

Dear Westwood Preschool families,

The health and safety of our staff, students and families are our top priority as we prepare to reopen our school in September. We continue to learn more information each day about COVID-19 and its effects in early childhood educational settings. I hope the answers to the questions below will help give some clarity to the policies and procedures we are putting in place to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff at Westwood Preschool.

Q: Will face coverings be required for staff and students?

A: A face covering, or face shield is required for all staff in our preschool when in communal areas, hallways, or lobbies. When isolated in a classroom with one group or cohort, face coverings are strongly recommended, but not required. Children 5 years and under are exempt from the face covering requirement, although you may choose to have your child wear a face covering while attending preschool. These are guidelines recommended by the Department of Human Services licensing division.

Q: What warrants a notification of exposure to COVID-19?

A: You will be notified of a COVID-19 exposure if your child had direct contact to someone that tested positive in their classroom. With our policy of not mixing groups or rooms at Westwood Preschool until further notice, you would not be notified of a diagnosis in a classroom not attended by your child.

Q: What happens if someone in my child's classroom tests positive?

A: Our first step, prior to making any connections with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), will be to temporarily shut down the classroom (not the entire preschool, just the affected classroom). This means that children in that room will be asked to stay home. From there, we will contact MDH and work with them on the next steps. Each classroom will be cleaned and sanitized by the WCC facilities team in accordance to our facilities protocol.

Q: If Westwood Preschool closes due to a surge in the COVID-19 virus will my tuition be reimbursed?

A: Yes. If our entire school closes due to mandates by the state, tuition will be reimbursed for the days missed. If an individual classroom is closed due to a student or staff person testing positive for COVID-19 and the classroom needs to close for the mandated number of days required by the state, tuition will be reimbursed for the days missed.

Q: What about large events that are on the calendar?

A: At this time, all large events (Fall Festival, Christmas Program, etc.) are scheduled but pending based on state guidelines for gathering of large groups. We will keep you posted on the status of these events as they get closer.

Q: What about the option for Lunch Bunch?

A: At this time, we will not be able to offer Lunch Bunch as we are not able to mix groups of children.

Q: What about Chapel?

A: At this time, we will be doing Chapel in each classroom with your child's teaching team leading the lesson each week. If and when we are able to rejoin and mix groups, we will come back to the format of large group Chapel time with all students attending together.

Q: Tell me more about carline procedures:

A: We are planning to have carline for drop off and pick up. We will be using the lower level and the upper level entrances for drop off points as to not overcrowd the areas where students will be waiting to enter the building. Detailed information about adaptations we are making will be given to you at Parent/Teacher Orientation in September.

Q: Will we be able to gather for Parent/Teacher Orientation?

A: We feel it is important for the students and parents to visit the classrooms and meet their teachers before the first day of school. We will be making adaptations to the group sizes, schedule and possibly the dates for orientation. Please mark your calendar for September 9th (scheduled date) and September 10th as possible dates. More information will be given to you closer to the time for orientation.

Q: What about parents or family members visiting the classrooms?

A: At this time, we will not be able to have parents visit the classrooms while preschool classes are in session. You will be notified if this restriction is lifted.

Q: What adaptations will you be making in the classroom?

A:

- No mixing of classroom groups
- Classroom ratios will be 16 students with 2 teachers
- Hand sanitizer will be permitted but administered by staff only
- Good handwashing practices will be encouraged by staff
- Each child will have a clear pencil box filled with personal use only supplies
- Classrooms will be cleaned between groups of students by our facilities staff
- Manipulatives will be cleaned by the preschool staff between groups of children
- Large muscle room will be cleaned by the facilities staff between groups of students
- Outdoor activities will be encouraged for all classes, weather permitting
- Classroom layout will be redesigned to encourage small group interaction between students
- Drinking fountains will be closed and students will be offered water in disposable cups at their request
- Classroom snacks and beverages will be served by the staff only, not family style
- All washrooms have been converted to touchless features

Please call or email me with additional questions or if you need clarity on any of the questions above.

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