



ST. MARK PRESCHOOL

COVID-19 GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES

Updated August 12, 2020

DROP-OFF, ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP

- There will be separate drop-off areas for each classroom. There will be a map and directions at each entrance indicating where to go.
- Parents will walk children to their classroom via the designated route on the St Mark Preschool Guide to Safe Entry.
- We will implement staggered arrival and pick up times.
- Families will be served one at a time. Please practice social distancing and maintain a distance of 6' from all other families at all times.
- If possible, the same parent/caregiver should drop off and pick up the child every day; avoid designating those at high risk.
- All staff and children must participate in the health screening upon arrival (see below). If your child passes the health screening, hugs are welcome!! Children need to be hugged and frankly, so do we! Of course if you are not comfortable with Preschool staff hugging your child, please let us know
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to participate in a **health screening** (see below for details) at drop-off and pick-up times.
- If the ProCare system is up and running you will be able to sign your child in and out electronically.
- Prior to entering the classroom, staff and children will get their temperatures taken with a contactless thermometer. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will not be permitted to enter.
- Parents and caregivers, staff and children over 2 years old are required by Santa Barbara County, to wear a mask as you enter the building. You must use hand sanitizer or wash your hands with soap and water at your classrooms designated area.
- Hand washing and hand sanitizer stations will be set up at the entrances for each classroom so that all adults can clean their hands before they enter and before they leave the facility.
- Once the health screening is passed, sign your child in manually or electronically (hands free if our new ProCare system is set up). We will send instructions when it's ready.
- Shoes must be removed (parents and children) before entering a classroom.
- During pickup time, we plan to have the children playing in the yard. When we see that you are present, we will have your child wash their hands and walk them to you.
- Please observe the same mask, hand sanitizing, and social distancing protocols as stated in the arrival procedure.
- If you are dropping off or picking up your child and you have their sibling with you, siblings are not permitted to go beyond the breezeway. Infants, or children that can be carried and stay in your arms, are permitted to stay with you. They will be assessed too.

- All tours for new or potential families will be given on the weekends utilizing Covid-19 protocols.
- Extended family members that are not dropping off or picking up are not permitted at this time.
- Note: By signing your child in, you understand the risk according to CDC Risk Factors and that St. Mark Preschool cannot guarantee that you or your child will not be exposed to COVID-19 while attending.

HEALTH SCREENING

- Staff and children will have their temperatures taken with a contactless thermometer just prior to entering.
- Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will not be permitted to enter.
- A staff member will do a visual screening to observe any obvious signs of illness.
- Each parent or caregiver dropping off will agree to answer the Health Declaration posted on the entry bulletin board.

HEALTH DECLARATION

Please review these questions each morning, prior to bringing your child to school. If you answer “Yes” to any of these questions, do not bring your child to preschool.

You will be asked to refer to these health questions once again prior to dropping off your child.

A. Do you, your child or any member of your household:

(Head to toe questions)

1. Have a fever of 100.4 F or above now or in the preceding 72 hours?
2. Chills
3. Headache
4. Have a new loss of taste or smell?
5. Congestion or runny nose
6. Have a cough?
7. Have a sore throat?
8. Nausea or vomiting
9. Have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
10. Have any muscle aches?
11. Fatigue
12. Diarrhea

(Symptoms list will be updated as the CDC learns more about Covid-19)

B. Have you, your child or anyone in your household in the past 14 days:

1. Tested positive for COVID-19?
2. Have been tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting test results?
3. Is under quarantine for suspected exposure to COVID-19
4. Has traveled to a restricted area?
5. Any person/household who answers “YES” to any question will not be permitted to stay at preschool.
6. Note: Signing your child in certifies that you have answered “NO” to all the questions in the health declaration.
7. Know the Symptoms of COVID-19 Poster (Will be up on a bulletin board, in the transition area, located in the parking lot.)

ST. MARK PRESCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN WITH ILLNESS

Children with the following symptoms or exposure may not attend preschool.

- If a child has Covid-19 Symptoms:
 1. Have a fever of 100.4 F or above now or in the preceding 72 hours?
 2. Chills
 3. Headache
 4. Have a new loss of taste or smell?
 5. Congestion or runny nose
 6. Have a cough?
 7. Have a sore throat?
 8. Nausea or vomiting
 9. Have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
 10. Have any muscle aches?
 11. Fatigue
 12. Diarrhea(Symptoms list will be updated as the CDC learns more about Covid-19)

1. Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately.
 - a. Trouble breathing
 - b. Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - c. New confusion
 - d. Inability to wake or stay awake
 - e. Bluish lips or face

PARENTS AND CHILDREN CANNOT ATTEND ST. MARK PRESCHOOL IF:

- They have had a prolonged close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) with the infected person or healthcare provider that might have been exposed.
- They have been in contact with someone under quarantine for a suspected case of COVID-19.
- They have been in contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- They have come into contact with a person who has tested positive for Covid-19. They must self-quarantine for 14 days.
- A family or child that has traveled internationally in the last 14 days, must follow the 14 day quarantine advice from the CDC travel information site.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN ARE SAFE TO RETURN TO ST. MARK PRESCHOOL WHEN:

- They have been around someone who was identified as a *close contact to a person with COVID-19. You should closely monitor yourself for any symptoms of Covid-19, but do not need to self-quarantine.

- They have come into contact with a person who has been tested and proven NEGATIVE for Covid-19 or after 14 days since their last contact with a COVID-19 tested positive person. After the 14 days, they should have no signs of Covid-19 symptoms.
- After the 14th day of quarantine after an international trip and no signs or symptoms of Covid-19, the child may return to preschool.

CLOSE CONTACT:

is defined by the CDC as (1) being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time and can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case, or (2) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).

- Considerations when assessing close contact include the duration of exposure and the clinical symptoms of the person with COVID-19.
- We will be documenting and tracking incidents of possible exposure, immediately notifying Santa Barbara County Public Health, Community Care Licensing, and currently enrolled families of any possible COVID-19 exposure.
- We will be confidential in our reporting as required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and/or the American's With Disabilities Act (ADA).

FACE MASKS FOR CHILDREN

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department clarified the mask order for children two years old and older. It states that children 2 and older must wear a mask or face covering in public spaces. However, when in preschool or daycare, it is a recommendation but not a mandate to wear masks. Only 3rd graders and older are mandated to follow the mask order in school and in public.

Community Care Licensing falls under the Santa Barbara County guidelines. They are asking us to “to do our best” to encourage the children to wear them. If they are having a hard time, they will take a break. We will offer every child break times during outside time.

CHILDREN WILL BE SEPARATED FROM THEIR CLASS AND SENT HOME

IMMEDIATELY IF:

- They have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher or show signs of COVID-19. Staff and children will be monitored throughout the day for signs of illness. If a child shows signs of illness, the child will be taken to the office and a parent or caregiver will be notified immediately.
- If you are asked to come pick up your child, please do so immediately. Please be sure your contact information is up to date.
- You will want to consider your plan of action if you are called and asked to keep your child at home for 72 hours or longer.

ALLERGIES:

The health department will not let us attempt to distinguish whether the symptoms are caused by COVID-19 or another cause such as allergies or a common cold or flu. Any one of these symptoms prevents a child from attending preschool until they have been symptom free for 72 hours. However, if your child has a history of allergies and frequently shows signs of allergies, you may be asked to provide a confirmation letter from your child's pediatrician so we can make an assessment on reducing the exclusion time.

IF WE HAVE TO CLOSE AGAIN:

Our main goal is to assure the health and safety of every person that comes through the St. Mark Preschool's doors. Taking all safety precautions will not only reduce the risk of exposure but it will lessen the chances of having to close once again in the near or distant future. Cooperation and patience will play a crucial role in this determination. The guidelines and precautions we are implementing are to avoid the transmission of Covid-19. However, even with the most stringent of precautions we cannot guarantee that no member of our current community will contract Covid-19.

- If a staff member or child has a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and the California Department of Social Services and Community Care Licensing will be notified immediately. These officials will help to administer and determine a course of action for our preschool.
- Any decision about school dismissal or cancellation of school will be made in coordination with our local health officials. However, St. Mark Preschool is a private childcare program and may choose to close as needed if we feel the risk of contracting COVID-19 is accelerated and/or unmanageable regardless of the recommendation of the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department.
- We will likely dismiss students and staff in the affected classroom for 2-5 days.. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for a cleaning crew to clean and disinfect the affected areas.
- Public health will use this time to trace close contacts of the case and determine if others could be at risk.
- We will work with the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.
- If there is substantial transmission in the local community, or if the surrounding school district closures, local health care officials may suggest or mandate extended full or partial school dismissal. We will follow and abide by the recommendations from the local health agencies if a mandated order is put in place.
- We have a substitute and volunteer list in place, however, if we have a substantial amount of staff members that are sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 and we cannot operate within the mandated ratios, we may need to temporarily close down. Length of time of closure TBD.
- Short term and or long term closure of St. Mark Preschool may be implemented within the same day of discovery. It is suggested for you to have multiple back-up plans for various scenarios, regarding illness policy and possible shut down. Tuition Policy in case of closure (see below).
- See Center for Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines to Planning and Responding

HEALTHY HYGIENE

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. Learn when and how you should wash your hands to stay healthy. Children will be encouraged to wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hands will be dried with paper single use towels.

- Refer to the CDC Guide to Hand Washing
- Refer to the CDC Hand Washing Poster
- All children and staff will wash hands at the following times:
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food, or assisting children during mealtimes
 - Before and after administering medication
 - Before and after caring for someone who is sick or treating any wounds
 - Before and after diapering
 - Before going to a new classroom
 - After using the bathroom or helping a child use the bathroom
 - Before and after sensory play
 - After coming in contact with bodily fluid
 - After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
 - After playing outdoors or in sand
 - After handling garbage
 - Handwashing station will be available in all areas children and staff will be congregating
 - Children will be reminded to avoid contact with one's eyes, nose and mouth, and use tissue to wipe their nose and to cough/sneeze inside their elbow
 - Used tissues will be thrown away immediately and hand sanitizer used if teachers are not immediately able to get to a handwashing station
 - Staff will carry hand sanitizer with them at all times
 - Handwashing signs will be posted at all sink stations and in all bathrooms
 - Hand sanitizer will be available to all adults throughout the center but out of reach of children
 - Parents/caregivers entering the building must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer when arriving and leaving the building

FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

- All Staff members, children over the age of two, and persons entering the St Mark Preschool facility will follow the new Santa Barbara County and Licensing guidelines which require masks to be worn at all times.
- Parents/caregivers entering the building must wear a mask and keep the mask on until they leave the building.

GROUP SIZE, CLASSROOM SPACE AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

While 6' of space is recommended for physical distancing, we are aware this will be extremely challenging to enforce and maintain with young children. We will focus our efforts on group size, schedules, environment set up and sanitizing to minimize the risk of exposure vs. keeping children physically apart from one another. Our precautions will include:

- Class sizes will adhere to Community Care Licensing ratios for each age group.
- Classes will operate as “pods”- meaning children will stay with their group throughout the day and will not mix with the other groups.
- Teachers will be assigned to their class and rotate to other classrooms only if there is no other alternative. Covid-19 preventative measures of wearing a mask and offering a variety of activities that assist with social distancing will be utilized.

NAPPING

- Nap cots will be set up 6 feet apart, with heads in opposite directions.
- Nap cots will be sanitized each day.
- Bedding must be brought from home in a drawstring bag or backpack and taken home the last day of the week the child attends, washed and brought back the following week.

OUTDOOR PLAY

- Use of outdoor space and time will be maximized to reduce time spent indoors which includes, but not limited to, groups having circle time and mealtimes outdoors.
- Indoor and outdoor play will be staggered and adjusted to reduce the number of children in the same area.
- Outdoor play equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between use by different groups of children.
- Sensory play will be limited to individual groups. Children will be reminded to wash their hands before and after all sensory play.
- Activities that require close physical contact between children, ex: wrestling or tag, will be discouraged to the best of our ability.
- Activities will be set up with social distancing in mind.
- Circle time carpet squares will be spread out to encourage social distancing.
- Taped spaces on tables will be used to spread children out during table activities.
- The sandbox will remain open for now (pending further guidance).

TOYS AND BOOKS

- Each group will have a separate set of toys designated for their group and/or area.
- Toys that have gone in a child's mouth or been coughed or sneezed on will be put in the “To Be Sanitized” bin.
- Fabric toys/items will not be used at this time.

- Books and other paper-based items are not considered a high risk for transmission so therefore do not require any special procedures.
- Playdough can be shared by children in the same group only and will be disposed of at the end of each week.
- **Please have children leave toys from home in the car or at home, to prevent loss, difficulty sharing, and most importantly Covid-19 sanitary reasons.**

DAILY CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- At the end of each class day staff will wipe down and sanitize all tabletops, chairs, doorknobs, trash cans and any other items/equipment in high use traffic areas.
- Our SMP Custodian will assist with additional cleaning, each day from 12:00-8:00pm.
- Once a week Big Green will sanitize and disinfect the preschool.
- Toys used in each class will be stored in bins and not shared between classes.
- Containers will be placed throughout the center and designated for toys that need to be cleaned and sanitized before being introduced back into the classroom.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized easily have temporarily been put away.

MEAL TIMES

- For Wednesday, August 26th-28th, all lunch and snack items must be brought in a disposable bag.
- Starting Monday, Aug. 31st, children may bring a metal or plastic lunch container that can be wiped down, after each use.
- For now, teachers will not be preparing group snacks or lunch. Please provide at least 2 snacks and lunch if they are at preschool all day.
- Children will eat with their individual groups.
- We will celebrate birthdays with singing and honoring the birthday girl or boy. Parents and caregivers can bring prepackaged treats for the birthday celebration. (Healthy individually wrapped snacks preferred)
- Outdoor space will be utilized as much as possible during mealtimes so we can spread children out.
- Tables will be marked with tape and or name tags to remind children to spread out during mealtimes.
- Handwashing will be enforced before and after eating.
- All meal tables will be disinfected before and after all meal times.
- Children will not be permitted to share food.
- Indoor and outdoor water fountains will not be used. Please provide a labeled water bottle for your child.

CHANGING TABLES, DIAPERS, AND POTTIES

Toilets and sinks will be sanitized after each use.

- Gloves will be used for all diapering and toileting needs.
- Changing tables and “potties” will be cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- Parents of toddlers, please bring diapers and wipes in bulk.

A SOFT OPENING

As much as we would like to be able to operate at full capacity, we may need to limit enrollment, to align with Covid safety requirements. Our first priority will be essential full-time working families. Serving a smaller number of families at first, will allow us to work out any unexpected situations. A “soft and slow” reopening will give us an opportunity to make sure we can be fully prepared to start our very busy fall session, with health and safety being our number one priority.

FALL ENROLLMENT

- Fall program will begin Wednesday, Aug 26th with a modified 9-2pm schedule.
- We will then resume the following week on Monday, Aug 31st with standard days and hours: Monday through Friday, from 7:45-5:15 PM. Tuition will be charged monthly and due on the 25th day of the month preceding. August 2020 tuition will be prorated.
- If your child needs to stay home due to COVID-19 exposure, or if a pod has to shut down, parents will receive a credit for the time not in class. For other illnesses or absences, regular tuition is charged to hold your child’s space.
- We will do our best to accommodate requests.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

- _____ A labeled lunchbox with lunch and 2-3 snacks. (*Brown bag lunch for August 26-28)
- _____ A labeled water bottle.
- _____ Bedding for the week, in a labeled drawstring bag or backpack.
- _____ A full change of clothes (multiple changes if your child is having frequent accidents or potty training).
- _____ Shoes that are easy to take on and off.
- _____ Parents must wear a facemask for drop off/pick up!
- _____ Child’s facemask
- _____ Please put sunscreen on your child before coming to school.