

MCS Preschool & Kindergarten Parents -
Return to Campus Orientation
Questions and Answers

1. If there are subsequent waves of infection, will the preschool return to distance learning?
What's the threshold to consider that?

The Head of School, Marjie Carroll, and the Board of Trustees meet regularly to consider what is best for the health and wellbeing of the students and staff on campus.

MCS has created a color-coded status system alert system based on data made available through the Hawaii Department of Health, and other resources, to determine the school's activity level and operations. The MCS Reopening Plan is available on the school's website and provides details about the Alert Status. Our goal is to avoid a return to Distance Learning in the Preschool & Kindergarten program to the extent possible since we believe that is the best environment for learning for our children. However, we will follow any mandates by the State of Hawaii and be mindful of risks posed by the pandemic.

2. Will distance learning materials be provided for students if we decide to keep them home longer?

No, once the school or classroom has returned to on-campus learning, there will be no Distance Learning provided for individual students.

3. Can we drop off and pick up at any time in the time frame?

Preschool & Kindergarten children should be dropped off between 7:30-8:30 a.m. ~~After 8:30 a.m., staff may not be available to do screening outside of the classroom.~~ If any children should arrive after 8:30 a.m., they should report to the office with their parent for screening. But prompt arrival (and pick-up) is encouraged even more strongly this year.

4. Do parents open the gate? Or is the teacher opening it? Will there be markers to tell parents where to stand?

At drop-off, parents will not open and enter through the gates. There will be someone at the gate to conduct the health screening protocol and escort your child into the play area or classroom. In the afternoon, at pick-up, the procedure is slightly different depending on which classroom your child is enrolled. Please ask for instructions when you drop-off on Monday.

5. Can Tree House park near Little House and come in the Preschool Upper Gate for pick up?

No, the Tree House screening will take place in the Parking area in the lower court. You must start there, and your child will be escorted into the play area through the lower gate of the Tree House.

6. How long do you anticipate drop-off/screening to take?

It should take no more than one to two minutes to do the screening protocol for both child and parent. It is best to say your warm and fuzzy goodbye while at your car or in the parking area, and make the screening and handover to the classroom assistant a quick process.

7. Will kindergarten be held outside?

The Preschool & Kindergarten program takes place both within the classroom and outside in the play and arts areas depending on the time of day and activities of the moment.

8. Will there also be a temperature check midday, or only when they enter campus?

Children's temperatures will also be taken midday. A third temperature check will be taken at the start of the ASC programs.

9. Will we be notified if our child is exposed to another child who has COVID-19 or is sick at all?

If there is a confirmed case of COVID in a classroom, ~~the teacher~~ the school will notify the families in the classroom. MCS will follow the directives from the Hawaii Department of Health to determine the next steps including possible closure of the classroom and a return to Distance Learning.

10. For snack and lunch time, how will social distancing be practiced? will the students be broken into groups? and the same for nap time, will there be social distancing?

Social distancing is planned for both nap time and snack/lunch time. Tables, work mats, and markers on the floor will indicate to children where they can sit or work, and, where appropriate, clear dividers will be placed to further reinforce distancing guidelines.

11. During after school care, will the children be mixing with other children outside their cohort?

No, classroom cohorts will be maintained all day, including After School Care.

12. What are the class sizes of each room?

Preschool classes range from 19 to 28. Teacher to student ratios are still ~~at least~~ maintained at the required 1:12 ratio.

13. Will all work be independent work by each child? no working together in any form?

Children will work independently at this time. There may be a time when a teacher provides a lesson with two children, but proper distancing will occur and all participants will wear a face mask. The classroom teachers will also wear shields when distancing themselves from others poses a challenge.

14. Will children be allowed to hug and touch their friends?

Hugging and touching will be discouraged and avoided to the extent possible. Classroom teachers will instruct on safe practices, and encourage children how to be mindful of others and their own wellbeing.

15. Does MCS have their own contact tracing system like some schools do?

No, in the event of a confirmed case of COVID on our campus, MCS will notify DOH and utilize their contact tracing system.

16. Will handwashing for 20 seconds be monitored?

Yes, teachers will teach about how to wash hands properly, supervise, and monitor children as they practice good hygiene.

17. Are flu shots mandatory?

Flu shots are encouraged but not mandatory. Parents should check with their child's pediatrician.

18. What happens if the teacher gets sick (non-COVID) — will there be a substitute? Classes combined?

If a teacher gets sick, it is MCS' obligation to report the incident to the Department of Health and we will follow their recommendations as to classroom closure. Parents directly affected will receive a phone call informing them of the situation and what will happen next. If MCS is required to close a classroom and the students and staff be quarantined, the classroom will begin distance learning as soon as possible with available staff.

19. Are you concerned about how it will affect the child's development for the rest of their life if they aren't allowed to play with other kids?

At MCS, we are aware that the conditions created by the pandemic may affect our children in many ways, both physical and emotional. Our School Counselor, Kylie Dunn, will be providing guidance to children, families, and staff about ways to cope with and create healthy habits at for play and exercise. At MCS, our children will play appropriately both outdoors and indoors, and our staff will sanitize materials to create as safe an environment as possible.

20. When teaching letter sounds and blending of those sounds to read words, what safety precautions will be taken for these close-up lessons- for teachers and children?

When teachers need to be in closer proximity to the children, such as for individual lessons, or assistance with bathroom accidents, they may wear face shields in addition to their face masks.

Should we encourage our kids to play with other kids when they aren't at school?

Maintaining close, consistent family cohorts, or "ohana bubbles" helps to reduce the spread of infection. Following government guidelines on maintaining ohana bubbles is one very important component of preventing further spread of the COVID-19 virus, so interacting with other family groups outside of school is not encouraged.

21. What's being done to keep the air as clean as possible in the classroom (eg HEPA filter air purifiers or in A/Cs)?

Window air conditioning units are fitted with appropriate air filters, and are regularly cleaned and maintained. All the window units were cleaned prior to the campus reopening. Windows are opened as much as possible, and additional fans have been installed to increase air circulation.

22. How are seating arrangements affected by the cross airflow in the room?

Classroom seating is not static, and children will be encouraged to move between the indoors and outdoors during the work period.

23. Will hand sanitizer be used or not?

Hand sanitizer will be used by staff and placed where children cannot access it. Personal hand sanitizer should not be brought to school by the child.

24. What kinds of masks can be worn?

Children can wear appropriately sized disposable or cloth masks. Valved masks or gaiters should not be worn on campus.

25. What items should my child bring on the first day of school?

Please refer to the Family Handbook for a list of general items to bring on the first day of school.

In addition, please bring:

- School supplies provided for distance learning
- An extra clean mask in a bag, labeled "Clean"
- A bag for dirty masks, labeled "Dirty"
- Pacifier clip to attach mask to child's clothing (optional)

26. If a child stays home because they aren't feeling well, will they be able to do distance learning for that time?

If a whole class is in Distance Learning (DL) due to exposure or illness due to COVID-19, all children in that class will be included in the Zoom group. If the school or classroom has returned to on-campus learning, there will be no Distance Learning provided for individual students.

27. Will parents also have their temperatures taken at check-in?

Yes, along with the child, the adult dropping off the child will also have their temperature taken.