

September 14, 2020

Dear Families,

This school year is going to look different but we look forward to seeing your children soon! The Martha's Vineyard Public School Nurses wanted to write to inform you about some changes on how the health office at each school will operate and also provide some information to help your child's transition back into school go as smoothly as possible. We would like to assure you that our nursing staff has trained the staff in the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) use, cleaning, disinfecting, proper hand washing, hygiene, disease transmission and best practice for minimizing risk for spreading infection. Please inform your school nurse in writing/email if hand sanitizer is contraindicated with your child.

Helpful hints:

- Pack a spare mask in case your child's becomes wet or soiled
- Keep an extra set of clothes in your child's bag (even for older students!) in case they have an accident or spill
- Please do not send food that needs to be heated, microwaves will not be available
- Keep a bag of non perishable snacks as a backup in your child's bag

Symptomatic Students:

Students who have symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home from school. If you cannot be reached, your emergency contact will immediately be phoned. **Parents are expected to promptly retrieve their student from school.** If you are not able to promptly dismiss your child for illness, please designate someone who is ready and able to do so ahead of time. Have a solid back up plan in place from the start. Students with symptoms of COVID-19 will not be in the nurse's office, they will remain in the medical waiting room until their parents pick them up. They will be supervised by the nurse or her assistant.

Please make sure the school has your most recent and accurate contact information. Any child with COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home. There will be no exceptions. A negative test result or doctors note indicating an alternative reason for the symptoms will be **REQUIRED** before your child may return to school if the nurse dismisses them. If you are questioning your child's health and believe they may be developing symptoms, **keep them home!**

Medication in the Nurse's Office:

Please call or email your school nurse to arrange an appointment to drop off your child's medication. This meeting will likely occur outside the building. Parents and visitors will not be allowed in the building without an appointment. As always, medication must be in a pharmacy

labeled, original container and must always be delivered to the school nurse by an adult. Students may not carry medication without written permission from their physician and school nurse. Please note, due to aerosolization, nebulizers will not be administered at school and all inhalers must have a spacer.

We encourage all families to schedule a COVID test at a local test site for anyone ages 5 and older, prior to the start of school.

Due to the gravity of the situation we expect that parents and guardians will honestly and thoroughly follow these guidelines everyday before sending their child to school.

Attached is the agreement that parents must sign prior to the start of school. By signing this agreement, parents are attesting they will perform the daily self-checklist prior to sending their child to school. Please see attached self-checklist.

This is an evolving situation and we hope as time goes by we will find even better ways of getting through this together. We will be sure to give parents and guardians guidance updates as they become available.

Martha's Vineyard Public Schools

COVID-19 Parent Symptom Checker Agreement

I will screen my child _____ daily for symptoms of COVID-19 and if any are present will not send my child to school. **If I learn at any point my child has been exposed to COVID-19, I will notify my child's school and health care provider.**

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever over 100.0 or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms.
- Nausea, vomiting or abdominal pain
- Diarrhea

I will also follow the MA state travel guidelines for any necessary restrictions.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order>

See full Protocol below

09-11-20

Protocol: Daily Self Checklist for Families and Staff Prior to Leaving Home

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to **STAY HOME**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; ***please do not assume it is another condition.***

When in doubt, stay home!

Part I: STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves:

- Fever (100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies)

***Do not plan to see your school nurse if your child has any symptoms. You must stay home and contact your primary care provider!**

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education policy of when a student/staff person may return to school after COVID-19 symptoms

- If a student or staff member has COVID-19-like symptoms (such as listed above), they may return to school after they have tested negative for COVID-19, have improvement in symptoms, and have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

- If a provider makes an alternative diagnosis for the COVID-19-like symptoms, the individual may return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis (e.g., influenza or strep pharyngitis).
- If a student or staff member presents COVID-19-like symptoms (such as listed above) and chooses not to be tested, they may return to school 10 days from start of symptoms, as long as their symptoms have improved and they have been without fever for at least 24 hours prior to their return to school without the use of fever reducing medication.

Part II

Have you had any close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person who has a confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19?

Have you traveled to any state other than a designated lower risk state?

See Travel Order: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order>

- **If you answer yes to any of the questions in Part I and Part II, please contact your Primary Care Provider. A staff member or student must be tested before returning to school.**
- **If you answered yes in Part I, but there has been no close contact or potential exposure due to travel, please contact your Primary Care Provider for evaluation of symptoms. A staff member or student may return to school if school sick policy criteria have been met**