals we have consulted.

### **Travel Policy**

As we mentioned in our Community Commitment, we kindly ask that our families avoid traveling on commercial flight whenever possible.

If you have traveled outside of the country, please wait 14 days after your arrival before you/your child returns to school.

Furthermore, children who board a commercial flight (domestic or international), must quarantine for 14 days before returning to school.

Parent who must travel (due to business) must kindly inform us. Let us know your travel plans so that we can evaluate case by case.

These travel policies are subject to change.

### **If a Family or Teacher Test Positive**

*Please note that local authorities and our medical consultants continue to update and refine these guidelines. We will update you as these guidelines develop. Here is what we know at this time:*

Beth Montessori will not allow sick staff members and students to return to school until they have met the CA of Public Health's criteria to discontinue home isolation.

If a child or staff member tests positive, the whole classroom/stable cohort must quarantine for a period of 14 days. If this occurs, Beth Montessori will provide a Distance Learning routine during that period of time.

If a relative/close contact of a child or staff member tests positive, then only the child/staff member must quarantine for 14 days. This 14-day quarantine is mandatory, regardless of their COVID test coming back negative.

If you or your children know that you came in "close contact" (= within 6 ft for a period of 15 minutes or more) with a person with COVID-19, your child should stay home and quarantine for a period of 14 days from last exposure.

In consultation with our county health department and other medical advisors, we will determine case by case if any particular situation requires quarantine/closures beyond what was mentioned above.

**\*\*To help understand how to correctly count the days and what actions to take in different scenarios, you can reference the [CDC's webpage on quarantining](#)\*\*.**

### **11. Parents and Visitors on Campus**

Initially, visitors to campus will be extremely limited. At some point, we would like to allow parents to have greater access to our school and so we will be monitoring safety regulations in order to decide when that might be appropriate. These modifications will be taken case by case, and day by day.

As for coming to observe through the observation windows, in order to limit the amount of adult traffic, we will be limiting the number of parents who come observe. So please contact the office ahead of time and we will gladly schedule you in.

For the time being all school tours will be done virtually.

### **12. Tuition Policy**

Some common questions have been:

“What is the Tuition Policy should the school be mandated to close?”

“What if I start feeling uneasy with the local climate and I want to pull my child out, will I still be responsible for tuition?”

In both cases the tuition policy will remain as it was in our Enrollment paperwork:

“PARENTS OR GUARDIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR'S TUITION.” The paperwork also clearly states that the “Deposit is non-refundable”.

Beth Montessori has always tried our best to be reasonable when it comes to the very complicated financial impact this pandemic has had on our families. However, all the new restrictions and the limit we have placed on our capacity in order to keep everyone safe, has created a slightly more delicate financial model. It is for this reason that we must be strict in our financial policies, if we want to continue having the stability needed to continue operating. We understand that you are taking a big financial risk, but so are we. We must therefore share this risk with the sole purpose of provide the best learning environment for our children.

*“An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking; it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live.”*

- **Dr. Maria Montessori** | Education and Peace

**BETH MONTESSORI  
8660 GILMAN DRIVE  
LA JOLLA, CA 92037**

**858-452-3030 (Phone)**

**858-452-3040 (Phone)**

**858-777-9199 (Fax)**

**[admin@bethmontessori.com](mailto:admin@bethmontessori.com)**

**[www.bethmontessori.com](http://www.bethmontessori.com)**

**END OF HANDBOOK**

Updated: 8/20/20