

## ASPEN LEAF PRESCHOOL ILLNESS AND COVID POLICIES

### ILLNESS POLICY

Children will be screened at drop-off for general health and the below symptoms. If a child is exhibiting symptoms, we may require the child be taken home. The decision to send a child home due to illness often requires the exercise of judgment on the part of Aspen Leaf Preschool and is in the full discretion of Aspen Leaf Preschool. If we observe that your child is showing symptoms of illness while in our care, we may isolate him/her so as not to spread the illness to other children and will notify you immediately and require your child be taken home. If you cannot be reached, we may contact your emergency contact. For the health of all children in our care, we require that a child remain at home until he/she is symptom free for at least 24 hours.

**COVID symptoms.** According to public health agencies, the following are signs or symptoms of COVID:

- Fever (a temperature over 98.6°F under the arm, over 99.5°F orally, or over 100.4°F rectally)
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Myalgia
- Cough
- Nasal congestion, runny nose, green or yellow nasal discharge
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Poor appetite or poor feeding

If your child **or any individual in your household** is experiencing COVID symptoms, your child must be kept home at least until the individual obtains a negative COVID test. If you have multiple children attending Aspen Leaf, all children will need to be taken home if one exhibits any COVID symptom. **The symptomatic child may return to school after one of the following occur:**

- The child has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours **and** your child obtains a negative COVID test;  
*or*
- Your child has been kept at home for 10 days **and** has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Once the symptomatic child obtains a negative COVID test, any non-symptomatic siblings may immediately return.

**Non-COVID symptoms.**

- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or “cold in the eye”
- Mouth sores
- Unusual rash
- Infected skin patches
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Grey or white stool
- Head lice
- Contagious illness of any sort that results in child being too ill to participate in daily activities

If your child is showing any of these symptoms before coming to preschool, please keep him or her home until symptom free for at least 24 hours.

## COVID INFORMATION

***Reducing risk vs. “keeping people safe.”*** When discussing measures and policies to protect against COVID, many people, businesses, public officials, and schools talk about what they’re doing to “keep people safe.” We believe use of the phrase is potentially misleading, for if transmission occurs at a business, does that mean the business was operating in an “unsafe” way? Not necessarily. We believe it is both more accurate and more helpful to talk candidly and realistically about “reducing risks” by:

- (1) Identifying the **risks** present at any given business;
- (2) Determining which risks can be eliminated or reduced and implementing measures doing so; and
- (3) Being open and transparent about the remaining risks.

Broadly speaking, the risk of transmission at any given place (business, school, etc.) is based on the following factors and the interplay among them:

- (1) The number of people each person comes into contact with;
- (2) The length of time two or more people must interact;
- (3) The proximity at which those people interact;
- (4) Whether the interactions occur indoors or outdoors, and if indoors, the ventilation available.

***Risks we can reduce.*** The risk factor we are able to meaningfully reduce is the first—the number of people each person comes into contact with. By requiring curbside drop-off and pick-up and siloing each class of children as much as possible (see *below*), we are able to cut by more than half the number of unique individuals who enter the preschool on any given day and significantly reduce the number of unique interactions between children and staff of different classrooms.

***Risks we cannot reduce.*** Families needing preschool or child care typically need at least four, eight, or more hours of care. We therefore cannot meaningfully reduce the length of time the children and teachers at the preschool interact. (After all, 15 minutes of preschool is of no use to anyone.)

We also cannot meaningfully change the proximity at which children interact with each other and their teachers. State and federal guidance issued to schools and child care centers recommends keeping all children spaced 6-feet apart at all times, with individual activities or boxes of toys. While such measures could potentially be implemented on a single given day, the measures are simply impossible and impractical to enforce for an extended period of time and would likely cause significant harm to the social and emotional development of preschool-age children. Infants must be held. Children must play side-by-side and face-to-face. Positive discipline requires a teacher to be close to a child (or multiple children) and to speak at their level.

Aspen Leaf students have always spent significant time outdoors, but also must spend significant time indoors, including for naptime. To improve ventilation, even during naptime when windows are closed and curtained, all classrooms have been equipped with air purifiers that cycle the air and are capable of filtering particles smaller than the novel coronavirus (see *below*).

## COVID POLICIES

The primary aim of our policies and protocols is to **prevent the virus from entering the preschool in the first place**. We have expanded our general illness policy (see above). We are also relying on you to minimize your own risk of exposure, to closely monitor your children and household members, and to be honest and transparent with us regarding any possible exposure.

***Health screening and social distancing at drop-off and pick-up.*** At drop-off, a teacher will do a visual health check and take the child’s temperature with a touchless thermometer. The teacher may also ask about

household members and any recent travel or possible exposures. Families are asked to stay socially distant at drop-off and pick-up.

**100% adult vaccination.** All teachers and staff employed at Aspen Leaf Preschool are vaccinated. All adults who enter the preschool (e.g., a child's ABA or occupational therapist) must provide proof of vaccination before being allowed to enter.

**Air purifiers.** Each class has been equipped with a HEPA filter capable of filtering particles down to 0.1 microns in size (the coronavirus particle is approximately 0.125 microns in size) and cycling the air in the classroom approximately 3-4 times per hour.

**Siloed classrooms (no commingling).** At present, each classroom is siloed throughout the day to prevent children from different classrooms from commingling, thus reducing the number of individuals each child interacts with during the day. If children from multiple classrooms must be combined for unavoidable reasons, we do so outdoors if possible and require the children wear masks.

**Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting.** To reduce the risk of fomite transmission (transmission of the virus through contact with a contaminated surface), the teachers regularly clean all items that are handled (toys, art supplies, etc.), and clean and disinfect surfaces and high-contact objects such as door handles with commercial disinfectant.

**Masks.** We require adults (teachers or staff and parents/guardians) to wear masks at drop-off and pick-up. We require teachers and staff to wear masks when entering any classroom or space that is not their primary classroom.

In response to licensing citations issued January 19, 2022, which Aspen Leaf is appealing, all staff members and all children two-years-old and older will be required to wear a mask indoors from January 20, 2022 through February 15, 2022 (or until expiration of requirement under CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Masks if requirement is extended). Children exempt from mask requirements under CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Masks will be required to submit documentation to that effect, which will be maintained in the child's file.

**Current relevant timeframes.** Following the generally accepted scientific consensus available as of the date of these policies, Aspen Leaf has adopted the following time-periods for determining quarantine and isolation times:

- Incubation period: 5 days (day of exposure = Day 0)
- Contagion period: 10 days (earlier of first day of symptoms or day of testing = Day 0)
- Potential exposure period: 48 hours prior to onset of symptoms in infected individual + 10 days starting with first day of symptoms or day of testing)

**Isolation period.** If a child tests positive for COVID, the child cannot return to preschool until the 11<sup>th</sup> day after either the symptoms began or the positive test was taken (whichever is earliest) *and* the child has been symptom-free for at least 48 hours. After a child tests positive, no negative test is required to return.

**Quarantine periods.** If an individual in a child's household tests positive, the child must remain home until the infected person's contagious period + the child's incubation period have both elapsed. If the child tests positive at any time, the child can return following the isolation period. No child is permitted to attend so long as an individual in the child's household is potentially contagious or infected, COVID is potentially incubating in the child, or the child may otherwise transmit the disease. Thus, a child who has recovered from COVID and is no longer contagious may return, even if some other individual in the household is still potentially infected.

**Test to return.** Following a confirmed or potential exposure, a child may return *after* a PCR test taken 4-6 days following the exposure is returned with a negative result.

***No test required after recent infection.*** If a child has recovered from COVID since mid-December 2021, the child is not required to obtain a negative test to return to school when a test would otherwise be required.

***Classroom/school closures.*** We will not allow any potentially infected or contagious individual into the preschools, which may require closures. We will otherwise endeavor to avoid or reduce the disruptions for all families.

***PCR/NAAT vs. rapid antigen tests.*** Based on the best available data and information, and informed by the anecdotal information we've acquired by experience, when a negative COVID test is required for a child to return to preschool, we allow rapid antigen tests (either clinic-administered or at-home) only when the child is symptomatic *and* is not known to have been subject to a confirmed or potential exposure. At all other times, a PCR or NAAT test is required.

Aspen Leaf endeavors to keep rapid antigen tests available on site, which can be deployed as needed or when advisable. Aspen Leaf will not administer a COVID test on a child without the family's prior consent. Aspen Leaf currently acquires the tests on the private market at full retail price, and so the cost for an antigen test provided by Aspen Leaf is \$15 per test.

***Communications.*** Any time a child has or potentially has been subject to exposure to COVID, the family will be notified. In addition, Aspen Leaf sends detailed communications regarding any COVID-related changes or events that Aspen Leaf knows families may find important or helpful in assessing risk and making decisions.