



COVID-19: Guidance for After School Program

Understanding the Risk

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, and from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face. Higher risk situations require adequate protocols to address the risk.

The risk of person-to-person transmission is increased the closer you come to other people, the amount of time you spend near them, and the number of people you come near. Physical distancing, also known as social distancing, measures help mitigate this risk. The risk of surface transmission is increased when many people contact the same surface, and when those contacts happen in short intervals of time. Effective cleaning and hygiene practices help mitigate this risk.

Since the inception of early childcare education programs, there have always been safety measures in place to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases. Therefore, we will follow, to the best of our ability, the guidelines instituted by our licensing agency and the CDC, which encourages frequent handwashing, sanitizing surfaces, use of Kleenex tissues when coughing or sneezing, wearing masks, and maintaining a reasonable distance (at least six feet) between individuals. Even with these safety measures in place, there is still some risk involved in the transmission and contraction of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Please see our frequently asked questions (FAQs) at the end of these guidelines if you have additional questions or concerns. Share these guidelines with your child(ren) before the start of the program. Feel free to contact us if you need further information.

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Program Structure

Arrival Procedures & Sick Students

After school personnel will take the temperatures of students before the program begins during check in and again mid-way through the program. Children with a temperature of 100.4 or higher, which is the state's recommended temperature, will not be allowed to attend the program. Rather, parents will be called immediately and the child will be quarantined in an enclosed space not around others until a parent can pick them up. The child will be supervised until their parents arrive. Students with high temperatures *must* be picked up immediately. Parents will need to call the Main Office and the student will be walked out to the car by the director.

Attendance Time

In order to remain compliant with social distancing mandates, children will be placed in assigned seats that maintain a distance of six feet apart; for example, there will be an empty chair or more between each child. The children will still be able to engage in fun activities and conversation and be comfortable during homework time while sitting in assigned seats. Tables and chairs will be cleansed daily.

Snack Time

Children will be called by grade level, starting with K4-Eighth grade, to retrieve their snack. Snacks will either be pre-packaged or prepared by the after school staff wearing gloves. The after school program staff will place all snacks on a sanitized surface, typically a napkin or plate and located on a sanitized table for children to grab and take back to their seats. As children are called to line up to get their snack, they will be monitored to ensure six feet of distance is maintained between them and others at all times. They will then follow the line to go back to their seats and enjoy their snack.

Free Time (aka Center Time)

Free time, or what we refer to as Center Time, is an uninterrupted, hour-long experience of exploration and discovery where children can engage in activities that interest them. During center time children will be called by grade levels to pick a center they would like to enjoy. There will only be four students at a time allowed at one center. Centers will be sanitized daily and materials sanitized after each use by the after school program staff. More centers may be added or materials rotated or changed throughout the school year as children's interests develop and/or change.

Centers include:

Math/Science/Technology
Reading/Writing
Art
Music

Dramatic Play
Blocks and Construction/Engineering
Games
Sports

Homework Time

Children will line up to go with the after school group leader to wash hands and prepare for homework time. During this time a second temperature check will be completed before Homework Time begins (see Arrival Procedures & Sick Students above).. This time will be designated as a quiet time or quiet zone, which means children with homework will have the opportunity to complete it while other children who do not have homework will find quiet activities like silent reading to do. *Please note that we are not a homework-based program, but children will have assistance with homework by an after school group leader or director.* During homework time children will sit in their assigned seats that are already configured to meet social distancing mandates. We will allow group leaders to work with students in a group of no more than five children with social distancing measures in place. If more than five children need to be grouped a new group will be formed with a different group leader. We will make every effort to place the right staff member in the right group based on their area of expertise and knowledge in an academic subject.

Meal Time

All children and staff members will wash hands before any meal time. When children return from the restroom washing hands, they will then have a seat in their assigned chair and be called up one by one to retrieve their supper. After all children are served, the staff will engage with students to make sure they are not sharing any food or passing any drinks. Children will clean their hands and faces at the end of meal time and staff members will take children out of the lunch room to begin sanitizing according to our cleaning process (see *Cleaning and Disinfecting Practices* below). All supper meals will be pre-packaged and served by our after school staff using clean food service gloves for children to enjoy.

COVID-19-related Policies and Procedures

Practice Physical (aka Social) Distancing

We will...

Practice physical (aka social) distancing as best as possible to maintain a six feet distance between staff and children. Physical distancing will not compromise supervision or a child's safety.

Encourage children to greet each other using non-physical gestures (e.g. wave or nod or a verbal "Hello") and to avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes).

Regularly remind children to keep "hands to yourself."

Reinforce no sharing policies and procedures. This includes the current practice of not sharing food, beverages, water bottles, or other personal items.

Limit the number and types of personal items that can be brought into the after school setting and provide individual bins or lockers for each child's belongings. All personal items must be clearly labelled with the child's name to prevent accidental sharing or loss.

Plan activities that encourage individual play and increase space between children.

Avoid activities that involve shared objects or toys.

Avoid activities involving singing, shouting, or speaking loudly indoors.

Increase the distance between rugs in the reading area.

Practice Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Students will..

Clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) after restroom use and play (indoors and outdoors), before and after meals, if use of hands for coughing, sneezing, or placing hands in mouth or nose, and when visibly soiled.

Avoid touching their face, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Cover their cough or sneeze with their elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash their hands.

Bring additional hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) and store them in an easily accessible area to be used if soap and water or a hand sanitizer station is not readily available.

Work with after school staff to ensure that proper hand hygiene is practiced often and when necessary (e.g. before and after eating, after using the bathroom, after covering a cough or sneeze). This includes monitoring other children and reinforcing hand hygiene.

Notify after school program staff when hand hygiene supplies are low. After school staff will monitor hand hygiene supplies to ensure adequate amounts of liquid soap, paper towel, hand sanitizer, tissues, and waste receptacles and notify the director immediately when supplies are low or run out.

Modified Food Safety Practices for Snack and Meal Times

After school group leaders will modify meal practices to ensure that there is no self-serving or sharing of food at meal times.

Meals will be pre-packaged/plated and served in individual portions to the children.

Utensils will be used to serve food. The use of shared utensils or items will be prohibited (e.g. serving spoons, condiments).

Children will not be allowed to prepare, cook, or bring food from home that will be shared with others.

There must be no food provided by the family or outside of the regular meal provisions of the program (except where required and special precautions for handling and serving the food are put into place.) The program will make every effort to accommodate children with documented food allergies. *Unfortunately, we will not be able to accommodate children with food preferences at this time.*

The director will ensure proper hand hygiene is practiced when staff are preparing food, and for all individuals before and after eating.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Practices

Bleach solutions among other cleaning and disinfecting solutions may be used in our program for disinfection of surfaces.

We will prepare disinfecting solutions according to the instructions on the label or in a ratio of:

- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) bleach/cleaning solution per cup (250 mL) of water, or
- 4 teaspoons (20 mL) bleach/cleaning solution per liter (1000 mL) of water.
- Ensure a minimum of two minutes contact time and allow to air dry.
- Prepare fresh bleach/cleaning solution daily.

We will educate staff on how to use cleaning agents and disinfectants:

- All staff will be required to complete an orientation where a topic related to proper disinfecting and cleaning procedures among other topics will be discussed.
- The director will monitor staff to ensure they are abiding by required disinfectant contact times (i.e. amount of time that the product will need to remain wet on a surface to achieve disinfection).

Requirements for the Use of Toys, Equipment and Other Materials

Disinfectant sprays/wipes may be used to disinfect equipment and play structures that are too large. In this case, we will still ensure required disinfectant contact times are achieved or alternatively allow toys to air dry.

Gloves must be worn when it is anticipated that hands will come into contact with mucous membranes, broken skin, tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces.

FAQs

If a child or staff tests positive for COVID-19, what will happen?

Children and staff who become sick during the program, or who arrive sick, will be sent home as soon as possible. Anyone who is sick will be kept separate from well students and staff until the sick person can be picked up. Also, please see our Arrival Procedures & Sick Students section above.

Does my child have to wear a mask the entire time during after school program?

The CDC does not recommend children under age 2 to wear a mask.

It is also recommended that your child not wear a mask or other face covering if it is a possible choking or strangulation hazard, or if your child has trouble breathing with the mask. If your child is unconscious, incapacitated or unable to remove the cover without help, they should not wear a mask either.

Additionally, if your child is touching his or her face more frequently while wearing a mask, then they should not wear it because this increases their risk of being exposed to the virus. In all other cases, a mask must be worn when it is permissible to do so.

What if I do not want my child to wear a mask?

Your child does not have to wear a mask if you do not wish for her or him to. However, a parent or legal guardian must get medical clearance from their child's primary care doctor if they do not want their child to wear a mask. This medical clearance should be on file with our center.

Do parents, after school program staff, and volunteers have to wear a mask? What if they do not want to wear a mask?

Yes, parents, after school program staff, and volunteers must wear masks. Anyone inside or outside of the after school program must have on a mask unless they are medically cleared from wearing a mask. However, if parents, after school program staff, or volunteers are sick, not feeling well, or experiencing fever, cough, chills, or any other symptoms related to the virus that causes COVID-19, they should remain home. During dismissal, our after school staff will escort children outside for pickup.

I am concerned that social distancing guidelines may keep my child from much needed social-emotional development. How will the after school program ensure that my child bonds with friends and engages safely with other children?

We are committed to the health and safety of everyone. However, we have designed our program so that our fun learning experiences are enjoyed while also remaining compliant with social/physical distancing guidelines. Children are still able to engage with one another but in safer ways that help mitigate the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.

If my child has to be out because of COVID-19 or if she/he is sick, am I still required to pay?

Our payment policy states, "Families contract for a specific weekly schedule as indicated on the *Enrollment Agreement* form. Payment for this contracted schedule is required every week year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary every week all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather or public health emergency." (Source: *Day-Star Christian Academy Family Handbook*)

Failure to pay will result in your child losing her or his slot in our after school program. Re-registration will be required if space is available.

Who should I contact if I have a concern that is non-COVID related?

The after school program has an on-site director who may be able to address your concerns. However, if they are unable to, you should contact our main office at 404-559-8099 and speak with the site director.