

2023–2024 family handbook

january 2, 2024



As a result of the current state of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have evaluated our operational processes and are making changes based on the current recommendations by the CDC. We will observe the following policies and procedures in order to maintain the health and safety of all staff and students. DMS reserves the right to update or change these policies throughout the school year.

This document will be a living document and will be reissued with updates as needed.

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Contact Information

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All adults (parents/guardians, & DMS staff) and children are required to abide by health guidance and other policies in the Family Handbook. The school will notify families of any change in policy. It is the responsibility of families to be aware of notifications and to be prepared for any change in policy.

Health Policy

The school health policy will be evaluated regularly to reflect Covid-19 symptoms and new guidelines.

Do not send your child to school on days when any one of the following symptoms are present:

- Fever (temperature 100.4° and above) or chills *
- Congestion or runny nose *
- Diarrhea *
- Nausea or vomiting *
- Sore throat (*some Covid-19 variants manifest with scratchy or dry throat*) *
- Cough *
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing *
- Fatigue *
- Muscle or body aches *
- Headache *
- New loss of taste or smell *
- Rash
- Discharge of discolored or profuse mucus from the nose
- Any contagious disease

*Covid-19 symptom

General Health Guidelines

A student must have an unmedicated temperature of 100° or below for 24 hours before returning to school.

A student must not have vomited for 24 hours before returning to school.

A student must be free of diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

Weather permitting, outdoor play is a part of our daily schedule. A student too ill to participate in outdoor activities will not benefit from other learning activities and should remain at home until well.

Medication to be given during school hours must be given to your child's teacher in its original container, along with signed and dated instructions stating the dosage, and the time it is to be administered.

Policy for Staying Home & Return to School After Non-Covid Illness

Children must remain at home if they exhibit any of the symptoms listed in the health policy.

If a child's non-Covid symptoms persist for 3+ days and/or they are taken to a physician to evaluate their symptoms, the school will require written confirmation from a doctor affirming that the child is healthy enough to return to school before readmittance.

If a child has any Covid-19 symptoms, please refer to guidance stated on page 5 of the Health Policy. In all cases of illness, children must be symptom free for 24 hours without medication to be admitted back into the classroom.

Personal Hygiene at School

Children will wash their hands after putting away their belongings at arrival time. Handwashing after toileting is expected, and routine hand washing will be encouraged. Respiratory etiquette (covering sneezes and coughs with an elbow, blowing nose and cleaning hands) will be reinforced as necessary. Hand sanitizer will be available and provided within DHS guidelines.

Masking

Wearing a mask is optional for students and staff. Anyone who wishes to wear a mask is welcome to do so. Students who are sent to school with a mask will be provided with a reusable basket for storing their mask during snack time and lunch time. If opting to wear a mask, it is recommended that a back up mask is sent in your child's lunchbox in case a replacement is needed. While universal masking is not expected, if for any reason it becomes necessary, DMS reserves the right to change the masking policy.

Volunteers & Visitors

Visitors such as support teachers from the IU, inspectors and individuals for necessary repairs will be permitted inside the school. Family members are welcome to arrange a visit to share a special presentation with their child's class. Any visitors who wish to wear a mask are welcome to do so but it is not required. It is expected that volunteers and visitors will be in good health.

Covid-19 Policy

Sudents and Staff with Covid-19 Symptom(s)

Students and staff will be asked to adhere to the following guidelines (along with the general health policy) if they are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms.

At the onset of symptoms take a home Covid-19 test. A photo of the home test must be provided to your child's classroom teacher prior to your child being dropped off at school. Staff must provide a photo of their test to the school administration.

Negative result	Positive result
The student or staff member may attend school as usual. A confirmation home test shall be administered in another 48 hours to confirm the negative result.	Students and staff members must follow the guidelines provided in the "After a Positive Covid-19 Test" on page 5.

Covid-19 Exposure Guidelines for All Individuals

Students and staff who are aware of an exposure to someone with Covid-19 either at the school or elsewhere will be asked to disclose the exposure to the school and will be asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Masking - Wearing a mask after exposure is recommended by the CDC and highly encouraged by DMS but will be optional. If choosing to mask please follow the [guidelines from the CDC](#) below and use either a surgical or KN95 for the best benefit:
 - » Wear a well-fitting mask for 10 full days after exposure
 - i. Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19
 - ii. Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure

2. Watch for the development of any Covid-19 symptoms. If a symptom appears, students or staff members will need to go home or remain at home. Immediate testing will be necessary. Do not wait until day 6.
 - » At home testing will be accepted in this circumstance.
3. On day 6, perform a home Covid-19 test. A photo of the home test must be provided to your child's classroom teacher. Staff must provide a photo of their test to the school administration.

Negative result	Positive result
Students and staff members may continue to come to school. Masking through day 10 will continue to be optional. Please understand that Covid-19 can still develop up to 10 days after exposure. Continue to monitor for symptoms through day 10. If any symptoms emerge during this timeframe, students or staff members will need to go home or remain at home and a second home test will be required. A photo of the home test must be provided to your child's classroom teacher. Staff must provide a photo of their test to the school administration.	Students and staff members must follow the guidelines provided in the "After a Positive Covid-19 Test" on page 5.

Covid-19 Exposure in the Home

Students and staff with a close contact in their immediate household are encouraged to monitor closely for any symptoms. If the Covid positive individual at home is unable to isolate from others for any reason, please contact the school prior to morning drop off.

After A Positive Covid-19 Test

If an individual tests positive for Covid-19, they will be required to remain home and adhere to the following precautions. This policy is based upon [CDC recommendations](#).

When you have COVID-19, a full 10 day isolation is necessary. Isolation time is calculated as follows:

If you had no symptoms	If you had symptoms
Day 0 is the day you were tested (not the day you received your positive test result).	Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset, regardless of when you tested positive.
Day 1 is the first full day following the day you were tested.	Day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started.
If you develop symptoms within 10 days of when you were tested, the clock restarts at day 0 on the day of symptom onset.	

Individuals with a positive Covid-19 test must remain home for 5 full days. Those with no symptoms may return to school on day 6 wearing a well-fitting surgical or KN95 mask through day 10. Those with symptoms may return to school on day 6 provided that they have been fever free for 24 hours and that other symptoms have resolved or greatly improved. They must also continue to wear a well-fitting surgical or KN95 mask through day 10.

If Covid-19 symptoms were moderate to severe, the CDC recommends that the individual consults with a physician before ending isolation.

Domestic and International Travel Guidance

We kindly urge all families and staff to use caution when returning to school after travel.

We encourage parents and staff members to monitor themselves for any symptoms of illness during and after travel, and to abide by the school health policy if any symptoms arise.

Promoting Health Accountability

Students and staff will be required to strictly adhere to the school health policy.

The reporting of any possible Covid-19 exposure outside of school is required for all students/families and staff.

Classroom Cohorts

Classroom cohorts were established at the beginning of the pandemic. This year, cohorting will no longer be required. Please understand that the removal of cohorts may result in a class having to adhere to exposure guidelines if groups were combined indoors.

Classroom A	Soni/Knerr/Murty/Ganta
Classroom B	Steele/Sai/Carroll
Classroom C	Molter/Vojjala
Classroom D	Davis/Rajan

Classroom/School Cleaning

We are aware of the importance of frequent and thorough cleaning in the school. We will have professional cleaning done weekly and will have deep cleans performed if needed. Teachers will have a daily list of necessary cleaning tasks and sanitizing procedures to keep materials, surfaces and bathrooms disinfected.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

If your child is in Extended Care, please see Extended Care section for additional details.

All classrooms will have a designated entrance and exit. The entrances and exits for morning and full day session arrival and dismissal are in the chart below. (Weather permitting, classes may be dismissed from designated outdoor areas.)

	Arrival	Dismissal
Classroom A	Office door	Office door
Classroom B	Classroom door	Classroom door
Classroom C	Parking lot door	Parking lot door
Classroom D	Parking lot door	Parking lot door

Arrival

Students will be greeted at their vehicle by one of their classroom teachers, and they will be escorted to their classroom entrance.

Dismissal (12:00pm or 3:00pm)

Parents will form a line of vehicles in the school driveway and wait for their child(ren) to be walked to their car by a staff member. **If there are already a few people getting children into cars, we ask that arriving parents remain in their car and pull up before exiting their vehicle to greet their child.** This will keep the line of cars from backing up into the street.

Extended Care

There will be AM Extended Care only (no PM Extended Care).

Arrival

Extended care parents or guardians may park in the lot outside the school (facing Broadway).

All extended care groups will have a designated entrance. Here are the entrances for extended care arrival:

Classroom A	Office door
Classroom B	Office door
Classroom C	Parking lot door
Classroom D	Parking lot door

Parents may bring their child to their designated entrance. The student will be greeted by a teacher and will go through the hand cleaning procedure outlined in the Classroom/Playground Health and Safety Procedures below.

Students will follow the 12:00 pm or 3:00 pm dismissal plans described in the previous section.

Classroom/Playground Health & Safety Procedures

Upon arrival, students will be greeted by their teacher.

After putting things away, students will be instructed to wash their hands with soap and water before using any materials.

Handwashing breaks will be taken throughout the day. Students will be instructed in proper handwashing technique.

Water

In order to reduce the spread of germs, students will not be using water cups in the classroom. Students will need to bring a thermos from home that they can access freely throughout the day. Refills of filtered spring water will be made available.

Please be sure that water bottles fit either inside lunchboxes or in a bottle holder on the side of your child's lunch bag.

Snack

Students will not be having shared snacks in order to reduce the spread of germs and to accommodate individuals

with dietary needs/restrictions. They will need to bring a personal snack for the morning only.

Children will be allowed to bring in individually wrapped, store-bought snacks for their class to celebrate their birthday. Details can be found in the "Other Important Notes" section.

Lunchtime

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Weather permitting (and at the classroom teachers' discretion) students may have "picnic" lunch outdoors.

Naptime

If students are of napping age, they will remain with their classroom in a designated nap area for naptime. Any child who is wearing a mask will not be expected to wear it while sleeping. Students will be spaced as far apart as possible and heads and feet will be staggered so faces are at a safe distance.

Each child's nap belongings will be stored in the bin provided from home as per the supply list.

Nap belongings will be sent home each week to be laundered.

Homework

Composition books (Class D only) and folders (all classes) will be transported between school and home. Students will read to teachers and go over concepts presented in homework during class.

At-Home Work for Students With Covid-19

Any child who is required to isolate at home due to Covid-19 will be sent activities and at-home practice via the DMS Google Drive. Your child's teacher will send age-appropriate practice based upon your child's in-class work.

Communication and Staying Informed

We encourage communication between parent, teacher and our director any time a question, concern, or problem arises.

Because teachers are not available to speak on the

telephone during class time, we ask that you refer to the [contact information](#), and either email them, call and leave a message, or use the messaging portion of the Brightwheel app. Your question or concern will be addressed as soon as possible.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Individual parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and again in the spring. At this time, we plan to hold conferences virtually.

Brightwheel

We use Brightwheel to manage enrollment and invoicing, and to send alerts, reminders, and messages to parents

You may access Brightwheel from the web, and there is also, conveniently, an app that you can download to your iOS or Android device.

You will be invited to join Brightwheel via text or email. Once you receive the invitation, follow these easy steps:

Create a free Brightwheel account. Use either the [web](#) or [mobile app](#). Make sure to use the same [email address](#) or cell [phone number](#) to which the invitation was sent. [Here](#) is a quick video overview.

- **Confirm your child's profile.** You will see your child's profile after you create an account - you can confirm information such as birthday, allergies, and additional contacts. If you do not see your child's profile, please contact us with the email address or phone number you used to sign up. You will not see updates within Brightwheel until we start to use it regularly.
- **Set your account preferences.** You can adjust your notification preferences within your profile settings on the app or website.
- **Add your payment information.** Brightwheel offers secure, automated online payments that saves time for us and gives you advanced tools and reporting. Please add your [payment information](#). Here is an online [Payments Setup Guide](#) with more info.

School Closure Updates

In the event of a school closing, you will be notified via Brightwheel, email, and the school [Facebook page](#).

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the school may either close for the full day, have a one- or two-hour delayed start, or an early closure.

When there is a delayed start, your child should be dropped off one or two hours later than their normal drop-off time. Dismissal times will remain the same unless an early closure is announced.

We will notify you of any delays or closures via Brightwheel email, and the school [Facebook page](#), and local news station, WFMZ, will always have an updated list [on their website](#). WFMZ also makes frequent announcements on the TV and radio.

Below are the schedules for one- and two-hour delays:

	Morning Session	Full Day Session	Extended Session
One-hour delay	10:00 am to 12:00 pm	10:00 am to 3:00 pm	8:00 am to 3:00 pm
Two-hour delay	11:00 am to 12:00 pm	11:00 am to 3:00 pm	9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Visiting & Observing

Observing Your Child

Parents are welcome to arrange a time to observe their child in the classroom. Please contact your child's teachers via email or Brightwheel to schedule a day and time.

Please keep in mind that, as an observer, you will learn more by watching your child and their classmates rather than interacting with the children.

Participation in Your Child's Class

Parents are welcome to make arrangements with their child's teacher to present a holiday activity, to read a story or to share information about their profession. Other ideas for presentations are also welcome. Please contact your child's teacher via email or Brightwheel to discuss participating in the classroom.

Other Important Notes

Clothing

We ask that students keep a pair of comfortable, well-fitting slippers or crocs at the school to be worn inside the classroom.

When there is snow on the ground, we require the following gear for outdoor play: waterproof boots and snow pants, jackets, hats, and gloves or mittens.

Rubber-soled shoes are required for outdoor play. We strongly recommend closed toe shoes be worn.

Please mark your child's name on their slippers and any articles of clothing brought to the school. There are numerous duplications of colors and styles.

Finally, please send a change of season-appropriate clothing, as well as an extra mask, to keep at the school in case they are needed.

Toys

All students are asked to please leave their toys at home.

Learning to Read

In a Montessori classroom, children learn the phonetic sounds of the letters before they learn the alphabetical names. The teacher introduces the sounds with the Sandpaper Letters. Only the lower-case forms of the letters are used since most words in books are printed with these letters. Pre-reading exercises are made more difficult if the child is first taught the upper-case letters and their alphabetical names.

Birthdays

Your child may bring in a store-bought snack* to share with their classmates to celebrate their birthday. Birthdays that do not fall on a school day will be celebrated as close to the actual day as possible. Your child's teacher will contact you to make arrangements and to notify you of any special dietary requirements or allergies in the classroom.

**Please send in store bought snacks in their original packaging so that we can easily review all ingredients. We also ask that the servings are individually wrapped. A few examples are nut-free cookies, small boxes of raisins, cheese sticks, individual bags of either sliced apples, carrots, popcorn, pretzels, or chips, etc.*

Tuition

This year, we will continue to offer a flexible month-to-month payment plan. The year's first payment was due by July 1, 2023. The subsequent payments will be due on the following dates:

Dates of service	Payment due date
October 1-31	September 24
November 1-30	October 24
December 1-31	November 24
January 1-31	December 24
February 1-28	January 24
March 1-31	February 24
April 1-30	March 24
May 1-31	April 24
June 1-11	May 24

Brightwheel will generate invoice statements 5 days prior to the due date, on the 19th of each month. There will be a \$25 fee for late payments. After the 24th of each month, we will invite waitlisted students to fill any open spots. Your child's spot for the next month cannot be held after the 24th of each month unless payment is received. Monthly payments are non-refundable.

The monthly rates will not be prorated in order to accommodate for situations such as vacation, or a school closure. In the event of a school closure, we will complete the remaining days with our School From Home program.

The 2023-2024 monthly rates for each academic session are as follows:

Morning Session	Full Day Session	Extended Session
\$926 per month	\$1,115 per month	\$1,243 per month

Making Tuition Payments

Datzyk Montessori School uses Brightwheel to easily and securely collect tuition payments.

Tuition payments will be quick and easy.

ACH transfers (transfers from bank-to-bank) are free.

Payments with a credit or debit card have a 3.25% processing fee.

Please note that the ACH Authorization form does not bind you to automatic recurring payment. The ACH Authorization form is meant to permit our processor to pull funds from your bank account when you actively click "Pay by Bank".

You may of course also continue to pay by check if you choose, and you may use Brightwheel to access your tuition invoices, receipts and statements.

If you need technical help, please send a message to Brightwheel support, or email admin@datzyk.org.

Late Pick-up Fees

It is imperative that parents gather their child(ren) at the time that was chosen at enrollment.

As a reminder, our Morning Session ends at noon, our Full Day and Extended Sessions end at 3pm.

In the event that a parent is late to collect their child, late fees will be applied via Brightwheel.

Please refer to the following table:

For 12 pm pickup: arrival between	For 3 pm pickup: arrival between	Late fee amount
12:10 and 12:15	3:10 and 3:15	\$10.00
12:16 and 12:25	3:16 and 3:25	\$15.00
12:26 and 12:35	3:26 and 3:35	\$20.00

Diversity & Inclusivity

The Datzyk Montessori School embraces a community of all cultures, races, ethnicities, religions, family structures, sexes and sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, learning styles, and world views, among others. Our student community is admitted to all privileges, programs and activities available at the school and does not discriminate in the administration of its educational and admissions policies.

We oppose discrimination and consciously recognize the value of diversity throughout our hiring practices, admission process, classroom composition, and professional development.

The Datzyk Montessori School calendar observes holidays and school breaks in close alignment with our local public school districts. We discuss and present all holidays and customs in a non-religious manner.

Dismissal from the School

We reserve the right to dismiss your child from our school enrollment if their behavior, or that of the parents, becomes unacceptable or disruptive. This includes non-compliance with the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

These policies are subject to change at the discretion of Datzyk Montessori School. This document will be regularly reviewed and updated in order to ensure that all policies and procedures are functioning as intended, and to ensure the health and safety of all staff and students.