

## BCNS Illness and Covid Policy

(Updated August 2022)

**Vaccinations:** All school employees, in-person volunteers, and visitors are required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. Student vaccinations are strongly encouraged.

**Illness Protocol:** Students who have symptoms of COVID-19 are required to stay home and get tested and/or cleared by their child's pediatrician before returning to school. Symptoms include fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, loss of taste/smell, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, nausea/vomiting, and diarrhea. Refer to the symptom flowchart for more information.

If the student tests **negative** and/or is cleared by their child's pediatrician, they may return to school after a full 24 hours has passed since any fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication), vomiting, or diarrhea. A fever is defined as 100.4 degrees.

**Covid-19 Protocol:** Any student who tests **positive** for COVID-19 with a viral or antigen test is required to isolate at home for 5 days, regardless of vaccination status. The child may return to school after 5 full days of isolation if they 1) test negative for COVID-19 using a viral or antigen test AND 2) are asymptomatic or their symptoms have improved and they have had no fever for the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Students will be required to wear a well-fitting mask for an additional 5 days (day 6 through day 10) if they return to school after the end of their 5-day isolation period.

Day 0 is the first day of symptoms. For people without symptoms, day 0 is the day of the positive viral test. Individuals who test positive at the end of the 5-day isolation period, and/or on days 6-10, are required to complete the 10 full days of isolation. Testing after day 10 is not recommended.

**Post-Exposure Protocol:** DOH no longer requires exposed individuals to quarantine after exposure to COVID-19. To protect their school community, students and teachers, regardless of vaccination status, who were exposed to COVID-19 should 1) monitor for symptoms AND 2) test as soon as possible after exposure and then repeat testing every 24-48 hours through at least the first 5 days after exposure.

**Illness at School Protocol:** Any student who reports/has COVID-19-like symptoms is required to be immediately isolated from others, sent home, and referred to diagnostic testing as soon as possible, regardless of vaccination status. While waiting to leave the school, the individual with symptoms is required to be isolated and wear a well-fitting face mask. Teachers will wear a well-fitting mask in the isolation area as well.

**Notifying Families of Potential Exposure:** Families will be informed via email of any COVID-19 positive case in their class.

**Masking:** Students and teachers may always choose to wear a mask at school with the expectation that others' choices will be respected.

Students who are experiencing mild cold/allergy symptoms, are feeling well enough to attend school, and have been cleared for COVID-19 or other infectious diseases are strongly encouraged to wear a mask at school to protect their school community.

*Families should communicate with their child's teacher about any masking changes.*

When the COVID-19 Community Level is high, CDC and the DOH recommends universal indoor masking in early childhood programs. Therefore, if two or more students/teachers (10%) in a class test positive for COVID-19 within 7 days of each other, all individuals in that class will be required to mask at school for a 5-day period. Teachers will implement additional safety measures as well, including distancing students during eating times and increasing cleaning/disinfecting of high touch surfaces.

**School Closure:** BCNS is committed to staying open for the behavioral and emotional health of our students. The physical health of our students, teachers, and their families is an equally important consideration. Therefore, if four or more students/teachers (25%) in a class test positive for COVID-19 within 7 days of each other, that class will be closed for a 5-day period and all students/teachers in that class will be required to test for COVID-19 before returning to school.

This protocol may be implemented with other infectious diseases as well.

#### **Additional Mitigation/Prevention Strategies:**

- **Ventilation** is an essential COVID-19 prevention strategy for early childhood programs since many young children have difficulty or are unable to wear a mask appropriately for long periods of time. Children spend about half of their day at BCNS outdoors. When indoors, all functional windows are open and an air purifier is used to circulate fresh air inside the building.
- Class **cohorts** are used so that an outbreak in preschool/Pre-K will ideally be limited to that specific class.
- Teachers will encourage and model frequent **handwashing** and good **respiratory etiquette** to prevent spreading and contracting COVID-19 and other diseases.
- Teachers will **clean and disinfect** all tables, bathrooms, and other high-touch surfaces using EPA certified cleaners before and after school, in between classes, and after significant messes.
- Teachers are required to remain up to date on **vaccinations** and students and their families are strongly encouraged to do the same.
- BCNS will maintain **awareness of COVID-19 community levels** and coordinate with local public health to inform our ongoing mitigation response.