



Parent Handbook

COVID-19 Edition
2022-2023

'Keeping our Community Safe'



BISHOP HAMILTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

August 2022

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School Director Message

Dear Parents,

At the core of our vision is the well being and development of each and every one of our children. Together, with our dedicated BHMS team, we will continue to adapt both creatively and responsibly.

BHMS is committed to continue to maintain robust health and safety practices to keep our community of students and staff safe throughout the school year. Our Covid-19 procedures have been amended to reflect current Ministry and Ottawa Public Health guidelines and we will continue to exceed their basic requirements.

Please review the 2022-2023 COVID-19 Parent Handbook that aims to outline the health and safety measures we are undertaking to keep our community safe. Our protocols will be fluid as we continue to monitor and assess our practices and fine tune them as required. We rely on your continued partnership in helping to keep our children and dedicated staff safe.

Renette Sasouni
School Director

Screening

BHMS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for staff and students and will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within the school.

BHMS requires staff, students and visitors to continue to self-screen every day before attending school using the COVID-19 school and child care screening tool and to follow public guidance by staying home if they are feeling ill to prevent the spread of illness.

COVID-19 school and child care self-screening tool: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

Staff and students are required to stay home if they are experiencing **ANY** of the symptoms identified on the active screening questions and must report their absence to Administration.

Morning Drop Off Locations

BHMS Staff: Entrance B (Front Doors)

Infant: Entrance B (Front Doors)

Toddler: Exit D Stairwell (Last Set of Doors at the Rear of Building Closest to Toddler Classrooms)

Casa: Entrance B (Front Doors)

Junior / Senior Elementary & Junior High

- Drop Off & Drive System: Use of roundabout at the front of the premises

Important:

- School starts at 8:30, parents must ensure their child's timely arrival to school.
- **All Entrances will be closed at 8:30.** Students arriving past 8:30 must proceed to the front doors, Entrance B, ring the doorbell and wait for staff to admit your child to school.
- During drop-off times, parents / guardians will park close to their assigned location and walk their child to the doors. Exception: Elementary and Junior High where students are dropped off at the roundabout and enter the school premises independently.

Student Pick-Up Locations: 3:30 Dismissal

Students who are picked up at 3:30 will be dismissed at the following locations:

Infant: Same location as assigned drop-off location

Toddler: Same location as assigned drop-off location

Casa: Entrance A (Main Entrance Doors Facing Casa Park)

Junior Elementary: Exit C Stairwell (Middle Stairwell Doors at the Rear of the Building)

Senior Elementary: Exit D Stairwell (Last Set of Doors at the Rear of Building Closest to Toddler Classrooms)

Junior High: Exit C Stairwell (Middle Stairwell Doors at the Rear of the Building)

Parents / guardians will park close to their assigned drop-off location, a member of staff will greet you and dismiss your child. **Parents who have children with siblings in Elementary and Casa should pick up their Elementary child at the Casa Pick-up location.**

Pick-Up Locations after 3:30

Infant: Entrance B (Front Doors)

Toddler: Toddler Park or if Inclement Weather, Pick-up at Entrance B (Front Doors)

Casa: Casa Park or if Inclement Weather, Pick-up at Entrance B (Front Doors)

Elementary

- **4:00 p.m. Pick Up:** Exterior Gym. Doors situated near the front entrance around the corner from the roundabout.
- **5:00 or 5:30 Pick-Up:** Entrance B (Front Doors)

Visitors

Visitors will be permitted access to the premises. Parent / guardian inquiries may be conducted in person as required, by telephone, email, or video conference.

Illness Policy

BHMS is committed to maintaining a healthy environment for all members of the community by following Ottawa Public Health standards. Students and staff must not attend school if they are sick.

Students Who Display Symptoms of Illness or Become Sick Policy

Policy Statement

BHMS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students, staff and families. BHMS will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within the school. Children must not attend school if they are sick.

Purpose

To ensure that BHMS staff are aware of and adhere to the School's Health and Safety practices.

Application

This policy applies to students enrolled in the school.

Procedures

Students who demonstrate symptoms of illness or become sick while at school will be sent home. The School will contact parents / guardians to inform them of the symptoms their child is displaying and request pick up.

Students who are symptomatic, do not pass the self-screening, or have been advised to self-isolate by Ottawa Public Health cannot attend school and must stay home. If a child becomes ill while at school, staff will contact the child's parents / guardians.

BHMS staff will exclude a **child who is presenting with signs and / or symptoms that are greater than normal, or if the child is unable to participate in regular programming because of illness.**

Important

If it appears that the child requires immediate medical attention, staff will inform parent / guardian that the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance for examination by legally qualified medical practitioners.

Surveillance

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are monitored is essential in prevention and reducing illness. The School and staff will monitor for an increase in above normal amount of illnesses among other staff and children by looking at the normal occurrence of illness and during the specific time period.

Surveillance will include:

- Observing children for illness upon arrival
- Recording symptoms of illness for each child including signs or complaints the child may describe such as sore throat, stomach ache, headache.
- Recording the date and time that the symptoms occur

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and whenever a change is made.

Required Forms

- Illness Form

Staff Who Display Symptoms of Illness or Become Sick

Policy Statement

BHMS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for staff. BHMS will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within the school. Staff must not attend school if they are sick.

Purpose

To ensure that all BHMS staff are aware of and adhere to the School's Health and Safety practices.

Application

This policy applies to all staff and any others persons engaged in business with BHMS.

Procedures

BHMS staff who present with symptoms of illness or become sick will be sent home.

Staff who are symptomatic, do not pass screening, or have been advised to self-isolate by Ottawa Public Health, cannot attend school and must stay home. If a member of staff becomes ill while at school, they must isolate themselves as quickly as possible until they are able to leave the school. Completion and remittance of Illness Form to Administration is required. Staff must remain off work until symptoms have improved and they pass self-screening.

Surveillance

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are monitored is essential in prevention and reducing illness. The School will monitor for an increase in above normal amount of illnesses among other staff and children by looking at the normal occurrence of illness and during the specific time period.

Surveillance will include:

- A record of the date and time that the symptoms occurred
- A record of attendances and absences

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and at any time where a change is made.

Required Forms

Illness Form

Management

Together We Can Do It

It takes our community of BHMS families and staff to create our healthy and safe community. We will only be as healthy as each and every family.

BHMS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students and staff and will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within the school. We require staff and families to follow the directives established by Ottawa Public Health.

Monitoring and Responding to Reports of COVID-19 Symptoms

Anyone who is symptomatic, does not pass screening, or has been advised to self-isolate by Ottawa Public Health will not be permitted to attend school and should stay home. If a student or member of staff becomes ill while at school, arrangements for them to go home will be made. Household members (including siblings) who are fully vaccinated and do not have any COVID-19 symptoms are not required to isolate and may remain at school or work.

Students and / or staff presenting with COVID-19 symptoms may return to school once one of the following conditions have been met AND symptoms have improved for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication or resolved for 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, diarrhea:

- Receive a negative COVID-19 PCR or RAT test result
- Complete a minimum of 5 days of isolation since the date symptoms began; or
- Receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care provider.

Outbreak Management and Protocols

The School will seek guidance and direction from Ottawa Public Health as required.

BHMS Protocols In Dealing With a Confirmed COVID-19 Case:

- Document the confirmed case.
- Contact parents / guardians to arrange for student pick-up
- Conduct classroom disinfection protocols
- Release a written communication notifying families and staff within the classroom of a confirmed COVID-19 case. Distribute rapid tests to students and staff within the classroom requesting monitoring for symptoms.

Surveillance

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are monitored is essential in prevention and reducing illness. The School and staff will monitor for an increase in above normal amount of illnesses among other staff and students.

Reporting

BHMS has a duty to monitor and report areas of concern regarding health or communicable diseases under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Although reporting confirmed cases of Covid-19 is no longer a requirement by Public Health or the School's licensing bodies, BHMS will continue to monitor, assess and report areas of concern pertaining to health.

BHMS will respect the confidentiality of any staff or student who experiences COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

Hygiene and Prevention Practices

BHMS will continue to maintain infection prevention and control practices.

Handwashing

BHMS has Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedures that apply to all staff, students and visitors. See section titled BHMS Procedures.

Sanitizing & Disinfecting

BHMS has Sanitizing and Disinfecting Policy and Procedures that staff are required to follow. See section titled BHMS Procedures.

Masking

Masking for students, staff and visitors is not a requirement and is optional. BHMS continues to promote the use of masks and requires all members of the school community to be respectful and inclusive of individuals who choose to wear or not to wear a mask when at school.

BHMS requires staff, students and visitors to continue to self-screen every day before attending school using the COVID-19 school and child care screening tool and to follow public guidance by staying home if they are feeling ill to prevent the spread of illness.

In School Modifications

- Medical Grade HEPA Filtration Units: All Classrooms are equipped with commercial medical grade air purifiers ensuring ongoing air filtration.
- Cleaning: Thorough cleaning has always been an important element of the Montessori classroom. Continuous cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and shared spaces will be ongoing and form part of daily routines.
- Sleep set-up: Cots for nap time are distanced and positioned head to toe/ toe to head.

Sanitary Precautions

Policy

All BHMS staff must maintain routine infection prevention and control practices as well as adhere to sanitary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Procedures

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

BHMS staff must be trained and able to assist children on hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rubs.

Hand Hygiene is incorporated into daily classroom routines at regular intervals during the day.

Staff are required to wash their hands with soap and warm water frequently, and in the following situations:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home
- Before handling food, preparing bottles, feeding children
- Before and after eating and drinking
- Before and after touching their own or someone else's face
- After sneezing or coughing into hands
- Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child or self
- Before and after diaper check or changing diapers, assisting a child to use the toilet, and using the toilet
- Before and after contact with bodily fluids (i.e. runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
- After cleaning and handling garbage

Children are required to wash their hands with soap and warm water frequently, and in the following situations:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home
- Before and after eating and drinking
- After a diaper change and using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing into hands

Staff should follow and role model the following steps for proper **hand washing**:

- Wet hands and apply soap
- Lather for at least 15 seconds or as long as the "Happy Birthday" song. Rub between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, under nails
- Rinse well under running water
- Dry hands well with paper towel or hot air blower
- Turn taps off with paper towel, if available

When hands are not visibly soiled, staff should follow these steps for cleaning hands using hand sanitizer:

- Apply hand sanitizer (60% - 90% alcohol-based)
- Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds
- Work sanitizer between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, and under nails
- Rub hands until dry

Note: Hand sanitizer must only be used on children who are over the age of two and must be used under staff supervision. Staff must ensure that the product has completely evaporated from the child's hands before allowing the child to continue their activity.

Parent consent through remittance of a Hand Sanitizer Permission for Students form is required to use hand sanitizer on children. Children under the age of 2 are not permitted to have hand sanitizer applied, instead perform hand washing frequently and gently.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting reduce the spread of germs. Cleaning with soap and water removes dirt and grease that can hide and protect germs from disinfectants.

Disinfectant products in use by the School are effective against COVID-19. Cleaning schedules are in place ensuring that cleaning and disinfecting duties are conducted and documented.

Materials and Equipment

Staff must ensure that all equipment is in good repair, clean and sanitary.

- Materials and equipment are disinfected daily.
- Mouthed material or equipment must be set aside after being mouthed for cleaning and sanitization.

Cots

- Children will have a cot assigned to them.
- Cots are placed to support appropriate distancing and children are placed head-to-toe or toe-to-toe.
- Cots and cribs must be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Cot sheets and blankets must be changed between each user.
- Sheets and blankets if used by same user must be cleaned weekly or more frequently as needed.
- Ensure cot sheets and blankets belonging to different children are labelled with the child's name and stored separately in bags or bins and kept out of the way of everyday activities.
- Families will be permitted to bring their own blankets or sleeping bags for children. Families must launder all items prior to bringing them to school.
- Items must be laundered weekly or more frequently as needed.

Additional Infection Control Practices

Regularly clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, handrails, and electronic devices at least once per day to prevent the transmission of viruses from contaminated objects and surfaces. Additional cleaning and disinfecting may be required based on daily need.

- High touch electronic devices such as keyboards, tablets, chromebooks, may be disinfected with 70% alcohol wipes while ensuring the dilute solution makes contact with the surface for at least one minute.
- Carpets are vacuumed daily.
- Garbage is kept in waterproof containers lined with plastic garbage bags. Staff must dispose of garbage daily. Any blood-soiled items must be discarded in sealed bags.
- For creams and lotions during diapering, staff must use a tissue or single-use gloves

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and at any time where a change is made.

Sanitizing and Disinfecting Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

Bishop Hamilton Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students, staff and families. The School will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within the premises.

Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of, and adhere to, the School's Health and Safety Practices as prescribed by Ottawa Public Health and its licensing bodies.

Application

This policy applies to all employees, students, community members, and any other persons engaged in business with BHMS.

Definitions

Cleaning: refers to the physical removal of foreign material such as dust, soil and organic material such as blood, secretions or microorganisms. Cleaning removes, rather than kills microorganisms. Warm water, detergent and mechanical action such as wiping is required to clean surfaces. Rinsing with clean water is required to complete the cleaning process to ensure the detergent film is removed.

Sanitizing: is defined as the reduction of microorganisms to levels considered safe from a public health viewpoint. Sanitizing takes place after the cleaning step because it is most effective on a minimally soiled surface.

Disinfecting: describes a process completed after cleaning in which a chemical solution is used to kill most disease-causing microorganisms. In order to be effective, disinfectants must be left on a surface for a period of time - contact time. Contact times are generally prescribed by the product manufacturer.

Note: All products including cleaning agents and disinfectants must be kept in a secured location that is out of reach of children. All cleaning agents and disinfectants must be labelled. Safety data sheets are updated, stored and managed by custodial staff.

Procedures

Cleaning

- Use detergent and warm water to clean visibly soiled surfaces
- Rinse the surface with clean water (warm to tepid temperature preferred) to ensure detergent is removed
- Let the surface dry
- A sanitizing / disinfecting solution will be mixed and delivered to classrooms by custodial staff daily. Contact time for this solution is 10 minutes.
- Cleansing bottles will be refilled by custodial staff and delivered to classrooms daily.

Disinfecting Surfaces

For general environmental disinfection of high touch surfaces use the disinfectant mix. Disinfectant wipes (containing Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide), may also be used in classrooms for quick disinfecting.

How to Disinfect

- Use of rubber gloves and a mask can be used by staff with scent sensitivities.
- Spray or wipe on the disinfectant solution and leave on the surface for the appropriate disinfecting contact time – 10 minutes. Once the contact time has elapsed, the surface has been disinfected.
- If the surface continues to be wet, you may wipe it dry with a single-use paper towel
- For general environmental disinfection of high touch surfaces, large toys and equipment that cannot be immersed in a disinfectant solution, use disinfectant wipes.
- For all other toy cleaning & disinfecting, use bleach solution as prescribed by Ottawa Public Health bleach washing guidelines that are posted in each classroom.

Clean and Disinfect Frequencies

- **Tables and Countertops:** used for food preparation and food service must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use
- **Spills** must be cleaned and disinfected immediately
- **Handwash Sinks:** staff and children washroom areas must be cleaned and disinfected at least two times per day and as often as necessary, this also applies to sinks in classrooms.
- **Floors - Infant, Toddler & Casa:** cleaning and disinfecting must be performed as required (ie., when spills occur), and throughout the day when rooms are available during recess. Ideal cleaning times: after lunch and at the end of the day.
- **Classroom Equipment:** cleaning and disinfecting must be performed daily and as required.
- **High Touch Surfaces:** surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned as often as necessary (when visibly dirty or contaminated with body fluids), examples include: light switches, shelving, containers, hand rails, door knobs, sinks and toilets.
- **Floor Mats:** cleaning and disinfecting must be performed daily.
- **Low Touch Surfaces:** must be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- **Shared Items:** Examples include: computers, chrome books, walkie-talkies, phones, attendance binders, or classroom logs, photocopiers, or microwave must be disinfected after use.
- **Blood / Bodily Fluid Spills:** Immediately

Crib and Cot Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Children have assigned cots and cribs.
- Cots and cribs must be cleaned and disinfected before being assigned to a child.
- Crib mattresses must be cleaned and disinfected when soiled or wet.
- High touch surfaces on cots and cribs must be disinfected at least once per day and as often as necessary.
- Cots must be stored in a manner where there is no contact with the sleeping surface of another cot
- Bedding must be laundered weekly or as needed.

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees before commencing employment and at any time where a change is made.

Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

BHMS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students, staff and families. BHMS will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within the school.

Purpose

To ensure that all staff are aware of, and adhere to, the School's Health and Safety Practices as prescribed by Ottawa Public Health, and its licensing bodies.

Application

This policy applies to all staff, students, community members, and any other persons engaged in business with BHMS.

Definitions

Hand Hygiene is a term that refers to any action of hand cleaning. Hand hygiene relates to the removal of visible soil and removal or killing of transient microorganisms from the hands. Hand hygiene may be accomplished using soap and running water or a hand sanitizer, 70-90% alcohol based. Hand washing with soap and running water must be performed when hands are visibly soiled.

Procedures

Hands carry and spread germs. Touching your eyes, nose, mouth, sneezing or coughing into your hands may provide an opportunity for germs to get into your body or spread to others. Keeping your hands clean through good hygiene practice is one of the most important steps to avoid getting sick and spreading germs.

Staff and children must practice good hand hygiene when hands are visibly dirty or after:

- Sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- Using the washroom
- Handling garbage
- Outdoor play
- Toileting/diapering routine
- Handling soiled laundry, dishes, materials or other items
- Coming into contact with bodily fluids
- Coming into contact with any soiled/mouthed items
- Preparing, handling, serving and eating food
- Handling animals
- Touching a cut or open sore
- Glove use
- Before and after giving medication

When hands are visibly soiled follow these steps for cleaning hands:

- Wet hands and apply soap
- Lather for at least 15 seconds. Rub between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, under nails
- Rinse well under running water
- Dry hands well with paper towel or hot air blower
- Turn taps off with paper towel, if available

Hand Sanitizing

When hands are not visibly dirty, a 70-90% alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used. It is important to rub hands together for at least 15 seconds and work the sanitizer between fingers, back of hands, fingertips and under nails.

Hand sanitizers can only be used on children who are over the age of two and must be used under adult supervision. Staff must ensure that the product has completely evaporated from the child's hands before allowing the child to continue their activity.

Parent consent through remittance of a Hand Sanitizer Permission for Students form is required to use hand sanitizer on children. Children under the age of 2 are not permitted to have hand sanitizer applied, instead perform hand washing frequently and gently.

Glove Use

Gloves shall be worn when it is anticipated that hands will come into contact with mucous membranes, broken skin, tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces. Nitrile gloves are single use only.

Gloves and Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene shall be practiced before applying and after removing gloves. Gloves must be removed and discarded after use.

To reduce hand irritation related to gloves:

- Wear gloves for as short a time as possible
- Ensure that hands are clean and dry before wearing gloves
- Ensure gloves are intact, clean and dry inside
- Disposable gloves are single use only

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and whenever a change is made.

