



Covid Handbook

September 2020

This handbook was written to outline our practices and procedures in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The following information was current as of August 2020. Additions, changes and updates will be added as needed.

Hand washing:

Hand washing is going to be a key component in safety at Emilie. Children and staff will wash hands as soon as they enter the building, before and after eating, toileting, sensory play and heading out to the playground. Both staff and children need to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, then dry thoroughly. Children are now able to use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available, however, sanitizer will be reserved for use by children only when they arrive and are going directly into the playground.

Masks

Masks are now required to be worn by all staff and children over two years of age. Here are the guidelines as put out by Governor Wolf:

- Only children 2 years of age and older should wear masks.
- Children must be able to take them off independently.
- Children with a medical condition or disability are not required to wear a mask.
- If a child has difficulty wearing a mask, face shields are an acceptable alternative.
- Children may not wear a mask while eating, exercising or napping.

Here is what it will look like at Emilie:

- All staff are required to wear a mask while on school property. If staff members are outside and can maintain at least 6-foot distance from other staff members and children, they may take off their mask and take a mask break.
- All parents, grandparents, family members must wear a face mask when dropping off and picking up their child, regardless of whether they are doing so inside or outside of the building.
- All children in our preschool, PreK and school age classes will need to wear a mask upon arrival to school, when walking in the hallways, and during pick up. Children will wear masks at any other time indoors when social distancing is not possible. This may include certain group or table activities. We have reduced our class sizes and organized the centers in the classrooms so that children can be more spread out during play.
- Children will not wear masks when on the playground, eating or napping.
- Children will not wear a mask if they cannot take it off independently.
- Children will not wear a mask if it causes stress or results in them touching their face more than usual or if they have other difficulties.

-Children will wear masks home each night. Parents are responsible for providing a clean mask for their child to wear in school each day.

Social Distancing:

Social Distancing of 6 feet is our current requirement. Outside on the playground, children are easily able to social distance. They are also running and exercising, so a mask is not required. In the classroom, we have taken out some of the furniture and extra materials to offer more space for the children to spread out. Classrooms have designated centers and times where the children are spaced at 6-feet apart, allowing for mask breaks.

The CDC also suggests limiting group sizes for early childhood and to limit the interaction of the groups in a school. At Emilie, this applies to class sizes, the playground and the Gathering Room. We will be limiting class sizes and combining children before and after school, by age groups. Our goal is to have a toddler team, preschool/pre-k team and a school age team. As much as possible, staff will be assigned to a team, in order to limit exposure to additional people. This will allow for consistent coverage should a teacher be absent, and minimizes exposure, should someone become ill.

Building Use:

Emilie Christian Day School has the designated spaces of the first and second floors of the Education Wing of the building, as well as our playground areas. No other group who uses the building, including church staff and parishioners, will be allowed to use our designated spaces. Likewise, the Day School is not permitted to utilize the Sanctuary, RED doors/hallway or Welcome Center. The goal is to limit mixing of groups in order to help isolate the spread of illness.

Day School area use is currently limited to staff members and enrolled children. Visitors are not permitted to enter the building. Parents, grandparents and siblings are considered visitors and are not allowed in the building or on the playgrounds. When early intervention services and therapies are allowed to resume, therapists will be subject to the same policies and procedures staff must follow.

Drop off Procedures:

Children are to be dropped off at our BLUE doors. A Safety Station will be set up at the entrance until 9:30am. Children's temperatures will be taken at the Safety Station and recorded, and a physical assessment of the child's health will be done. If there is no fever or signs of illness, children will be signed into care. A staff member will take the children to their classrooms. Family members and children over 2 years are required to wear a mask during drop off and pick up. In the case of inclement weather, screenings will happen indoors. No more than two

families are permitted in the lobby area at one time. Families and visitors may only enter the building for screenings, to drop off or pick up children, or to access the office.

Pick Up Procedures:

Families of half day children can wait outside to pick up their children. A staff member will bring them out at dismissal time each day. Families picking up full day children will do so on the playground. In case of inclement weather, families should go into the building and stop in the office. A staff member will bring your child to you there.

Screening Process:

Upon arrival, all staff and children will be screened for symptoms of illness at the Safety Station. Please be alert for illness in your child and keep them home if they are sick. Screening consists of taking their temperature and a visual inspection of the child. If their temperature is greater than 100°F, or if they exhibit the following symptoms, they will not be admitted to the building: cough, shortness of breath, flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing, fatigue or extreme fussiness.

If you, or someone you have been in contact with, has been diagnosed with or suspected of having covid-19, please keep your child home until the test results are confirmed. If the test results are negative, your child may return to care. If the results are positive, please let us know as soon as possible.

Communication

Communication between school and families and between teachers and families is vital to providing quality care to children. With families dropping children off at the door, this challenges our typical means of sharing information. Weather permitting, drop-off and pick-up will be on the playground. Though parents will not be inside the playground, face-to-face conversations can happen over the fence. With the start of our classes on September 9, we will be using a childcare communication app called Engage. This will allow for individual as well as classroom specific communication between teachers and families. Please know that teachers will only be able to post and respond during break and nap times. For immediate concerns, please call the office.

Tuition and Questions for the Office– Families paying by check can do so at the Safety Station. If you are paying by cash, or need a receipt, this must be done at pick-up time, or after 10am. If you have a question or concern for the office, the office is open from 7:30-5pm. You are welcome to stop in, call at 215-945-3131 or email at dayschool@emilieumc.com.

Class groupings:

Children will be in the same class each day with the same teacher, as is our usual practice. Multiple class groups will be limited to age level groupings as much as possible for the Gathering Room and playground time.

Things brought from home:

In order to reduce the transmission of germs between home and school, we must limit the items coming into the building and leaving the building. Children will only be allowed to bring a lunch, nap blanket and a jacket, into the building. Backpacks, lunch boxes and toys from home are not permitted. Lunches should be in all disposable bags or containers, as it will all be thrown away after eating. Nap blankets will go home on Fridays or the child's last attending day, to be laundered.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

We will continue to follow our rigorous cleaning schedule as outlined by the state in order to keep our children healthy. We will be adding daily cleaning of playground equipment, twice daily cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as door knobs, faucet handles, and chair backs. Toys in the classroom are not to be shared at the present time, so we will do our best to limit this. For things like playdoh or legos, we will have smaller boxes/bags for individual use, rather than one large box for the table. When children are finished playing with a toy, it will be set aside to be cleaned. Children will also have their own pencil box for crayons, markers, glue and scissors. Unfortunately, stuffed animals and other toys which cannot be cleaned, will have to be stored and be out of circulation, for now.

Medications

In the past at Emilie, we have dispensed medications and given nebulizer treatments when needed. If your child needs medication, as per the CDC, please remember that sick children are not allowed in school. If your child is coughing, has a fever or infectious disease, they will not be admitted to school. If needed during the school day, medication can still be administered.

Nebulizer treatments cannot be given at this time, as this causes airborne respiratory droplets to spread further. Please plan for treatments around the school day. If some type of medication is necessary, talk to your doctor about your child using an inhaler. Medication is allowed to be dispensed in school through an inhaler.

What happens if someone gets sick:

As per CDC guidelines, if a child in the building becomes ill, parents will be notified and must come to pick up the child within 30 minutes of receiving the phone call. The child will wait in

the room next to the office, with a staff member, for their grown-up to arrive. The waiting room, classroom and materials will be cleaned and disinfected.

If a child or one of their family members is being tested for covid-19, the child may not come to school while they are waiting for the test results. If the test result is negative, the child will be allowed to return to school.

Currently, CDC Guidance tells us to follow the following protocol:

If a child or family member tests positive, the child may return to school after:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND:
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

If a child or family member has tested positive but shows no symptoms, the child may return to care after:

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test; OR:
- Negative COVID-19 results from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected 24 hours or more apart (total of two negative specimens).

If a child or staff member of Emilie Christian Day School tests positive for Covid-19, Emilie must close for 48 hours so that the facility can be cleaned and disinfected properly. As we are a public building, if a child or staff member of the Head Start program which is located in our building, or a staff member or parishioner who has been in the building tests positive, Emilie Christian Day School will need to close for 48 hours for cleaning and disinfecting. Emilie must report positive cases to the Bucks County Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS).

Please know that if covid-19 is suspected or confirmed, this will always involve disinfecting and airing out of the space. Depending on the situation, we may need to move the children in that class to another classroom for the remainder of the day until cleaning is completed. The children in that class will remain together and finish the day with either the other class in their age level, or the toddler playroom or Gathering Room, depending on their age. If a case is suspected or confirmed, children and staff may also be told to self-isolate, or school may need to close for a period of time. We hope that by working together, we can keep our children, families and staff free from Covid-19. However, please plan for this in case these situations arise.

Parent Responsibility:

Parents are responsible for providing a clean mask for their child to wear at school every day, as well as wearing a mask themselves when dropping off and picking up their child. Parents need

to keep children home if they are sick and until they are well enough to come back to school. We are working hard to minimize the spread of illness. Bringing sick children to school puts the other children and our staff all at risk of becoming sick. Parents need to alert the office if their child or anyone in their family has come into contact with someone who is being tested or has been diagnosed with covid-19.

How to prepare your child to come back to school:

Start a consistent bedtime and wake up routine. If children have been sleeping in and need to get up earlier in the morning, put them to bed 15 minutes earlier. Do this every two or three days to help ease you and your child into an earlier routine.

Decide how you will send your child's lunch into school. Practice opening and closing the Ziploc bags or containers you will be using so that they can do it independently. Have them pack and unpack the paper bag or Ziploc bag containing their lunch.

Talk to your child about what drop off is going to look like, so they know what to expect. Talk about the screening process, taking temperatures and saying goodbye to you at the door instead of in the classroom.

Have your child practice taking off and putting on their mask. Encourage them to wear their masks when they are around people other than those in their household and when they cannot social distance. Start for a short period of time and slowly increase the time they are wearing a mask. Masks need to cover both mouth and nose. Seeing family members wearing masks and making it part of the families' routine is very helpful! There is a video of our staff members wearing masks that is posted on our private Facebook page. See if your child can guess which teacher is hiding behind the mask!

Resources

Childcare centers in the state of Pennsylvania have been directed to follow the guidance from the CDC, Centers for Disease Control.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

Caring for Our Children is the reference that all centers in Pennsylvania must follow regarding health and safety practices and policies. Respiratory health practices can be found in here as well.

<https://nrckids.org/CFOC>

ECELS is the Early Childhood Education Linkage System. This is an often used resource for childcare centers regarding health practices.

<http://ecels-healthychildcarepa.org/>

The American Academy of Pediatrics offers information for childcare centers here:

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/guidance-related-to-childcare-during-covid-19/>

We dearly love the children and families of Emilie and are doing everything in our power to keep everyone safe! We ask that you do the same by keeping children home if they are sick, by wearing masks and maintaining social distancing at school and as you go about your day. If we work together, we can keep our children, families, staff and community safe and healthy!