



# Housatonic Valley Waldorf School COVID-19 Community Health & Campus Operations Plan (Previously titled “Campus Reopening Plan”)

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COVID-19 Coordinator:

Christina Dixcy, Office Manager and Communications Director

[office@waldorfct.org](mailto:office@waldorfct.org), [cdixcy@waldorfct.org](mailto:cdixcy@waldorfct.org)

Date of arrival of students and start of classes:

September 9, 2020 (Grade School)

September 10, 2020 (Early Childhood)

Intended last day of school:

June 11, 2021 (All)

## Acknowledgment

Housatonic Valley Waldorf School (HVWS) will be guided by applicable law, Executive Orders, and state and federal public health guidelines for the reopening of schools. The policies and protocols contained within this document have been developed with the understanding that we may need to react quickly to changing conditions. This document is a working document and may be updated due to evolving guidance and refinement to procedures. HVWS will modify restrictions throughout the school year to respond effectively to changes in public health data.

*This document has been written with guidance from the State of Connecticut, the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).*

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# Introduction

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## Approach (Updated Rev. 2)

HVWS will operate its Grade School and Early Childhood campuses working with mandates in the State of Connecticut's guidelines for reopening schools safely, including:

- cohorting groups of students;
- physical distancing;
- face coverings for staff and grade school students during the school day when inside or when outside when physical distancing is not possible;
- face coverings for early childhood students when inside;
- frequent hand washing;
- enhanced cleaning;
- enhanced ventilation.

The HVWS Early Childhood Program will operate under additional guidelines set out for daycare centers by Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood. This allows schools accredited by CAIS to keep early childhood classrooms open even if K-12 campuses are closed due to a regional resurgence of COVID-19.

The guidance from the state is grounded in a desire to support the healthy return of all students, faculty, and staff to campus during the 2020-21 school year. The measures above are designed to be implemented in combination, providing multiple means of preventing and containing the potential spread of coronavirus.

As a Waldorf school, HVWS is committed to providing a holistic and developmentally appropriate education for our students in the place and time in which we find ourselves living. This is part of what makes Waldorf education unique. HVWS must respond to the current world situation and take reasonable and responsible steps to reduce risk for both students and employees. The goal is that any steps taken to mitigate risk are feasible and will be in balance with the School's educational ideals. HVWS continues to prioritize providing a rich and warm environment based on love and mutual respect. Any changes and precautions will be implemented carefully and intentionally and communicated to students with compassion, not fear. The goal is to create a culture of collective care. The students will be involved in strengthening this culture but the adults will carry the responsibility for managing the changes needed to mitigate risks. The success of this plan will depend on the entire community working together to support the implementation of these protocols.

## Mission

*The mission of the Housatonic Valley Waldorf School is to provide a lasting education that cultivates resilient and creative human beings who are capable of free thinking, confident action, and deep connections with others and the world.*

In all that it does as a Waldorf school, HVWS takes the following as guiding principles:

- HVWS recognizes that children’s needs, interests, strengths and challenges evolve from their early childhood years throughout their school journey. The curriculum is consciously designed to best meet each developmental stage as children grow, providing the right experience at the appropriate time.
- HVWS community members seek to work together in ways that increase the diversity of our school community and promote equity and inclusion for all community members regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, financial means, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender, or disability status. This includes ensuring that the curriculum is continually evolving to meet student needs.
- Relationships are fundamental to the work of a Waldorf school. HVWS consciously strives to foster and support healthy relationships in all areas of the school community: between students and teachers and among classmates, faculty and staff, and all community members. HVWS faculty and staff seek to meet each community member with love and care, ensuring that there is flexibility and support in the classrooms, school policies and practices, and community expectations.
- Children are best supported when there is a partnership between home and school. HVWS seeks to provide parents with support, education, and engagement and asks that parents collaboratively work with teachers in the same way.
- Each community member is a whole human being: body, soul, and spirit. The HVWS faculty and staff draw insight and inspiration from the work of Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy.
- Through its curriculum, policies, employment agreements, community expectations, and services beyond the classroom, HVWS strives to fully engage all community members and create a culture of purposeful activity and joy.
- Through community life, HVWS respects and supports the inner development and growth of school community members, sharing the celebration of festivals, artistic work, and study.
- Collaboration and shared responsibility are the foundations of the HVWS governance and leadership model. Faculty, staff, and trustees work with consensus within all governance groups. HVWS is committed to a transparent and cooperative process for all significant decisions in the school.

## Resources (Updated Rev. 2)

Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) COVID-19 resources:

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>

Connecticut Travel Advisory Page

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/travel>

World Health Organization (WHO) COVID-19 resources:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Newtown Health Department COVID-19 resources:

<https://www.newtown-ct.gov/covid-19-information-newtown-residents-and-businesses>

Connecticut Department of Education COVID-19 resources:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/COVID-19-Resources-for-Families-and-Educators>

Connecticut Department of Education School Learning Model Indicators:

<https://data.ct.gov/stories/s/CT-School-Reopening/ddy2-ijgu/>

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood COVID-19 resources:

<https://www.ctoec.org/covid-19/>

Connecticut State Department of Education Learning Hub:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Academic-Office/CT-Learning-Hub>

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America COVID-19 Resources:

<https://www.waldorfeducation.org/covid-19-resources-for-members>

Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN):

<http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org/>

Housatonic Valley Waldorf School Website:

<https://www.waldorfct.org/>

<https://www.waldorfct.org/current-parents/>

## Communications (Updated Rev. 2)

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The HVWS Leadership Council is holding regular virtual office hours to answer parent and employee questions and concerns (email [leadership@waldorfct.org](mailto:leadership@waldorfct.org) for meeting information). The Leadership Council and COVID-19 Task Force will continue to send regular updates to parents, faculty, and staff via email, and will as post important communications to the (password-protected) Parent Portal <https://www.waldorfct.org/parent-portal> and (public) Current Parents page on the school website <https://www.waldorfct.org/current-parents>.

### Calendar

<https://www.waldorfct.org/calendar/>

HVWS is following a standard school year calendar and remains committed to offering full weeks and full days of school on campus whenever it is possible. The Newtown Public School district may operate with a different weekly schedule and will not direct the HVWS weekly schedule. HVWS is not planning partial week, split day, or limited hours as ways to manage low-density instruction and will instead work to create low-density classrooms within the two campuses. This is possible owing to the small size of the school but also means that enrollment caps may become necessary.

### School Mail

Whenever possible, the school office will refrain from sending home paper letters or fliers via school mail folders. Correspondence to parents will be sent via email or USPS. Parents may send notes or paperwork in with their student, but students will not have mail folders or mail boxes at school.

## Training and Orientation (Updated Rev. 2)

### Faculty and Staff

Prior to the start of school all faculty and staff attended a mandatory training session based on updated health and safety guidelines such as, instruction on how to properly put on and remove personal protective equipment, recognizing signs and symptoms of communicable disease, isolation of a sick child, and enhanced sanitation and disinfection protocols. Additionally, the COVID Coordinator completed the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Contact Tracing course. Supplemental training will be provided to substitutes or other visiting teachers or tutors who may enter the school grounds after early training sessions have been completed.

### Parents

All parents will receive email notification of updated policies and procedures, which will also be uploaded to the parent portal.

Parents were required to attend a virtual parent evening in advance of the start of the school year to review new policies and procedures

### Grade School Students

The first two days of school for students in grades 1-8 were half days focused on adjusting to being back on campus and practicing new procedures. Additionally, some teachers chose to hold virtual orientations with their classes before school began.

## Buildings and Grounds (Updated Rev 2.)

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### Cleaning

HVWS will employ Department of Public Health (DPH) Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting of Schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Buildings will be cleaned nightly by a professional cleaning company.

During the school day, faculty and staff will adhere to diligent cleaning protocols including the frequent wiping down of high-touch surfaces both indoors and out.

Bathroom surfaces will be wiped down with increased frequency.

Disposable wipes and/or paper towels and an appropriate spray cleaner will be available in all bathrooms, classrooms, and other shared facilities (e.g., copy machines, coffee stations).

Students will continue to be involved in daily classroom cleaning as appropriate for their age. Students will not use disinfectants.

### *Additional Early Childhood Program Steps*

Linens will be sanitized daily.

Toys and classrooms will be sanitized at the end of each day. Toys that become contaminated by excretions will be removed immediately from play, placed in a designated basket, and sanitized.

Toys that cannot easily be regularly sanitized will be removed from circulation.

The staff will complete a cleaning checklist daily using a disinfectant pursuant to current CDC recommendations.

### Ventilation (Updated Rev. 2)

HVWS will comply with DPH Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation Systems during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whenever possible, windows will be open.

Classrooms have been equipped with exhaust window fans and HEPA filters.

## **Water Systems**

HVWS will follow the Department of Public Health Return to Service Guidance for Building Water Systems.

HVWS added outdoor hand washing stations on both campuses.

## **Signs**

Signage regarding physical distancing, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, proper handwashing, respiratory etiquette, and mask wearing have been placed around campus.

## **Visitors on Campus (Updated Rev. 2)**

Visitors—including parents, vendors, and visiting or substitute teachers—will be restricted to those who are essential, must have an appointment to enter school buildings and playgrounds, and will be asked to wear a mask and complete a self-screening form: <https://forms.gle/Ufp2dXLdKKnz4e839>.

The adult lending library and conference room will be closed to visitors until further notice.

HVWS will continue to use virtual meetings for parents and employees, including parent-teacher conferences, until further notice.

Classroom visits for new students will be suspended until further notice.

## **Fire and Other Drills**

Fire and other drills will be conducted with new processes to ensure separation of cohorts. Grade school students will wear masks during drills.

# Transportation

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## Buses

Any Newtown residents who ride the bus to school will follow all health and safety protocols instituted by the bus company, All Star Transportation, <https://www.all-startransportation.com/newtown/>.

## Arrival and Dismissal (Updated Rev. 2)

Complete procedures will be shared with families by teachers and will be detailed in the Parent Handbook.

Per Connecticut Office of Early Childhood guidelines, families in the Early Childhood program are asked to maintain a consistent driver for arrival and dismissal each day. Schoolwide, HVWS recommends that families maintain consistent carpool cohorts.

## Early Childhood Program

- Before school, while still at home, caregivers must use the Daily Attestation of Health sheet to assess their child's health. *Parents do not need to submit their health attestation form, although this may change as conditions warrant.*
- Teachers will also conduct a quick visual check upon student arrival and may take a child's temperature with a touchless thermometer and/or send a child home with their caregiver.
- Each classroom will have a designated Arrival and Dismissal area.
- When assisting children out of cars, teachers may wear a face shield in addition to a mask. Teachers will use hand sanitizer between cars.
- If exiting their vehicles, caregivers will follow physical distancing guidelines, including wearing a mask and keeping at least a six-foot distance between families.

## Grades 1-8

- Before school, while still at home, caregivers must use the Daily Attestation of Health sheet to assess their child's health. *Parents do not need to submit their health attestation form, although this may change as conditions warrant.*
- Teachers will also conduct a quick visual check upon student arrival and may take a child's temperature with a touchless thermometer and/or send a child home with their caregiver.
- Students will wear face coverings for arrival and dismissal.
- Cars will form one line and refrain from passing other cars on the left.
- Students in the Sundial House cohort (Grades 1-3) will enter and leave campus at the playground gate.
- Students in the Compass Hall cohort (Grades 4-8) will enter and leave campus further up the drive at the basketball courts.

- While we prefer families to drive through arrival and dismissal, families may park behind the Fire House and walk across to drop off or pick up their student. Masks and physical distancing will be required.
- Families arriving late must park and call the office. A staff member will meet the student at their car and escort them to class.
- Students will not be escorted to the Administration Cottage for late pickups in the afternoon. Students and a staff member (or staff members) on duty will wait outside for late pickups.
- In inclement weather, a staff member will be stationed at the basketball court and will call up to Compass Hall for students to be dismissed as their cars arrive. Please be patient.
- Drivers may be required to drive around the loop if there is a delay in a student's arrival in the dismissal area.

# Health Practices and Protocols

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## Immunizations and Health Assessments

State law requires complete primary immunizations and a health assessment by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine prior to school entrance in Connecticut (<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Immunizations/Immunization--Laws-and-Regulations>). According to Connecticut General Statutes Sections 19a-7f and 10-204a, no child may be admitted to school without proof of immunization or a statement of exemption.

Health Assessments are required annually for all Early Childhood students, students entering 1st Grade, 7th Grade, and students newly enrolled at HVWS. HVWS understands that pediatrician appointments may be off-schedule owing to pandemic closures and will work with parents to accept existing health forms, updating them as appointments allow.

## Travel (Updated Rev. 2)

Anyone traveling into Connecticut after spending at least 24 hours in an area that has a new daily positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents or an area with a 10% or higher positivity rate over a 7-day rolling average is required to quarantine for a 14-day period from the time of last contact within the identified location. Travelers may now test out of a travel quarantine if they receive a negative result for a PCR test given within a window extending 72 hours before and 72 hours after their arrival to CT.

(<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Covid-19-Knowledge-Base/Travel-In-or-Out-of-CT>)

This counsel will be reevaluated as conditions warrant.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (Updated Rev. 2)**

All faculty and staff, visitors to campus, and Grade School students are required to wear a face covering (covering nose and mouth) when indoors and when outdoors when physical distancing is not possible. Early Childhood students are required to wear a face covering when indoors.

All students will bring their own masks to school, including an additional mask that will remain with their extra clothing on campus. HVWS will provide a disposable mask to any student who does not have one.

Teachers and staff will provide their own masks. HVWS will provide disposable masks and face shields to faculty and staff as needed.

Face coverings should be washed/disinfected or replaced after each day's use and must not be shared. Students and families should take responsibility for maintaining their individual face coverings.

### **Face Covering Pattern /Artwork**

Masks may be of the child/family's choice as long as they meet the health guidelines for material and fit and accord with the HVWS dress code.

### **Style and Fit Guidelines**

Surgical masks are not required. Homemade or cloth masks must be multi-layered. Masks must cover both the mouth and nose. Face shields worn without other face coverings are not considered adequate protection against COVID-19 and should not be used except in combination with an acceptable mask. The Connecticut Department of Public Health released updated guidance related to masks on August 31, 2020—*Addendum 11: Interim Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings in Schools during COVID-19*—in which the DPH emphasizes, “the most important features of any face covering to be used during the school day will be that it completely covers the nose and mouth of the wearer and that it is comfortable enough to wear for long periods of time during the school day.”

HVWS encourages parents to experiment with various mask styles to see what works best for their own children with regard to fit, comfort, and ease of use. Parents should practice the safe putting on and taking off of masks with their children.

Faculty, staff, and students, may use face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth for instruction or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., circle time, speechwork, or speech therapy). These alternate coverings may also be used for certain students (e.g., hearing impaired) who benefit from being able to see more of the face of the faculty or staff member.

The following table is pulled from the recent guidance from the State of Connecticut:

Mask Types	Advantages	Disadvantages	Recommendation
<b>N95 Respirators</b>	Excellent filtration of droplets and most aerosols-sized particles	Difficult to wear for extended periods, need specific fit-testing and medical clearance, supply chain issues, cannot be easily cleaned	 Not recommended for school use ( <i>except for nurses and aerosol-generating procedures</i> )
<b>KN95 Facemasks</b>	Very good capture of respiratory droplets, widely available for ordering	Wide variation in sizing and quality control, tend to run large and may not fit children well, may be difficult to wear for very long periods, cannot be easily cleaned	 Recommended for use in schools for older children
<b>Surgical/ Procedure Style</b>	Good to very good capture of respiratory droplets, widely available for ordering, relatively light weight	May not hold up to repeated use, cannot be easily cleaned, may have some quality control issues	 Recommended for use in schools, especially as a stockpile for schools to hand out when students do not have a face mask
<b>Cloth Masks</b>	Good to very good capture of respiratory droplets, widely available for purchase, can be constructed and personalized at home, fabric very breathable, can be easily cleaned	Generally require multiple layers of fabric, ear loops may irritate after extended use, may need to try multiple styles to find appropriate fit, fit may change with laundering	 Recommended for use in schools for all ages
<b>Neck Gaiters</b>	Very breathable and light weight, some moisture-wicking, very personalizable, widely available, many sizes and styles, eliminates ear loop irritation, stays on neck when not in use	May or may not provide adequate droplet control depending on fit and material used, may need to be layered to provide adequate source control	 May be adequate if layered (folded over nose and mouth multiple times) and sized appropriately so fabric is not stretched extensively, better for smaller children where bunching of fabric may be more protective
<b>Bandanas</b>	Widely available, inexpensive, allows mask to be tied instead of using ear loops, light weight and breathable	May or may not provide adequate droplet control depending on the weight of material used, may need to be layered to provide adequate source control	 May be adequate if layered and positioned tightly at the chin, material should be washed/ dried to tighten the fabric weave
<b>Exhalation Valve Masks</b>	Can be found in many styles of masks, may add some comfort, allows relief of air pressure upon exhalation	May allow some droplets to escape through the mask, may not close tightly when breathing in, cannot be easily cleaned	 Unknown whether or not exhalation valves in masks increase the risk of spread of COVID-19, better than no mask at all but masks with valves currently not recommended for school settings

The CDC website also provides guidance related to mask types:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

## Exceptions (Updated Rev. 2)

All teachers will receive training on COVID-19 specific hygiene and will have discretion in determining if a child may or may not remove their mask under various conditions.

### ***Mask Breaks***

- Teachers will schedule outdoor “mask breaks” in addition to regular recesses, as possible.
- Teachers may allow brief indoor mask breaks. These may be offered in a designated mask break space with a 12 ft radius, or, these may be offered in the classroom to one or two individuals at a time, if all nearby individuals are wearing a mask. Classroom mask breaks should be a break of last resort and should be brief.

### ***When Necessary for Direct Instruction***

- Teachers should not remove their own masks during the regular course of teaching but may do so if it is required for direct instruction, for example if they are working on a very specific speech need that requires lip reading. Mask removal in these cases should be as brief as possible and multiple additional layers of protection—extra distancing, face shields, or plexiglass barriers—should be employed.

### ***Snack and Lunchtime***

- Faculty, staff, and grade school students may remove their face coverings to eat provided that it is done in an area determined to have the appropriate capacity for social distancing during mealtimes (such as outside) or when eating behind a foldable, transparent desk divider, which will be provided in grade school classrooms for this purpose.
- Early Childhood faculty and students may remove their face coverings during snack and lunchtime. Distance between individuals will be increased as feasible, given the age group.

### ***Outdoors***

- Faculty, staff, and grade school students may remove masks when engaged in outdoor activities during which physical spacing can be maintained.
- Early Childhood students may remove masks when engaged in outdoor activities.
- Grade school students playing outside in low-risk activities do not need to wear masks; this includes most common childhood games and activities that do not involve prolonged close physical contact.
- Grade school students playing games considered “high risk” (e.g. contact sports) or working in close proximity for an extended period of time must wear masks even when outside.
- When engaged in an activity that involves increased physical exertion, physical spacing will be increased or masks will be worn, even when outside.

### ***When Alone***

- Masks may be removed when working alone in a classroom or office. In these cases, teachers and staff should be aware that they are modelling mask wearing and should avoid removing masks during indoor transition periods when they may be visible to students.

### ***Medical Emergencies***

- For anyone who has trouble breathing or who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance, face coverings and masks will not be required, per CDC guidance.

### ***Medical and Developmental Exemptions***

- For anyone who has a medical reason making it unsafe to wear a face covering, **a medical exemption from a legally qualified practitioner of medicine will need to be submitted to the office in advance for approval.**
  - HVWS will review any requests for a medical exemption from the mask requirement and engage in a collaborative process that may involve with parents, medical providers, and applicable staff to identify alternatives that address the needs of the student within the context of maintaining the health and safety of the entire classroom. This process may take time and may require additional documentation and/or conversations with the student's medical provider and the Department of Public Health, during which time families may elect to have their child participate in learning from home options available through HVWS.
  - Please be advised that anyone with a breathing issue serious enough to contraindicate mask wearing would be considered high risk for complications due to COVID-19 and should engage in learning from home.
- Early Childhood students who are working toward consistent mask wearing and who may not yet be developmentally capable of mask wearing will be able to remove masks during the phase-in period from September 21, 2020 to October 19, 2020. These students may remain eligible for a Developmental Exemption until such time as they are better able to wear a mask properly. Any Developmental Exemption will be made with input from the child's doctor and teachers. Teachers and parents will work with children with Developmental Exemptions to teach proper mask wearing as another form of learned personal hygiene.

## **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

Teachers will demonstrate and reinforce proper hand hygiene (hand washing for 20 seconds with soap and water if available or use of hand sanitizer). Hand hygiene will be practiced when entering a building, changing one's environment, after using the bathroom, after nose-blowing, before and after eating, before and after using shared materials.

Teachers will demonstrate and reinforce proper respiratory etiquette, including covering one's mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, using tissues, and disposing of used tissues after one use.

For additional handwashing options, outdoor handwashing stations will be installed on each campus over the summer. Hand sanitizers will be available in all classrooms.

## **Bathroom Protocols**

Bathrooms school wide are single-person. The HVWS Early Childhood classrooms each have their own bathroom.

Bathroom fans will be used.

HVWS will continue to use disposable towels in lieu of hand dryers.

## **Food Preparation**

### **Early Childhood Program**

- Teachers will serve children one portion for their snack time meal.
- Teachers will serve all beverages.
- Second servings will receive a new bowl and spoon.
- All utensils and dishes will be sanitized through the dishwasher.
- All food prepared by the children will be cooked at a high temperature.
- All food served raw will be prepared by the teacher in the designated kitchen area and will be served according to proper food safety guidelines per our local health department.

### **Grades 1-8**

- Hot lunches and bake sales are suspended until further notice.
- Students must bring in a water bottle each day in lieu of a classroom mug.
- The Administrative Cottage kitchen and Sundial House kitchenette, including microwaves and refrigerators, will not be available for student use.

# Monitoring the Health of Students, Faculty, and Staff

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## Daily Attestation of Health (Updated Rev. 2)

All faculty, staff, and families must assess their health daily and are expected to follow the sick policy and stay home if they are exhibiting any signs of illness as detailed below.

Owing to the conditions presented by the prevalence of COVID-19, arranging substitute teachers on any given day will be more difficult. If a teacher is home sick for any reason and substitute cannot be arranged, a class may be suspended for a “snow day.” On these occasions, HVWS will alert parents via the Honeywell Instant Alert System.

As conditions evolve, parents, faculty, and staff may be required to sign a daily health form.

**By arriving on campus, faculty and staff are attesting that they are illness/symptom free and have answered NO to all of the following each day before departing to school.**

**By sending a student to school, families are attesting that their students are illness/symptom free and have answered NO to all of the following each day before departing to school.**

- Have you had a fever greater than or equal to 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the past 48 hours without fever-reducing medication?
- Are you exhibiting any signs or symptoms of a respiratory illness (cough, runny nose, respiratory secretions) with or without fever?
- Are you experiencing shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
- Do you have chills or generalized body aches?
- Have you lost your sense of smell or taste?
- Do you have a new headache (e.g. one not associated with known conditions such as allergies)?
- Do you have a sore throat?
- Have you experienced active vomiting or diarrhea within the last 48 hours?
- Have you experienced an unexplained loss of appetite?
- Do you have a bacterial infection such as pink eye or strep throat that has not yet been treated with antibiotics for a full 24 hours?
- Are you experiencing an undiagnosed rash or new and/or untreated rash or skin condition (e.g. hives or a wound with purulent drainage)?
- Have you been asked to self-isolate or instructed to quarantine by a medical professional or local health department official?
- Have you been diagnosed or come in close contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been placed on quarantine for possible contact with COVID-19? (For these

purposes, the CDC defines close contact as having been any within six feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes).

Individuals may not return to school until they are illness/symptom free for 48 hours for all non-COVID-19 diagnoses, as outlined above, or as otherwise advised by public health and medical professionals.

If an individual develops key COVID-19 symptoms—fever of 100.4 or more, chills, uncontrolled new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell—the individual should consult with their doctor about COVID-19 testing.

- If this individual has had close contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19, this individual must get tested.
- Anyone awaiting test results will need to remain home until the results are returned.
- If anyone with suspected COVID-19 symptoms does not get a test, they will need to remain home for at least 10 days after the onset of symptoms and until the symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

**Please be aware we will need parents or guardians to pick up or arrange a pick-up of a child who becomes sick at school within one hour.**

## **Illness at School**

Faculty and staff will be instructed to recognize signs and symptoms of illness. If a student shows any symptoms of illness during the day (e.g. fever, vomiting, diarrhea, sudden onset or spreading of rash) the parent or caregiver will be called to pick up the student immediately.

If a faculty or staff member shows any symptoms of illness during the day they will be instructed to return home. Arrangements will be made for a substitute, as possible. In certain cases, a class may need to be dismissed early. Should this occur, parents will be notified via the Honeywell Instant Alert System.

## **Isolation Protocol and Containment**

While awaiting pick up, the student will be escorted and continuously supervised by a staff member in a designated sick room. This staff member will be provided with proper PPE. HVWS will keep a log of all persons who enter a sick room. The state guidelines for cleaning and ventilation of the sick room after each use will be strictly followed.

## **Positive Diagnosis/Exposure**

In February 2020, COVID-19 was added to the List of Reportable Diseases. Those required to report such diseases, including the schools, must report cases of COVID-19 infection immediately to the DPH Epidemiology and Emerging Infection Program (860-509-7994) and the local department of health in the town of residence of the case-patient by telephone on the day of recognition or strong suspicion

of the disease. Additional practices to those below may be recommended in consultation with the local health department.

### **Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis (Updated Rev. 2)**

If a student, faculty, or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, they must inform the school office immediately.

- HVWS will contact the Newtown Department of Public Health, the DPH epidemiology and Emerging Infection Program, and the local department of health in the town of residence of the case-patient, unless otherwise directed by the Newtown Department of Public Health.
- The individual will be directed to isolate at home during illness and recovery.
- No individual may return to school until it has been at least 24 hours since recovery—defined as no fever without the use of medications and improvement in respiratory signs like cough and shortness of breath—AND at least 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms.
- A physician’s statement may be required before returning to school.
- A negative test will not be required.

### ***Contact Tracing***

If the notification of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis occurs during school, all families in a cohort will be notified to come pick up their students. This notification will be sent out via the Honeywell Instant Alert System along with a follow-up email and phone calls as needed. This cohort will remain at home for at least 1 to 2 days as the school works with the DPH to determine next steps. Distance learning would not be implemented during this time.

- Names of those testing positive will not be shared with the community or with close contacts.
- HVWS will work with the DPH to determine if the student or staff member attended or worked at school while symptomatic or during the two days before symptoms began.
- HVWS and the DPH will determine who had close contact with the student or staff member at school during those days.
- Direct contacts will be notified, and they will need to follow the steps outlined below.
- All families, faculty, and staff will be notified via email about any campus closure or class/cohort quarantine regardless of whether it directly impacts their class or cohort.
- Any classroom space occupied by the individual will undergo appropriate cleaning and ventilation as needed.

### ***Exposure/Direct Contacts***

- If a student, faculty, or staff member has been in close contact with a person who is confirmed positive for COVID-19, they will be directed to quarantine for 14 days.
- An individual may not test out of a quarantine.
- If a student who tests positive has a sibling in a different class, the sibling will be directed to quarantine for two weeks; however, the sibling’s classmates will not need to quarantine unless the sibling tests positive as well.
- If a teacher or staff member who tests positive has children enrolled in school, these children will be directed to quarantine for two weeks; however, their classmates will not need to

quarantine unless the children test positive as well. Substitute or distance learning arrangements will be implemented for this teacher's class on a case-by-case basis.

- Those told to quarantine will watch for symptoms and may be directed to seek a COVID-19 test.
- If symptoms develop, the individual must seek a COVID-19 test. If the test is positive, see "Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis" (above).
- If an entire class or cohort is required to quarantine for two weeks or more, teachers would plan for distance learning to begin on day three. Substitute teaching may be necessary .

# Classroom Procedures and Protocols

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## **Physical Spacing, Cohorting, and Classroom Materials (Updated Rev. 2)**

HVWS is prepared to adjust the approach to physical distancing if guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or Department of Public Health (DPH) changes owing to shifting public health data or evolving understanding of COVID-19 disease, including transmission.

Adults will maintain physical spacing from other adults on campus. Students will practice feasible physical spacing. HVWS understands that it is unrealistic to expect children of every age to be able to practice physical spacing at all times and in all situations and that guidelines and expectations for physical spacing need to take into account the developmental stage of the students. Owing to the limitations of physical spacing, HVWS is reducing mixing between classes through cohorting.

Classes will enter and exit buildings at assigned entrances to reduce unnecessary mixing between classes.

### **Early Childhood Program**

Per the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood guidelines, Early Childhood classes (Mixed PreK/K) will be limited to 16 students total.

Students will not come into contact with any other classes throughout the day.

Circle time and other group activities will be designed to maintain appropriate distancing between students.

Additional space between students will be provided during snack and Extended Care lunch and nap time.

We will increase time outside for all students with time and/or location staggered between classes.

Each child will have their own designated basket in which to store their school supplies.

Supplies will not be shared between classrooms.

Each child will keep their personal belongings in their designated cubby and bag. We encourage all families to sanitize materials coming back and forth to school daily.

Afternoon Extended Care will function within a cohort model. Drop-ins may not be available.

## **Grades 1-8**

HVWS will maintain consistent Grade School cohorts throughout the day, restricting mixing between the groups in Sundial House (Grades 1-3) and Compass Hall (Grades 4-8).

Desk placement will maximize distance between students, achieving six feet when feasible. Desks will face in the same direction (rather than facing each other).

Outdoor classrooms will be utilized when possible. Teachers will increase time outside for all students whether for teaching or a simple break from mask wearing. Time outside will be staggered between cohorts and/or location.

Space between teachers and students will be maximized as possible. When a teacher is sitting at their desk, a physical barrier may be used for when students approach with work. If a teacher is providing close instruction (e.g. handwork instruction) a face shield may be used in combination with a face mask.

Whenever possible, Specialty Teachers will be scheduled to instruct by cohort on a rotating monthly schedule or will hold classes outside.

Teachers will modify procedures in classes that involve movement, music, or artistic work (including but not limited to gym, music, dance, Eurythmy, and applied arts) to maintain physical distancing as possible. Examples of these protocols include:

- Singing and flute playing will only occur outside, with increased physical spacing (twelve feet) with all singers or flute players facing the same direction.
- Traditional Dance will not include hand holding or prolonged close physical proximity.
- Teachers will not tune student instruments at school.

Generally, students will not share materials. When the sharing of materials is necessary, handwashing and the disinfecting of materials will be increased. Materials that cannot be disinfected will not be shared. As per guidance on cleaning from the State of Connecticut, detergent products (soap) and water are effective for surface cleaning and are very effective at removing the virus that causes COVID-19 from surfaces.

Students will not collect or distribute classroom mail.

At the start of the year, Afternoon Extended Care will not be offered. This program may be reintroduced as the school year progresses.

## **Social and Emotional Health**

Relationships and social and emotional well-being are at the center of a Waldorf curriculum and classroom. Care will be taken to be aware of the social and emotional well-being of all members of the community. HVWS's smaller classes and multi-year teacher-student relationships afford more personal

attention from teachers. Teachers will create a supportive environment for students, parents, and each other during this time of transition.

### **Early Childhood Program Additional Steps**

To ease the back-to-school transition, the following steps were implemented:

- New students received a physically distanced home visit from their teacher.
- Returning students received a letter from their teacher in the mail.
- Teachers hosted a clothing drop-off/supply pick-up day, allowing the parents to see where their arrival/dismissal area would be and offering an opportunity for the teachers and children to connect.
- Teachers are integrating into their circles and stories a more healing context in relation to the long absence and difficulties that some may have encountered during this pandemic.

### **Special Education**

Guidance and policies related to school reopening plans apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for individual education programs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan as designed, we will facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon student need, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input.

### **Festivals, Performances, and Assemblies**

The HVWS faculty and staff will update procedures for festivals and assemblies to be celebrated either within the classrooms or virtually, as possible. Updated procedures will be shared, as appropriate, on the school calendar and/or in communications between teachers and parents.

### **Programs and Activities Suspended Until Further Notice (Updated Rev. 2)**

- Summer Camp
- In-person Morning Glories Parent-Child Classes
- In-person After-School Programs
- Early Care
- Field Trips (exceptions may be made for trips that would not require carpooling)
- Large Gatherings on Campus
- Hot-lunch and Bake Sale Fundraisers
- Morning Handshakes

## **Campus Closure (Updated Rev. 2)**

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Any decision about a campus closure, reopening, or cancellation of school events will be made in coordination/collaboration with local health officials and in consideration of local conditions and trends.

### **Campus Closure, School Exposure**

Students will be grouped in cohorts to allow for fewer opportunities for cross-exposure and easier containment of the virus if there is a positive case. If a class or cohort are directed to shift to distance learning because of the need for quarantine, the school community will be notified (as outlined above), and the school may take extra precautions during this time, such as changes in school schedules or space use.

HVWS may close the entire Grade School or Early Childhood campus if positive cases of COVID-19 are identified in more than one class per campus or if school leadership determines that doing so is advised in consultation with local and state authorities.

HVWS may close the entire Grade School or Early Childhood campus if it is not possible to staff school programs safely because of the number of teachers and staff out sick or quarantined.

### **Campus Closure, Local or Statewide Conditions**

HVWS will follow the guidance of the Governor if he determines that a statewide K-12 campus closure is required. HVWS may also determine that a campus closure is necessary if regional rates of infection increase.

The state provides access to data (updated weekly) on the key metrics developed by the Connecticut Department of Health (DPH) and the Department of Education (CSDE) to support school decision-making around in-person learning: <https://data.ct.gov/stories/s/CT-School-Reopening/ddy2-ijgu/>

During a Grade School campus closure triggered by state-wide or regional conditions, the HVWS Early Childhood classes will remain open on campus, operating under the daycare center guidelines published by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, unless otherwise instructed by local or state authorities.

### **Continuation of Instruction**

Should a class or campus need to switch to a distance model the classes affected will take one or two “snow days” for teachers to regroup and then will launch into a distance block. There may be situations in which teachers themselves fall sick during a class quarantine, in which case HVWS will work to arrange substitute distance-learning coverage, as possible.

If teachers need to take up remote instruction they will be cognizant of the pace and mode of instruction. A balance of direct instruction, support, and social interaction is still under development at each grade level.

### **Early Childhood Program**

The Early Childhood Program at HVWS may need to implement a short-term closure in the case of a direct exposure. Should a class switch to a distance learning model teachers will support parents with weekly packets containing some combination of stories, recipes, suggested daily rhythms, songs, movement exercises, and recordings from the teachers. Early Childhood teachers may choose to engage in small, group Zoom check-ins with students.

### **Grades 1-8**

Teachers in Grades 1-8 are planning their main lesson blocks with distance learning in mind. Teachers are also planning a school-wide weekly schedule of online classes, which will include main lesson work and specialty classes. Attendance at these classes will be expected just as attendance at on-campus classes is expected.

Using technology is a part of this process for the older students, but teachers will also make an effort to have them sign off of their devices as much as possible, striving to maintain a balance of work that does and does not require the use of a computer.

*While school is in session on campus, faculty will support learning from home for individual students who are at high risk or live with someone who is at high risk of complications from COVID-19. Learning from home while class is in session on campus will not be the same as a full distance learning program. It will include homework and a weekly teacher check-in. In certain instances, this may include live streaming of classes. This will be determined on a class-by-class basis.*

### **Reopening**

After a campus closure, classes will remain in distance learning mode until school leadership determines a date for the safe return to instruction on campus.

In the event of a prolonged closure, school-wide deep cleaning and systematic checks of water and ventilation systems will be implemented before a return to campus.