

# Emilie

**Christian Day School**

**To Learn**

**To Grow**

**To Become**

## COVID HANDBOOK

Dear Families,

This handbook was written to outline the new information, policies and procedures in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. In order to continue to operate during the pandemic, the state of Pennsylvania has directed us to follow the CDC Guidance for Childcare Centers. These guidelines will help us to keep our staff, children and families as safe and healthy as possible while in a group situation. We have also been working closely with Emilie Church, to set rules for use of the building, in order to keep Day School staff and children, as well as church staff and parishioners, safe and healthy.

There is a parent sign-off page for you to sign so that we know you have read and understand our new procedures. We will adjust our procedures accordingly as new guidance is released. These are unprecedented times for all of us. Please ask questions, share ideas and concerns and keep in touch! We love our children, families and staff, and are committed to providing a safe and healthy place for everyone!

### **Symptoms**

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we will be implementing the following procedures within Emilie Christian Day School. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Please keep your child home if they exhibit symptoms based on the list below which defines the criteria for a COVID-19 like illness:

- ONE of these symptoms:
  - New or persistent cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - New loss of sense of smell
  - New loss of sense of taste
- TWO of these symptoms:
  - Fever greater than 100.00
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion/runny nose
  - Chills
  - Muscle Pain
  - Headache
  - Sore Throat
  - Nausea/vomiting
  - Diarrhea

In case of absence due to any illness symptoms, please follow the guidance described later in this policy to return and inform the center Director via Procure/email/phone call.

### **Hand Washing and Social Distancing in Childcare**

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. Children are now able to use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available, however we will be reserving hand sanitizer use for adults only.

## **Masks**

Masks are an important part of safety practices. Staff, regardless of vaccination status, will be wearing masks at all times while **inside** Emilie Christian Day School property until DHS and OCDEL, our licensing agencies, direct us otherwise as this is their regulation. Parents, regardless of vaccination status, must also wear masks when dropping off and picking up children **inside** the school building. The current regulation in place also requires children to wear masks while inside Emilie Christian Day School. Parents are not required to wear masks while conducting outdoor pick up, so long as families maintain social distancing from other families and children. Masks for children are not required outdoors however if you wish for your child to continue to wear a mask outside, please reach out individually and we will accommodate your needs. Children under two are not permitted to wear masks. Masks will not be worn during outdoor physical activity, meal time or naptime.

**Children 2 years and older are required to wear a face covering while inside Emilie Christian Day School Property.** “Face covering” means covering of the nose and mouth with material that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face at all times while **indoors**. However, PA Department of Health recognizes that getting younger children to be comfortable wearing face coverings/masks and to keep them on may create some difficulties. If a teacher or a parent/guardian is unable to place a face covering/mask safely on the child's face, the child will not be required to wear a face covering.

- Children will not wear masks during meals, napping, or any outdoor play.
- Parents are responsible for sending in a clean and labeled mask for the next school day.

Any child who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition, including those with respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition, or disability and children who would be unable to remove a face covering without assistance, are not required to wear face coverings. If this applies to your child please alert the Director immediately.

*The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning offer parents’ resources on facemasks for children in this link: <https://s35729.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Resources-on-Masks-for-Children-2020.08.pdf>*

## **Drop off/Pick up Procedures -Effective 7/6/21**

**(Current Operation times during Covid--19 will be 6:30-5:30)**

ECDS will be resuming in person drop off and pick-ups. **Families must still complete the daily health screening** of child/ren before arrival through the Procure app EACH MORNING. Parents and families are responsible for filling out these COVID-19 pre-screening questions before dropping off at the classroom. These questions are available on Procure. If you don’t have access to Procure, please contact the Director for other screening options. If your child does not meet the screening criteria, we will ask you to take/keep your child home and follow the guidance described later in this handbook. A physical assessment done by staff **is an addition to the completed parent questionnaire listed on Procure.**

**ONE pick up/drop off person will enter the building wearing a mask** (regardless of vaccination status) and proceed to bring the child/ren to the classroom directly. Teachers will receive your child at the classroom door, checking their temperature and taking their belongings. The designated pick up and drop off **person is NOT permitted into the classroom** and may experience a delayed pick up and or drop off as only one family may be received at once.

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. Families who are waiting are asked to maintain a 6-foot social distance at all times. ALL families are asked to maintain drop off and pick up times (if in the building) to FIVE MINUTES or less to help limit the spread or possible exposure of Covid-19.

### **Screening Process**

Upon arrival at the classroom door, all staff and children will be screened for symptoms of illness. 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. Parents and families are responsible for filling out these COVID-19 pre-screening questions before drop off which are available on Procure.

### **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. Emilie Christian Day School area use is 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 unless they are the designated pick-up person. Therapists for intervention services and therapies are allowed to enter and will be subject to the same policies and procedures that staff must follow.

### **Key Cards**

Each enrolled family will be assigned ONE key card to use for access to the building for pick up and drop off. All Key Cards require a 10.00 security deposit added to your account. If you wish to have more than one key card for your family; and if we have spares to assign, additional ones may be requested. All key cards must be returned at the end of your child's enrollment at Emilie Christian Day School. For each key card not returned, a 10.00 charge will occur per card.

### **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 classroom door, this challenges our typical means of sharing information. Email, phone and/or text messaging with teachers will continue to be utilized through Procure. Please know that teachers will only be able to post and respond during break and nap times. For immediate concerns, please call the office.

### **Personal Items**

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 box, nap blanket and water bottle, into the building. Backpacks and toys from home are not permitted. Nap items brought into the center will be stored in a non-porous bag to eliminate cross contamination. 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. 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 communicable disease, they will not be admitted to school, therefore, there should be little need to dispense medication at Emilie.

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.

### **Parent Responsibility**

Please keep your 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. Please alert us if you or your child has come into contact with someone who is being tested or has been diagnosed with covid-19. It is **REQUIRED** for families to inform the school of your child's absence so we can track absences regardless of the reason. Please continue to report this information on Procure messaging or call the office.

### **Changes to routines and environment**

- A mask/face covering will be removed when we notice the child is having difficulty breathing or unreliable due to constant touching. The mask/face covering will be stored in plastic or paper bags during non-use.
- No masks will be worn at nap, snack and mealtimes.
- Social distancing will be encouraged and attempted in the classroom and on the playground.
- Cots/mats will be placed 3-6 feet apart, with children laying in a head-to-toe fashion to cut down on the spread of germs.
- Children will wash hands frequently throughout the day and may use hand sanitizer under appropriate circumstances - if age eligible.
- Children and staff will have a 2nd temperature screening midway through the day.
- Daily activities will continue in small groups, distancing when possible, materials will be rotated throughout the day/week to ensure proper sanitizing of toys and equipment.
- Children will stay in their own classrooms throughout the day as much as possible.
- Toys and other items from home may not come into the center during this time- with the exception of lunches and bagged nap linens.
- All washable center toys will be rotated often and disinfected frequently.
- Temporary center or classroom closure may be necessary in the event of linked transmission with a classroom or the building and or for disinfecting needs.

### **Self-Care and Self-Reporting**

Please be diligent regarding self-care- minimizing outings, handwashing often and sanitizing to prevent the spread of germs.

**DIRECT EXPOSURE:** If your child has had direct exposure to someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, please notify us immediately. **Direct exposure is defined as being within 6 feet of the individual who tests positive for COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.** Persons who test positive are considered infectious 48 hours before the onset of symptoms. Persons testing positive but who do not have symptoms are considered infectious 2 days after exposure (if known) or starting 2 days before test date (if exposure is unknown).

### **The guidance for quarantine and isolation (below) is designed for individuals who are not fully vaccinated, which includes children:**

If your child/ren has had direct exposure as described above, you will be required to self-quarantine. Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days. However, based on local circumstances and resources, the following options to shorten quarantine are acceptable alternatives. We also follow the recommendation and authority of local Department of Health and/or individual health care providers regarding required quarantine length.

Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring **OR** quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen tests negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. The specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (day 5 or after), but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7. A child who has a family/household member that has been exposed and is asked to quarantine **OR** are awaiting the results of a COVID test, will be asked to stay home during this time. A child asked to self-quarantine as a result of exposure within the center will also require any enrolled siblings to also stay home from the center during this time.

### **Exclusion from Group Care: Return to Care**

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 a child or staff member of Emilie Christian Day School tests positive for Covid-19, Emilie and or the classroom must close for 48 hours so that the facility can be cleaned and disinfected properly.

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.

Children who meet criteria for illness on screening or who become ill while at the facility and are sent home should be referred to their healthcare provider for evaluation. Children presenting with symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19 may return to a facility when:

**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; **AND**
- A note from the child's physician indicating when the child can rejoin group care

**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); **AND**
- A note from the child's physician indicating when the child can rejoin group care

**Symptomatic child who is not tested:** exclude for 10 days from symptom onset AND at least 24 hours after fever resolution (if present) without the use of fever reducing medication AND improved respiratory symptoms.

**Symptomatic child determined by a health care provider to have an illness other than COVID-19:** exclude until without a fever for 24 hours (if fever present) without the use of fever reducing medication and symptoms improving.

**Symptomatic child with test negative:** exclude until without a fever for 24 hours (if fever present) without the use of fever reducing medication AND improved respiratory symptoms.

**Discontinuing at home isolation:** A symptom-based strategy (i.e., time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery strategy) is the only recommended strategy in discontinuing at home isolation. A test-based strategy is no longer recommended to determine when to discontinue home isolation, except in certain circumstances as determined by a healthcare provider.

**Symptom-Based Strategy** Individuals with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:

- At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms; **and**
- At least 10 days have passed AFTER symptoms first appeared.

**For Persons who tested Positive for COVID-19 but have NOT had COVID-19 Symptoms in Home Isolation:** Persons with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation after no less than 10 days have

passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, provided no symptoms have developed during that 10-day period.

*\*If a doctor has diagnosed your child's symptoms as being unrelated to COVID-19, and has cleared your child to return to school, the medical professional MUST provide a doctor's note, stating " \_\_\_\_\_ was seen in the office and was evaluated for \_\_\_\_\_. The child does NOT have Covid-19 and safe to return to a group care."*

### **Accounting Considerations**

- Families are required to maintain their initially requested schedule (times and days).
- Tuition will continue to be billed monthly according to your schedule.
- CCW families will be required to pay the weekly co-pay as usual if attended at all during the week that may be affected by closures.
- For CCW families, approval must be given by caseworker before attending. Family paperwork must be up to date.
- In the event a self-quarantine due to symptoms and/or positive case is necessary: any SCHOOL REQUIRED absences will be considered an "LOA" and a 'freeze' will be placed on billing. Any tuition already paid will be held as a credit for your return.
- Absences due to exposure outside of classroom exposure will not result in a freeze on tuition.

### **Staying Healthy**

Emilie is following guidance of OCDEL and the CDC to the maximum extent possible in order to keep your child and staff healthy. 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. We have adjusted many of our policies and protocol to align with recommendations and guidance that will keep children and staff safe. We need your help in keeping students' and staff healthy. It is the responsibility of families to be honest with staff about any illnesses you or your child may be experiencing. We ask that all families continue to practice social distancing and follow current CDC guidance as best as you can at all times. If we work together, we can keep our children, families, staff and community safe and healthy!

### **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/>