

2023-2024 ECNS COVID-19 Health & Wellness Protocol

Eureka Community Nursery School

Updated July 2022

This policy has been developed based on the most recently available guidelines provided from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Department of Child & Family Services (DCFS). This plan provides details on how ECNS will minimize risk of transmission of COVID-19 and includes an Enhanced Risk Management Plan, a personal protective equipment (PPE) Operational Plan, and an Enhanced Staffing Plan. **This is an imperfect and fluid plan, which is subject to revision at any time due to changes in government recommendations and mandates.**

Parents are required to read this Protocol in its entirety, then electronically initial and confirm where indicated in order to designate understanding and agreement with all policies and procedures set forth through this COVID-19 Health & Wellness Protocol for Eureka Community Nursery School.

Enhanced Risk Management Plan:

1. Drop off/Pick-up Procedures

Drop off and pickup will take place at the secured entrance door. Parents/caregivers will not be allowed access into the building, unless prearranged with the teachers or in the case of an emergency. Therefore, key fobs will NOT be distributed

If there should be an emergency requiring necessary access to students, parents/caregivers should call the classroom number at 467-3267 or the church office at 467-2369.

Promptness for class time arrival is expected. Should parents/caregivers arrive late, the security door will be locked, and teachers will be unable to leave the classroom. In the event that you do not arrive in time, please call the classroom number at 467-3267 for instructions.

Students may be picked up after class at the security door. Teachers will release students to parents/caregivers that are designated on the pick-up list. During pick-up, parents/caregivers should practice physical distancing outside of the building.

Teachers will sign students in/out each day due to this protocol.

2. Cleaning & Sanitization Procedures

All high touch classroom and bathroom surfaces and fixtures will be sanitized before and after each class session, as well as throughout the day, as necessary. These surfaces include, but are not limited to, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, lightswitches, shelving units, tables, and chairs.

Each student will have their own individual set of supplies to be kept at school. These supplies will be sanitized daily.

Shared classroom materials and supplies will be limited to hard or easily cleanable surfaces and will be switched out and/or clean/sanitized daily. Soft or plush toys materials will be removed from the classroom and will only be used by the teachers. If used, these materials will be sanitized after each use.

3. Communication Plan for Potential COVID-19 Cases

We will be following the most current and up-to-date information from the Illinois Department of Public Health found here: [IDPH SCHOOLS GUIDANCE](#) and DCFS regulations.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19,

- i. The school should be notified immediately. ECNS will then notify all other affected families and staff without disclosing personal information regarding the individual's identity.

Families are expected to immediately notify ECNS if anyone in their home tests positive or if the student has been in close contact with someone that has tested positive for COVID-19.

PPE Operational Plan:

4. Personal Hygiene and PPE

- a. As of Monday, February 28, 2022, DCFS is following the CDC's new guidelines that include COVID-19 [Community Levels](#). Therefore, as of March 1st, 2022, masks will be optional for students & staff at ECNS.
- b. **PLEASE NOTE** that since DCFS is following the Community Levels, if there is a rise in cases and our community becomes high risk, we may have to move back to requiring masks, even if temporarily. We will continue to follow DCFS guidelines and will inform you of any changes to this mask policy throughout the year. If we find ourselves in a situation where masks are again required, the following policies will be reenacted.
 - i. Student masks will need to be provided by each family, and it will be each family's decision as to what type of mask will work best with their child(ren) (i.e., typical disposable mask, mask with clear window, etc.). Disposable masks will be available if needed, but families are highly encouraged to provide masks for their child(ren).
 - ii. Face shields may ONLY be worn by teachers when necessary for educational purposes, such as phonemic instruction, but masks with clear view windows are encouraged. Students may not wear face shields.
 - iii. Teachers will incorporate age-appropriate mask wearing as part of the beginning-of-the-year routine instruction for all students. We realize that mask wearing may be difficult for children of this age population, so this will be encouraged to the best of our ability. It has been observed with the past school year that even young children are extremely resilient and have easily adapted to mask-wearing when necessary.

1. We understand that it may not always be feasible for students to wear masks at all times. Breaks from mask-wearing will be provided, such as during outdoor recess or activities where physical distancing can be maintained.
 2. Please keep in mind that students are only at school for a couple of hours each day; therefore, the amount of time required to wear a mask is minimal.
 3. Children will never be punished for improper mask wearing or use, but proper technique will continue to be encouraged.
- ii. Exemptions to mask wearing will only be accepted if they are due to a student or staff member's health or medical situation that is directly affected by mask wearing. These exemptions must be provided, with a signature, from a pediatrician's or primary care physician's office. ECNS reserves the right to review these exemption documents and decline them as necessary.
 - iii. Proper personal hygiene, including hand washing technique, through the primary use of water and soap, will be instructed as part of the daily classroom routine and will be reinforced throughout the day. Hand sanitizer may be utilized when necessary.

Enhanced Staffing Plan:

5. Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will be maintained to the best of our ability. Our classrooms are small, so it will not be possible for all students and staff to maintain 3 feet distance at all times. As a preschool program, we have tables and not desks, but children will be spaced apart as much as possible during table time activities. Unnecessary additional furniture or large equipment may be removed from the classrooms to provide additional space for social distancing.

A large part of the preschool experience is play and social-emotional development, which requires young children to interact with each other. Students will be distanced as much as possible, without impacting their learning through play and social interaction with peers.

Classes will use the playground together.

Additional Procedures:

6. Should we receive a government mandate to close or need to close any class sections due to health risks for students and staff at any point during the school year, teachers will continue to provide regular remote learning opportunities for students. Remote learning expectations for teachers will be set by the ECNS board in order to maintain quality of learning instruction and opportunities.