

SOCDS Health Policies Fall 2021

SOCDS is committed to the health and safety of our children, families, and staff. We will continue to follow the guidelines from the Department of Children and Families (DCF – our licensing agency) and the South Orange Health Department. We have come a long way since March 2020, however COVID continues to be a concern for our young children as they do not currently have access to the vaccine and, as we know, the virus continues to be spread by asymptomatic, infected people.

We are still dependent upon everyone being careful and limiting potential exposure for your child, even if you, the adult, are vaccinated. We continue to ask you to stay home if you or a family member, or your child, is not feeling well. This is the best and safest way to prevent the spread of all viruses.

SOCDS Pod Approach

Your child will only interact with the other children in their class. Playground time, drop off / pick up, and art and gardening classes will be done with your child's class separate from other classes.

Children of staff that are attending SOCDS will report directly to their own classroom in the morning to limit cross-pod spread.

Pod composition may change to best meet the needs of individual children. This is not done randomly or without consideration, as it can place the second classroom at risk to transmission of the virus between classes or the need to quarantine.

These practices do not guarantee that there will not be transmission within the pod, but it does mean that we can better handle the contact tracing and inform families of any potential risk to their household members.

Access to SOCDS Grounds and Classrooms Policy

SOCDS will require all visitors to wear a mask, even outside, as we cannot guarantee social distancing during drop off and pick up, and on the sidewalk.

Access to the classrooms will be limited to emergency first responders or repair personnel during the school day, and everyone must wear masks.

Health Screening Policy

South Orange Country Day School staff will visually inspect your child and take their temperature before your child enters the classroom. Only vaccinated staff will be permitted to complete the health screening for your child. Staff are no longer required to use a face-shield barrier but must be masked.

Upon entry to the classroom, everyone will wash their hands with soap and water.

Any child who has a fever will not be allowed to enter the building and must stay home until they are fever free without medication for 24 hours. If your child exhibits two or more symptoms related to COVID (temperature > 99.5, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, nausea,

diarrhea, sore throat, rash, flu-like symptoms, new loss of taste or smell, congestion, runny nose, muscle aches or pains) you will need to contact your child's doctor and follow their advice for returning to school. **SOCDS will require a "return to school" note from your doctor.**

If your child exhibits these symptoms in the morning or the night before, please keep your child home and call/email the school so that we can track the symptoms as well and agree upon next steps.

Mask Wearing Policy

Everyone, including children, who enter the SOCDS campus must wear a mask. Children will be asked to wear a mask as they enter the building, in the classroom, and at pick-up. When we are on the playground children have the option to not wear their mask.

Reminding children to wear their mask appropriately will not be done with an punitive consequences.

Children have become comfortable with wearing their masks. Many families have bought the mask "necklaces" and they seem to work well. If a child's mask gets wet or uncomfortable, we have disposable masks that we will offer your child.

Close Contact Definition

Please note that a childcare setting with children under the age of 6 (like ours, and more broadly under the age of 12 due to vaccination access) needs to continue to operate with procedures to protect the health of their children, staff, and household members, and particularly of those with existing health issues.

Since our young children really cannot care for themselves, if anyone in the household is a close contact the entire household is considered a close contact. However, the response to that close contact is separated by vaccination status of the adults in the child's household.

If all the adults in the child's household are vaccinated:

then if one of those adults are in close contact with someone who subsequently tested positive, the household, and the child, does not need to isolate or quarantine.

However, if that adult exhibits any symptoms of the virus (i.e, a breakthrough infection) the child will need to follow the quarantine and testing protocols. Depending upon the timing of that infection, their individual classroom/pod may also be considered a close contact and required to quarantine.

If the adults in the child's household are not vaccinated and an adult is a close contact to someone who subsequently tests positive or exhibits symptoms, then the entire household will need to isolate and quarantine. The timing of that isolation is driven by the adult's quarantine period - the child's quarantine period is additional to the adult's quarantine time and starts after the adult completes the quarantine period. Often the child is infected by the adult/care giver after the initial exposure.

If a household member tests positive, then the quarantine and isolation for the child starts after the household member completes their quarantine period.

It is your obligation and responsibility to inform SOCDS of any of these situations. Lack of honest communication will be considered a breach of trust and your family will be asked to leave SOCDS.

Travel Restrictions

Again, these restrictions are written separately for households with vaccinated adults and non-vaccinated adults.

If a household adult is vaccinated and travels independently, there is no restriction for the rest of the family.

If a household adult is not vaccinated and travels independently, then upon return the adult must be isolated from the rest of the family and can test out of quarantine on day 5 of their return. If the adult cannot isolate from the rest of the family then the adult can test out of quarantine day 5 of their return, and with a negative test the children can test out of quarantine 5 days subsequent to that negative test result of the adult.

If a household travels together and travels by plane or cruise, or visits a location that can not guarantee social distancing, then:

If all adults are vaccinated, then the children can test out of quarantine on day 5 of the return.

If all adults are not vaccinated, then the entire family will need to quarantine and first the adults can test out of quarantine on day 5 of the return and the children can test out of quarantine upon the negative test result of the adults. (Again, it is often that the initial exposure does not infect the child but the exposure to the infected caregiver/adult does.)

If a household travels by themselves (or with other households where everyone is vaccinated) and stays by themselves (i.e, camping, individual lodging, visit household with all vaccinated individuals, etc.), then there is no need to quarantine regardless of locale.

Please note that children who have not been vaccinated are a leading group currently transmitting the virus. So, if you are at a bar-be-que with your family and youth are not socially distancing and wearing masks, **your young child can be exposed**. If you are visiting your parents and your crazy Uncle Rudy drops by, the vaccinated adults might be at less risk, but your young child can be exposed. Those instances will require a 5 day quarantine and negative test to return to school.