



COVID-19 PARENT GUIDANCE HANDBOOK 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

(NOTE: This guidance is subject to change based on most current guidelines/recommendations issued from the CDC, NYS Department of Health, NYS Department of Education & the local Office of Children & Family Services)

Dear Parents,

As we are preparing to reopen after being closed since March, I want to make sure we are all on the same page. While I understand none of us have ever experienced this before, the teachers and staff at Ridgeway Nursery School & Kindergarten are committed to continue providing a quality program where your children feel safe and where they are encouraged to learn and have fun in a safe and loving environment.

While many things will be different with new procedures in place for the safety of all, this will still be an environment that fosters fun and learning. It is our goal to draw out and inspire the best in our children as we provide them with opportunities to create, explore, and learn.

This handbook will layout the changes as we enter the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation is unprecedented and is continuously evolving. All changes included in this handbook will be our procedures until further notice. We will make sure that all changes are realistic and feasible for staff, children, and parents by following the Center for Disease Control (CDC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), and NYS Department of Education (NYSED).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the policies and procedures that are outlined in this COVID-19 Parent Guidance. They are in place to ensure that Ridgeway Nursery School & Kindergarten is a safe and enjoyable place for your child!

Enjoy the rest of your summer and I look forward to seeing you in September!



Elissa Morgan
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Ridgeway Nursery School & Kindergarten

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PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- **Limit Teacher and children groupings**: Classrooms will be structured using ‘learning pods’, enabling the same group of children to stay with the same teachers. Group size will be limited to no more than 15 children (not including employees/staff). These pods ensure that different stable groups of up to 15 children have no or minimal contact with one another or utilize common spaces at the same time, to the greatest extent possible. We will take reasonable steps to reconfigure space to limit overall density of rooms to 15 or fewer children.
- **Maintain Social Distancing**: We will implement practices to maintain adequate social distancing in small areas, such as restrooms, and breakrooms. We will use signage and systems (e.g. flagging when occupied) to restrict occupancy when social distancing cannot be maintained in such areas.
- **Limit visitors to the RNSK Campus**: all non-essential visitors will be prohibited from entering the building.
- **Pick-Up & Drop-Off**: We will establish designated areas for pick-up and drop-off based on the location of your child’s classroom. We will have staggered pick-up and drop-off times which will be announced at the beginning of the year.
- **Rest Time**: To accommodate safe rest-time for children, safe social distancing of 6 feet will be encouraged where possible and children will be placed in head-to-toe configuration.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Face Masks: Teachers and staff are required to wear face coverings at all times during the day especially when interacting with children regardless of distance.

- ❖ Teachers and staff will be provided with acceptable face covering at no-cost.
- ❖ Teachers and staff are responsible for cleaning and replacing face coverings.
- ❖ Face shields will be provided for teachers and staff as well.

- Smocks: Teachers and staff are required to wear smocks that adequately cover their bodies and arms.

- Training: Teachers and staff will be trained on how to put on (don), take off (doff), clean (as applicable), and discard PPE.

HYGIENE, CLEANING & DISENFECTING

- We will adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) and maintain logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

- Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations: handwashing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels; alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not available/practical.
 - ❖ Make hand sanitizer available throughout common areas on site.
 - ❖ Teachers, staff and children must perform hand hygiene immediately upon entering the program.
 - ❖ Teachers, staff and children are to practice hygiene in the following instances:
 - Upon arrival to the first program activity;
 - Between all program activities;
 - Before and after helping child to use the restroom
 - Before and after diapering children
 - After using the restroom;
 - Before eating or handling food/ feeding children
 - After playing outdoors
 - Before departing the last program activity.

- Appropriate cleaning/disinfection supplies will be provided for shared and frequently touched surfaces (e.g. door handles, toys, art supplies, areas where children eat), and staff will be encouraged to use these supplies before/after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene.

- Regularly clean and disinfect equipment and toys
- Limit children from using toys that cannot be cleaned/sanitized (e.g. dress-up clothes, puppets).

- Parents are asked to not send toys from home.
- Hand sanitizer will be placed in convenient locations throughout the school (e.g. entrances/exits, security/reception desks).
- Signage will be placed near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
- Receptacles will be placed around the facility for disposal of soiled items, including PPE.
- Hand Hygiene:
 - ❖ Limit the sharing of objects (e.g. electronic equipment, arts and crafts materials, touch screens).
 - ❖ discourage touching of shared surfaces; or, when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched areas, teachers and staff will wear gloves (trade-appropriate or medical).
 - ❖ Teachers, staff and children are encouraged to practice handwashing throughout the day (20 second happy birthday song).
- Encourage all to get the flu vaccine.
- Use “respiratory etiquette “
 - ❖ Cover cough with a tissue or sleeve
 - ❖ Wash hands after using a tissue.

SCREENING

- Teachers and staff will be instructed to stay home if they are sick and parents/guardians are reminded to keep sick children home.

- There will be a mandatory health screening assessment which will include
 - ❖ questionnaire (parent/guardian)
 - ❖ temperature check for staff and children

- Screening questions will include but are not limited to:
 - ❖ COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days,
 - ❖ positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or
 - ❖ close or proximate contact with confirmed or suspected COVID19 case in past 14 days.

- In the event that a parent/guardian of a child must be isolated because they have tested positive for, or exhibited symptoms of, COVID-19, the parent/guardian may not enter the site for any reason, including picking up their child.

- If the parent/guardian – who is a member of the same household as the child – is exhibiting signs of COVID-19 or has been tested and is positive for the virus, utilize an emergency contact authorized by the parent to come pick up the child. As a “close contact,” the child must not return to the School for the duration of the quarantine.

- If the parent/guardian– who is a member of the same household as the child– is being quarantined as a precautionary measure, without symptoms or a positive test, staff should walk out or deliver the child the parent/guardian at the boundary of, or outside, the premises. As a “contact of a contact” the child may return to school during the duration of the quarantine.

If a child or their household member becomes symptomatic for COVID-19 and/or tests positive,

RNSK staff will contact parents/guardians listed on the emergency card. If the child is sick or not feeling well, he/she will be placed in an area that is used to isolate a sick child and shall be supervised by staff. The child must be picked up within the hour after being called.

When to keep the child at home:

Any child with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should remain at home in isolation for a minimum of 10 days **plus** at least 3 days after resolution of fever (**without fever-reducing medication**) and improvement in other symptoms.

❖ Symptoms of COVID-19 may include some combination of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- muscle or body aches
- headache
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

(According to the CDC, this list does not include all possible symptoms)

INSTRUCTIONAL/DAILY ROUTINE

- Separate Classroom pods are maintained throughout the day to keep the ratio in compliance. Weather permitting, all classes will take place outdoors as much as possible.
- We will sanitize playground stations between activities.
- Whenever possible, individual boxes with manipulatives, science, art, math and writing supplies will be available for all children throughout the daily routine.
- We will create activities that support the social/emotional development of all children, being sensitive to their needs, fears and concerns during this uncertain time in their lives.

BUILDING UPGRADES

- MERV-13 filters have been added to the building HVAC system.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available throughout the building.
- Three child-sized portable sinks will be available throughout the building.
- All water fountains will be covered.
- Covid-19 signage will be posted throughout the school.
- Floor decals will be placed in hallways to encourage social distancing between our children and staff.
- Hallways will have markers helping children to stay 6 feet apart.