

2020–2021
ACADEMIC YEAR

VMS

SMART RESTART

REVISED 8/13/2020 – REVISIONS IN PINK



The Vineyard Montessori School has developed a reopening plan that prioritizes the health and safety of our community. We are eager to welcome students back to campus on **Tuesday, September 8th.**

To ensure the most favorable possible experience amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we have developed a comprehensive plan for resuming campus activities.



Our Approach

- The **health and safety** of everyone in our campus community will continue to be our top priority as we bring students and staff back to campus.
- This plan was shaped by a **number of factors**, including research on both learning and health and a growing consensus among peer schools on the best way to reopen this fall.
- To be successful in our efforts to remain on campus, we'll require all VMS community members — students, families, and staff — to join together in a true community **social commitment** designed to keep our campus healthy.
- Understanding that all guidelines and plans are constantly in flux, we ask for your **patience and flexibility** as we work through these unprecedented times.
- In all efforts, we must underscore that our work is aimed at **mitigating transmission of the virus and minimizing risk**, while understanding that we cannot eliminate this risk altogether.
- We **encourage the long view**. We should all be prepared for a disruptive year as the world continues to wrestle with a global pandemic. At VMS, we will do all that's in our power to smooth out those disruptions for our students, families, and staff, knowing that in the future, we can all return to the steadier experience we all treasure.
- We will continue to be **transparent and communicate** regularly with families as details and decisions emerge.

While this coming school year will be different than anything we've seen before, we look forward to the special learning experiences that only a VMS education can provide. And we thank you for the trust you place in all of us at VMS as we weather this storm together.

Health & Safety



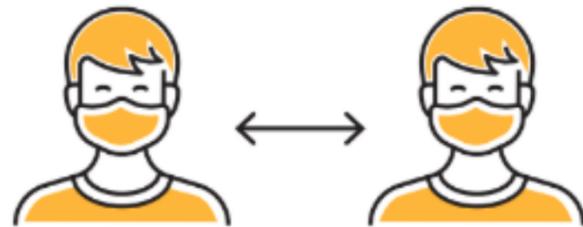
Each teacher, staff and family will have a **daily wellness check**.
These will be done in person each morning at drop off.



All faculty and staff will be **required to wear face masks**. All children will be **highly encouraged** to wear face masks and **required** when unable to be six feet apart.



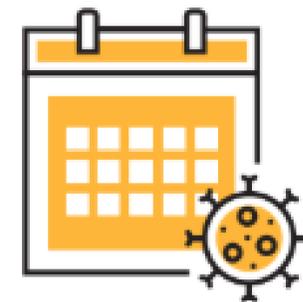
Enhanced **sanitizing and hygiene** protocols will be in place throughout the campus.



Everyone will be required to practice **social distancing** as feasible.



No parents or visitors will be allowed in the building until further notice.



VMS has a **COVID-19 sick and reporting policy**.



Wellness Practices



- We will be requesting all health forms be updated in our online portal 'Transparent Classroom' **by August 18th**. State law requires children to have a current physical exam and immunization record dated within the last 12 months. Students may not return to campus without these forms.
 - Per CDC and EEC requirements, all teachers, staff and families must complete a daily wellness check prior to entering the school. Parents will walk children to the screening tent each morning at drop-off to answer the screening questions. The screening questions relate to travel, exposure and symptoms.
 - Anyone who is showing any symptoms of illness must stay home and notify the school. Anyone who does not pass the daily wellness check will be asked to return home for testing and isolation. If symptoms develop while at school, the individual will be isolated and will leave as soon as possible to go home or seek medical help.
 - If a student or household member is exhibiting any **symptoms of COVID-19**, or anyone in the household has come in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, the family must **inform the school and keep the student(s) home. Refer to the School's COVID-19 sick and reporting policy.**
-  • *The influenza vaccine is strongly recommended by health experts for children and adults in anticipation of additional COVID-19 illnesses during the coming months. Avoiding influenza will also help students and staff avoid unnecessary quarantines.*



Face Coverings



All faculty and staff will be required to wear face masks. All children will be highly encouraged to wear face masks, and they will be required when children are unable to be six feet apart.

All students must bring two of their own clean cloth masks to school every day, labeled with their name. In the event an additional face covering is needed, the school will have extra supplies of masks available.

- Masks should cover the wearer's mouth and nose. Scarves, bandanas, **buffs and gators** are not acceptable.

* Masks should be free of negative, offensive, or insensitive symbols or language (including references to violence, sexual activity, cultural insensitivity, tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs). The Head of School will make final determinations on unacceptable wear.

Campus Visitors



All non-essential visitors, including parents, must remain off-campus until further notice. Should parents wish to meet with a teacher or administrator, they may do so virtually or via telephone.

Personal Hygiene & Campus Sanitation



- Every effort should be made to limit face touching.
- Handwashing will happen regularly. Students must wash hands with soap and water after each restroom use, before eating, and upon each entry to a building or classroom.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available for times when soap and water is not available. (Pre-k students will use soap and water only according to pre-k licensing regulations.)
- Shared materials will be avoided OR will be cleaned between change of users.
- Classrooms will be stocked with cleaning supplies for daily cleaning and sanitizing of tables, chairs, and materials.
- Frequently touched areas and restrooms will be cleaned throughout the day.
- A daily cleaning of classrooms and common spaces will occur at the end of each school day.
- Comprehensive deep cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting of the building will occur twice a week.
- Students must bring their own labeled water bottles that can be refilled at sinks.



Social Distancing



Our optimal learning environment entails having all students and faculty on campus, together. Thus, we will do everything we can to create safe classrooms, offices, and common areas with appropriate spacing. All unnecessary physical contact should be avoided.

Visual Markers/Signage

- We will remind our community to follow safety protocols by posting visual markers such as signs, floor markers, and other reminders throughout our campus.
- Signage will indicate appropriate spacing in places where students wait in line.

Classrooms and Shared Spaces

- VMS will leverage our small class sizes and larger classrooms, arranging furniture and student placement to maximize the space and create as much room between students as possible.
- Cohort grouping will be utilized to facilitate contact tracing as much as possible.
- Weather allowing, we will leave doors/windows open in classrooms. During warm weather, classes may be held outside.
- Each child will be given their own workspace/mat when working on the floor, or their own chair when working at a table or eating lunch as well as their own set of media (pencils, glue, etc.).
- Snack and lunch will be limited to two children at a table with a clear partition between them. They will bring their own snack and lunch in their lunch box.
- Each group will be on the playground by itself and all equipment will be wiped down in between groups.

Group Gatherings

- VMS will limit the number of persons assembling in classrooms and common areas and maximize distancing between individuals to abide by state health regulations whenever possible.
- All off-campus experiences (including field trips and class trips) will be postponed or cancelled.
- All faculty meetings and professional collaborations will be held either in a physically distanced fashion or virtually.



COVID-19 Sick and Reporting Policy



Due to evolving information, these policies are subject to change.

TRAVEL

- A child or staff who travels out of state must follow the current Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order. Currently this requires a 14 day quarantine or a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to your arrival in Massachusetts (refer to exemptions and exceptions for low-risk states).
- A child or staff may return to school after 14 days provided no symptoms develop, or once a negative COVID-19 test result is received.

SYMPTOMATIC

- A child or staff who displays **one or more symptoms** while at the program or at home must stay home, or if at school, must be isolated and sent home. All symptomatic individuals, even those with mild symptoms, must be tested and isolate at home until test results are returned. They can return with proof of a negative COVID-19 test, or with a doctor's note stating they have been symptom free without the use of medication for 72 hours. They may return to school if a doctor establishes an alternative diagnosis and presents a doctor's note to confirm the presence of alternate diagnosis that explains symptoms

EXPOSURE, WITH OR WITHOUT SYMPTOMS

- If a child or staff's household member or close contact is quarantined due to exposure, the child or staff must also quarantine. They may return after 14 days provided they are symptom free.
- If a child or staff had direct exposure but is **asymptomatic or tests negative for COVID-19**, they must quarantine and continue to monitor for 14 days after last exposure. They may return after 14 days provided they are symptom free and cleared by a doctor and the Head of School.

CONFIRMED OR PRESUMED POSITIVE

- A sick child or staff who is confirmed or presumed positive will not be allowed to return until they have met the criteria for discontinuing quarantine, are symptom free and cleared by a doctor and the Head of School.

Off-Campus Scenarios

While we remain hopeful that we can achieve our objective of having our students safely on campus throughout the 2020-2021 school year, VMS is prepared to pivot to an alternative learning scenario quickly and efficiently. **We are awaiting guidance on classroom closure criteria.**

In addition, despite our plans to create as safe an environment as possible, no school can guarantee a virus-free campus. We will respect individual family decisions to keep their children at home.

Distance Learning

- While our strong desire is to remain on-campus for the entire school year, the pandemic's unpredictability compels the School to prepare for the possibility that state or local orders could mandate the closure of campus, and all learning and teaching may have to take place remotely at some point.
- To prepare for a range of teaching and learning scenarios, VMS has invested heavily in professional development programs for our faculty and supplies/materials to take your Montessori learning home.
- In the event this scenario is implemented, distance learning plans will be communicated by each classroom.
- [Refer to each classroom's "Learning From Home" handbook for more information.](#)

Other Important Information

Program Orientation

A mandatory **Parent Orientation** on Zoom will be held prior to the start of school, Tuesday, September 1st at **6:00PM**. You will get to know your child's teacher, how the day will run, what your child will need to bring to school and all pertinent information. **The week of August 24-28** your teacher will invite you and your child to a **one-on-one** meet-and-greet to support their transition.

Pick Up and Drop Off

Classrooms will have **staggered pick-up and drop-off** times from 8:15-8:45 and 2:15-2:45. Before and after care will not be offered at this time.

Primary (Drop-off/pick-up Group **A**) 8:15AM - 2:15PM

Primary (Drop-off/pick-up Group **B**) 8:30AM - 2:30PM

Kindergarten (Drop-off/pick-up Group **C**) 8:45AM - 2:45PM

Elementary 8:30AM - 2:30AM (Satellite Campus)

Preparedness

Families should ensure that they have a working thermometer at home; if students are found to have a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher at school, they will be sent home immediately.

Snack and Lunch

Snack time and lunch will be two children at a table with a partition between them. They will bring their own snack and lunch in their lunch box.

Attendance

VMS must be kept apprised of student attendance. We ask for your help in promptly communicating with your child's teacher regarding the absences or illnesses of your student.

Acknowledgement

Every family must sign off that they have read and understand all enrollment documents which will be sent to families the 2nd week of August via Transparent Classroom and must be submitted to the School **by August 18**

Our Community's Social Commitment

Please keep in mind that any risk you take for your family could impact our larger community's health and safety, as well as our intention to remain on campus. The VMS Community Social Commitment outlines specific behaviors expected of our community on campus, including:



- **Wearing a face covering at all times**
- **Maintaining physical distancing and avoiding crowds**
- **Frequent washing and/or sanitizing of hands**
- **Adhering to all guidelines and policies**
- **Staying home when sick**

In addition to our campus-wide efforts, please consider beyond the VMS campus the Social Commitment we all share as we get through these challenges together.

- That shared responsibility includes following guidelines regarding facial coverings, frequent hand washing, and consideration of potential for VMS community spread when attending social gatherings off campus.
- Community members should comply with all current public health and travel guidelines.

FAQ's

Q: Will families and staff be informed if someone at VMS tests positive for COVID-19?

A: Based on health department guidelines, VMS will email all families and staff the occurrence of a confirmed case of COVID-19 at our school, specifying the classroom in which the case has occurred. We will also notify the local board of health and the licensing agency. Students or staff deemed to have had exposure to the individual (greater than 10 minutes of continuous interaction less than 6 feet away) will be contacted directly by the Head of School and directed to follow the School's COVID-19 policy. VMS will not disclose the names of any individual students or staff with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 to the school community.

Q: Is VMS implementing a travel policy?

A: The State of Massachusetts implemented a new travel policy effective August 1, 2020. Please refer www.mass.gov for the latest information and resources related to travel out of state.

Q: Will there be an opportunity for students to remove their face coverings during the day?

A: We recognize that wearing face coverings throughout the day can be tiring, even for adults. We will remain cognizant of this and look for physically distanced opportunities to allow students to remove their face coverings for a period of time, beyond when they are eating.

Q: What about annual traditions like World Peace Day and Grand Friends Day?

A: Unfortunately, social distance guidelines will prevent the School from being able to hold our annual traditions at the start of the year, and we will hold off on all large events until further notice. We look forward to resuming our treasured experiences as soon as appropriate.

VMS Vineyard Montessori School

286 Main Street
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

508.693.4090
vineyardmontessori.com



Guidance

Our plan will continue to be informed by continuous monitoring of reliable and expert organizations and authorities to enable VMS to make recommendations, including:

- Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC)
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Federal Government
- Massachusetts Government
- MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)
- MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

Questions? Contact Debbie Jernegan, *Head of School*, headofschool@vineyardmontessori.com