

THE MEHER SCHOOLS

# Summer 2020 Health Handbook

Working Together: Keeping our School  
Community Safe During the Pandemic

We're happy to welcome you to our summer programs. To protect your family and our staff, our health protocol is strict, established by working closely with doctors and following guidelines from public health and licensing agencies. We want to make sure everyone in our school community knows what's required so we can work together to maintain safety. Procedures are current as of July 27,, 2020. If procedures change during summer session, an updated document will be distributed.

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## New Realities at School

Because of the number of restrictions on life at school and our need for extreme caution regarding the spread of contagions, we won't be able to count on some aspects of school life we've always taken for granted. We apologize in advance for the inconvenience these new, necessary procedures might cause.

### You May Need to Pick Your Child Up at Any Time

There is an increased likelihood that we'll have to call you to pick up your child at any time, for a number of reasons. **If we call, you'll need to come immediately. If you work, we recommend letting your employer know this is a possibility. Make sure your emergency form includes at least one other person who can come to school immediately to pick up your child. We also recommend creating contingency plans for childcare.**

### We May Close a Room if We Don't Have Adequate Staff

Staffing under the new restrictions is challenging and requires more teachers than usual. Because teachers cannot go between cohorts of children, finding substitutes is exceedingly challenging. If a sub works with a cohort for one day, they cannot work in another room for three weeks.

**There's a chance we'll have to close a classroom temporarily if teachers become sick or are put on quarantine and we cannot find adequate sub coverage.** We'll give you as much notice as possible if this happens, via email. Again, this highlights the need to have a contingency plan for childcare.

### Pick-Up and Drop-Off Will Take Longer Than Usual

Each new health and safety procedure required at pick-up and drop-off adds time to your usual routine. Be aware that picking up and dropping off your child will take longer than usual. There may be lines in the parking lot and lines at health-screening stations. **Please plan for this extra time, knowing that it might take longer to get to work in the morning and to get to your child's classroom when you pick them up.**

### Medical Conditions and Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups

Our summer programs are not designed for those who are at high risk. Families with children in this category should consult with their doctor about enrolling. People of any age who have serious medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 .

Health information including allergies and other medical conditions needs to be disclosed when completing enrollment/re-enrollment forms.

## Before You Go to School

### Everyone in Your Home Must Be Symptom Free

Please help us by doing a quick visual and verbal check of everyone in your home to make sure you are all free of [symptoms](#). This does not replace the health screening once you get to campus, but it can prevent spread of contagions in the entrance to the school.

Symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If you or anyone in your home is exhibiting symptoms, do not come to school. Instead, please call the Office ((925) 938-9958) and let us know, and we'll let you know the next steps.

### We Won't Let You Come if We Feel You Have Symptoms

While the school has enjoyed being flexible in many of our procedures and policies, we're taking an approach to health and safety based on an abundance of caution this summer. At a symptom screening you may report that no one in your family has symptoms, but **if we feel you or your child is exhibiting [symptoms](#), we will ask you to not come on campus at all.** If you feel we're wrong in our assessment, we can have a phone conversation once you're at home.

### What to Send to School With Your Child

In addition to things you would normally send with your child, please have your child bring the following:

#### Preschool

There's nothing special or additional that a preschooler needs to bring this summer. Please check the Parent Handbook for all of the usual items we ask you to send with your preschooler.

## Elementary and Drama Camp

- ***A Mask or Face Covering***

While not required by the county for children under 12, please send your child with a mask or face covering. Singing is a foundational part of The Meher Schools, yet it also can easily spread contagions. To mitigate this risk, children will need to wear a mask or face covering when singing. Cohorts will sing outside as much as possible.

- ***Enough Food for Lunches and Snacks***

In order to protect each cohort and the Office staff, we're trying to minimize the need for children to "go to the Office." Typically, we have a number of students each day who run out of food and go to the Office for more. To prevent these visits, please pack ample food for lunch and snacks. The Office won't be able to provide additional food.

- ***An Extra Set of Clothing (For Younger Children and Water Play)***

Children in kindergarten should bring an extra set of clothes for water play or in case they have an accident. Older children might also want an extra set of clothing in case we have water play on a hot day. The Office might have some extra clothing available, but will be limited in what it can provide.

- ***A water bottle***

We recommend that each child bring a refillable water bottle to cut down use of shared drinking fountains. The bottle should be clearly labeled with the child's name and brought home daily for cleaning.

## Educating Children about How to Help Stay Healthy

Staying healthy as we return to school during the pandemic will be a group effort. It's important for everyone that children start to build an awareness of how to stay healthy and how to help prevent others from getting sick.

### **At home, gently remind your children about ways to stay healthy:**

- Wash your hands frequently!
- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Avoid close and direct contact with other children and staff as much as possible
- Tell a teacher as soon as possible if you feel sick, especially if you have one of the symptoms listed above.

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve – not your hands!
- Don't share food, drinking cups, eating utensils, etc.

## Dropping Off & The Parking Lot

### Parking Lot Congestion and Rules

As mentioned above, drop-off and pick-up will take longer than usual. New requirements outlined below will mean more parking spaces might be occupied longer than usual. **Please allow for extra time at drop-off and pick-up, and follow these guidelines:**

- Park as usual, though you may use street parking as well.
  - Do not park in the Sun Valley Swimming Pool lot – the pool is in use this summer.
  - Do not park in the Tier 2 or 3 parking lot.
- Be extra cautious when driving and walking in the lot.
- **Do not block parked cars when waiting for a parking spot. Keep circling through the lot until a space opens up.**
- Social distance in the parking lot (stay at least six feet from others; adults wear a mask or cloth face covering).
- **Do NOT gather in the lot, garden, or hallways.**
- You **MUST** go with your child to a health-screening station.
- See “Picking Up Your Child” for new pick-up procedures.

Because of our new health-screening procedures, we understand that children may be a little late entering the classroom. **Children are required to arrive by 9:30 to attend school that day.** If a child has a morning medical appointment and will arrive after 9:30, notify teachers ahead of time.

### Health Screenings on Campus

Upon arriving at school every day, parents will fill out a health-screening form verifying that no one in their household has COVID-19 symptoms or has been exposed to someone with symptoms or a diagnosis of COVID-19. You'll also need to take your and your child's temperature and sign a sheet verifying you are both symptom free. You'll find more information below about these new health screenings and sign-in procedures.

**The locations of the health screening stations are:**

**Preschool:** Outside each classroom.

**Summer Fun (K-4):** Outside each classroom

**Drama Camp:** Near Room 14

Current health screening questions:

Has your child or any member of your household shown any symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Has your child or any member of your household been in contact with someone who has COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Has your child or any member of your household been in contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

What is your child's temperature? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your temperature? \_\_\_\_\_

## New Sign-In Procedures

**This summer, children are not allowed to come up to the classroom by themselves.** In order to ensure health screenings are done effectively, children must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult caregiver, who will fill out the health-screening form and take their temperature. The adult will also sign the child in for the day.

Please follow these instructions when signing your child in:

- Stand with your child on the marked spaces six feet apart and wait for your class's screening station to be free.
- Health screening and sign-in at the room
  1. Put on a pair of the gloves provided.
  2. Take your child's temperature and your temperature and record it on the health-screening form.

If a temperature at 99.7 or higher displays:

- a. take the temperature again. If it's a hot day or your child has been running around, wait five minutes before taking theirs a second time.

- b. If your temperature or the child's still registers 99.7 degrees after two or three tries, you and the child will need to leave campus immediately.
  - c. Phone the Office at 925-938-9958 to let the school know that a temperature at or above 99.7 was registered and to learn about conditions for returning to school. If it's possible to let the teacher know about the fever without entering the classroom or coming close to the teacher, please do so. If it's not possible, the Office will let the teacher know about the fever.
  - d. Use an alcohol wipe provided to wipe off the thermometer after you've used it.
3. **Complete the health-screening form using a pen from the "clean" jar.**
4. **Sign your child in using the sign-in book.**
5. Place the pen in the "used" jar and dispose of the gloves and alcohol wipe in the trash.

Once you've finished the screening, your child can go to class. Without going in the room, verify the teachers know your child is symptom free and send them into the room.

**Allow plenty of extra time to complete this procedure.**

## During the Day

### Personal Protective Equipment for Students and Staff

#### Students

- ***A Mask or Face Covering for Elementary Students***

According to county guidelines for the coming school year, we will require children to wear masks. Please send one with your child.

#### Teachers and Staff

- ***A Mask or Face Covering***

Teachers and staff are required to wear a mask or face covering at all times, unless they're outside *and* more than six feet from others.

- ***Face Shields***



Some Office staff might wear face shields, though we have been advised they are NOT a replacement for masks. Staff wearing face shields will also need to wear a mask.

- **Gloves**

Disposable gloves will be available for all staff and will need to be worn when handling food (e.g., making snacks), cleaning, tending to injuries, and changing diapers.

## Cleaning and Handwashing In the Classroom

Each classroom and the Office will have specific cleaning guidelines and checklists for anyone using it. While children will not be expected to bear responsibility for ensuring the spaces they use are properly sanitized, they will be involved in regular cleaning of the space and materials they use. This is an opportunity to build healthy habits and to create a feeling that “we’re all in this together.”

**Everyone – children and adults – will be expected to wash or sanitize their hands every time they enter or exit a room.** We’ll have tissues in every room to use to open door handles, or we’ll leave doors open to prevent multiple people from touching the same handle before it’s cleaned.

Indoor and outdoor toys will be cleaned and sanitized before they’re used by other children. Personal table space, sinks, and drawers will be wiped down after use. Every classroom will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected each evening. We plan to remove cabinet doors in the classrooms to prevent cabinet handles from becoming shared high-contact surfaces.

## Eating Snack and Lunch

While children can't wear masks when eating, we'll use other precautions to stay safe.

- Children will be seated at least three feet apart (Public Health’s recommendation) and eat outside whenever possible.
- Children are not allowed to share food and will need to cover any cough or sneeze while eating.
- Everyone will wash their hands both before and after eating.
- Children who eat indoors will be asked to thoroughly clean their table spot when they’re finished.

Unfortunately, the Office is no longer to serve extra food to children who finish their lunch and are still hungry. **Please pack some extra food so children will have all they need in their lunch, even on a day when they are particularly hungry.**

## Sending People with Symptoms Home

If someone on campus develops any of the symptoms listed under “Before You Get to School,” they will be asked to go home immediately.

Children waiting to be picked up will wait in a room separate from their cohort (not the Office) under staff supervision to prevent the spread of contagions. We will let you know where to pick up your child should they need to leave campus.

**A child or staff member with symptoms may not return to school until they meet [CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation](#), in addition to local public health standards.**

A person with symptoms can return after:

- No COVID-19 testing and 10 days without symptoms
- A negative COVID-19 test and 10 days without symptoms
- A positive COVID-19 test, followed by no fever, improved respiratory symptoms, and two negative COVID-19 tests at least 24 hours apart

## The "New" Office

In an effort to minimize the Office staff's exposure to others, we've made some changes in the way the Office will be organized and used. The Office will be open its regular hours, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. These new guidelines will be in place for the summer:

- One parent or teacher at a time will be allowed in the Office.
- Line up six feet apart outside the Office when waiting to enter.
- Office guests cannot go past the reception desk.
- **Fill out forms before going into the Office.**
  - You're welcome to call the Office to request forms or other information ahead of your visit to the Office.

# Picking Up Your Child

## What to Do Before Coming to Pick Up Your Child

Please do the following things before picking up your child to help minimize the risk of bringing outside contagions onto campus.

1. If you work in a high-risk environment (medical or dental office, restaurant or retail, etc.), please change your clothes before coming on campus
2. Everyone should wash hands or use hand sanitizer before or upon arriving at school
3. To minimize potential exposure, only one adult should come to the classroom to pick up a child. Others should wait in the car. Since young children cannot remain in cars unattended, any other children you must bring will need to stay in the hallway with you.

## New Pickup Procedures

Below you'll find the changes to pick-up procedures to ensure social distancing and minimize the chance of bringing outside contagions into the classrooms. We'd like you to especially note that **no one is allowed to gather and socialize in the hallways, gardens, steps, or parking lot. Leave campus as quickly as possible after picking up your child.**

### Preschool

1. Come to the classroom and wait in line, 6 feet apart.
2. Sign your child out using the sign-in book.
  - a. Wash your hands or use sanitizer before touching the sign-out book
  - b. Use a pen from the "clean" jar to sign, and put the pen in the "used" jar.
3. Stand in the doorway and let the teachers know you are there to pick up your child. They will gather your child's belongings and bring your child and his/her belongings to you.
  - a. If the class is on the yard, walk around to the yard to signal that you are there. Do not walk through the classroom.
4. Leave campus as quickly as possible, to minimize possible exposure. **Do not gather in the hallways, garden, steps, or parking lot!**

### Summer Fun & Drama Camp (No aftercare)

1. Come to the classroom and wait in line in the designated spots in the hallway
2. When it's your turn at the door, the teachers will release your child to you with their belongings. Do not come inside the classroom.
3. Leave campus as quickly as possible, to minimize possible exposure. **Do not gather in the hallways, garden, steps, or parking lot!**

### **Aftercare in Summer Fun & Drama Camp**

1. Come to the classroom and wait in line, 6 feet apart.
2. Sign your child out using the sign-out book.
  - a. Wash your hands or use sanitizer before touching the sign-out book
  - b. Use a pen from the "clean" jar to sign, and put the pen in the "used" jar.
3. Stand in the doorway and let the teachers know you are there to pick up your child. They will gather your child's belongings and bring your child and his/her belongings to you.
  - a. If the class is on the yard, walk around to the yard to signal that you are there. Do not walk through the classroom.
4. Leave campus as quickly as possible, to minimize possible exposure. **Do not gather in the hallways, garden, steps, or parking lot!**

## **Some "What-Ifs"**

***Please note that these scenarios are subject to change as guidance from medical professionals continues to evolve.***

### **... There's a Case of COVID-19 at School?**

Public Health has asked that we notify them immediately if anyone in our school community tests positive for COVID-19. They will then direct us as to what to do next regarding closures and containing spread of the virus. If we have a positive test, we will inform the school community immediately.

#### **Possible Scenarios**

- **Full School Closure:** Public Health might ask us to close all summer programs for several weeks or longer.

- **Partial Closure:** They may require us to close only a specific room or set of rooms.
- **Family Quarantine:** If they feel that the person who tests positive did not expose others at school, they may suggest we only quarantine that person and their family for a period of time.

## ... My Child Develops Symptoms While at School?

If your child develops any of the symptoms listed under “Before You Get to School,” we will call you to take them home immediately.

**Your child may not return to school until they meet [CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation](#) and local public health standards.**

A person with symptoms may return after:

- No COVID-19 testing or a negative COVID-19 test and 10 days without symptoms
- A positive COVID-19 test, followed by no fever, improved respiratory symptoms, and two negative COVID-19 tests at least 24 hours apart

## ... My Child or I Are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 Away from School?

**The person who has been exposed may not return to campus for two weeks** (this is based on the time it takes to develop illness). If a parent has been exposed and a child has not, we will follow Public Health guidance for the particular situation.

## ... Our Family Takes a Trip Outside the Bay Area?

Children may return to immediately to school after a “non-flying” trip outside the Bay Area if your family adheres to these guidelines while you’re away:

- Wear a mask while in public or near others outside your social or family “bubble”
- Maintain a social distance of at least six feet at all times from people outside your social or family bubble
- Keep exposure in public places (stores, restaurants, etc.) to less than 15 minutes
- Avoid all crowds and group gatherings.

If you’re not able to follow these guidelines on your trip, you’ll need to quarantine for two weeks before returning to school.

## ... A Teacher Develops Symptoms

**The teacher will leave the classroom as soon as possible. Parents may be called to pick up their child immediately if no substitute teacher is available.** The teacher will be in quarantine after showing symptoms, and the school will consult with medical professionals. Families will be notified.

The teacher may return to work after either

- No COVID-19 testing or a negative COVID-19 test and 10 days without symptoms
- A positive COVID-19 test, followed by no fever, improved respiratory symptoms, and two negative COVID-19 tests at least 24 hours apart

## ... We Don't Have Adequate Staffing Because Teachers Are Ill or Quarantined and There Aren't Enough Subs?

In case of teacher absence, we always try to place a substitute teacher with the class. Because of the many new regulations, it's possible that we won't be able to find a substitute teacher. Health guidelines prevent us from combining classes or moving teachers between classes, and substitutes aren't able to return to campus for three weeks after working. ***So if teachers are ill or quarantined and no substitutes are available, the class will be canceled until we have sufficient staffing.*** This is a significant change for our school. Again, we strongly recommend families develop a backup plan for childcare.