



COVID Policy Manual & Waiver

2022-2023 Academic Year *Updated October 7th, 2022*

Garden House School acknowledges that the ideal environment to educate young children is in person, where the safety and health of the community is first and foremost. This document provides guidance as to how we will operate during the continued presence of COVID-19.



The plan is based on the required guidelines, put forth by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and in consultation with our Healthcare Consultant. This document serves as an addendum to the Garden House School of New York Parent Handbook.

Please note that Garden House School is licensed and regulated by NYC DOHMH and is therefore subject to their guidance and policy. This guidance may differ from or be more restrictive than guidance issued by NYS DOH, DOE or recommended by the CDC.

As of Tuesday, August 31st, 2021, ALL employees, SEITs, support staff and visitors were mandated to be fully vaccinated, in order to be onsite at our schools. Proof of vaccination is required prior to admission onsite unless the individual possesses an approved medical exemption.

Garden House School is bound by New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Interim Guidelines.

As per the NYC DOH, Nonpublic facilities and programs may choose to establish policies for all children or staff to have up-to-date vaccinations to attend work or school.

Community

All members of our community share in the responsibility of maintaining a healthy and safe environment and preventing the spread of illnesses. It is vital that we all commit to the expectations and high level of communication that will be needed to continue to execute this plan.

We ask that you attend to the recommendations and signage outside of the school and adhere to its instructions.

Testing

It is helpful for each of us to know our status prior to returning as a congregate, therefore, Garden House School will be requiring testing obtained 24 hours prior to onsite attendance at the start of school and upon returning onsite from holiday and planned breaks.

A single PCR test or 2 rapid tests within 24 hours apart are required for any staff or student experiencing possible COVID symptoms prior to returning onsite per DOH requirements.

COVID TESTING RESULTS SHOULD BE EMAILED TO

covid19@gardenhouseschool.org and info@gardenhouseschool.org with name and date written on results and student's name, GHS location and class indicated in email.

Prevention Measures (as per the NYC DOH, dated 8.31.2022)

This guidance provides best practice considerations for child care programs to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 among children and staff. These everyday preventive actions can help support healthy learning environments.

Get Vaccinated

- Vaccination is the best way to prevent COVID-19. We encourage up-to-date COVID-19 vaccination for all eligible children and staff.
- “Up-to-date” includes boosters for everyone who is eligible and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people. For more information, visit

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/COVID-19-vacc-schedule-at-a-glance-508.pdf>

Wear a Mask

A mask helps protect the person who is wearing it and helps prevent people, including those without symptoms who do not know they are sick, from spreading the virus to others. **Garden House School and its community respects the decision that each staff and student makes as to whether or not they wear a mask onsite.**

Children ages 2 and older and staff, regardless of vaccination status:

Are required to wear a mask when:

- Returning to child care after testing positive for COVID-19 through Day 10 after symptom onset or date of positive test, whichever is earlier, including when traveling on a school bus.
- Entering the facility medical room, nurse's office or school-based health center or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 at Garden House.
- When they were exposed to someone with COVID-19, whether the exposure occurred in the child care facility or outside the facility. The person **MUST** wear a mask for 10 days while onsite after their last day of exposure and get tested on Day 5.

May choose to wear a mask

- At all times, or in specific circumstances such as when:
 - Traveling on school buses.
 - When an individual feels more comfortable wearing a mask, such as for personal health reasons or because they live with someone at higher risk for severe COVID-19.

Garden House School requires all visitors and parents to be fully vaccinated and to wear a mask while onsite.

Garden House School reserves the right to reinstate required onsite masking as deemed necessary.

Stay Home If Sick

- Children, their parents and caregivers and GHS staff are to stay home if they show any symptoms of COVID-19 or other illnesses and to get tested for COVID-19.
- A single negative PCR test or 2 negative rapid tests obtained 24 hours apart is required for any staff or student experiencing possible COVID symptoms for clearance to return onsite.
- In addition to testing COVID negative, children must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication and symptoms must be **resolved**.

Isolate If You Test Positive for COVID-19

- **Children and staff who test positive for COVID-19** must isolate for five days and can return to the program on Day 6 if they have no symptoms or symptoms are improving. They should wear a mask when attending child care until Day 10 after symptom onset or date of positive test, **or** they may remove their mask following two negative COVID-19 tests taken 48 hours apart
- For the purpose of determining length of isolation and masking period: Day 0 is the day of COVID-19 symptom onset and Day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started. If they had no symptoms, Day 0 is the test date and Day 1 is the first full day following the test date.

Get Tested If Exposed to COVID-19

- Children and staff who are exposed to COVID-19 must report exposure to GHS
- Children and staff who are exposed may attend GHS as long as they are free of symptoms.
- These individuals **MUST** get tested five days after their last exposure and wear a high-quality, well-fitting mask while onsite at GHS for 10 days.
- All exposed individuals should monitor for fever and other COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days after their exposure. If symptoms begin, they should not attend child care and should get tested for COVID-19 right away.

If COVID-19 Testing is Positive

- If testing is positive, the individual must isolate according to the guidance above.
- Children and staff who test positive must isolate for a minimum of 5 days and must wear a mask while onsite until day 10 of infection.
- For the purpose of determining length of isolation and masking period: Day 0 is the day of COVID-19 symptom onset and Day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started. If they had no symptoms, Day 0 is the test date and Day 1 is the first full day following the test date.

Drop Off/Pick Up

- Garden House School asks that parents, caregivers and other authorized adults (who participate in drop-off and pick-up) to please continue to mask when interacting with staff during drop off and pick up and to present a photo ID during pick-up.
- During pick-up, the authorized adult should present the laminated pick-up sign with their child's name. This sign will be provided by your child's teachers.

- Garden House School reminds parents not to congregate while on site. Parents will be able to take their children directly to their classroom, assist with handwashing and settling in then say a quick goodbye. Drop-off is limited to 10 minutes.
- **Parents and caregivers will be allowed inside of the building during designated times (i.e. drop-off, special snack and birthday celebrations).**
- **Parents attending classroom event(s) will be required to obtain and submit COVID testing within 24 hours prior to onsite attendance.**

Hygiene

- Staff and students must perform hand hygiene immediately upon entering the program and will continue washing their hands (with soap for a minimum of 20 seconds) throughout the day in accordance with NYSDOH guidelines: When first entering program; before beginning first program activity; between all program activities; after using restroom; before eating; and before departing the last program activity.

School Events/Parents Association

- All PA Meetings will take place via Zoom.

Phase-In

- Phase-In will be conducted for one week with adherence to the COVID-19 guidelines and regulations.
- One adult may attend the school session with Young 2s and Toddlers that are phasing in. **Please note, this must be the same adult for the entire week (no exceptions).**
- **Parents must submit proof of vaccination.** Submissions of the aforementioned should be sent to info@gardenhouseschool.org.
- There will be designated areas for parents. Parents will be permitted into the classroom to drop-off their child.

Recess/Play

- Indoor and outdoor spaces will be utilized. Classes will share spaces and spend time together. We will also conduct All School Assemblies (at each location) starting in October.

If you are reviewing this online, please acknowledge electronically via our Parent Portal, FAM.

If you are reading a hardcopy, please sign (and date) the acknowledgement that you have read, understood and agree with the protocols set out above with the understanding that there is always a risk of illness and contagion. However, this risk will be mitigated by each member of our community doing their part to keep us all safe and healthy.

Child's Name:
Parent's Name:
Signature:
Date: