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2022-2023

**NYCACS COVID-19 RELATED POLICIES**

**AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Combined Sections 1-13

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**SECTION 1: DISTANCING, PERSONAL HYGIENE AND PPE**

Due to the ongoing effects of Covid-19, NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACS) will adhere to the following guidelines. These are in place to mitigate risk for students and staff. Every member of the school community is expected to follow all guidelines as written.

* Within NYCACS as well as the wider school buildings, staff should attempt to maintain a reasonable distance from others, especially if they are still within the 10-day recovery period from having had Covid-19, have recently been exposed to someone with Covid-19 (although are still testing negative), or are exhibiting symptoms of illness or allergies that, while not prohibitive in terms of work, could expose others to transmission of symptoms.
* We will continue to rely on video conferencing technology for large group meetings, with some supervision also remaining remote. Parents may opt to attend scheduled clinics and planning meetings in person starting in November if rates of Covid-19 remain consistent. Remote clinics and planning meetings will continue to be an option for parents moving forward.
* Staff and students must use designated building entry/exit points and stairwells.
* We will continue to follow hygiene protocols and to wear PPE in certain circumstances or according to the comfort level of each individual staff member or student/family. All staff will be required to read and view a designated set of training materials on proper use of PPE. [(See Training Materials for Hand Washing and Proper PPE Use)](#section12)
* Face masks are encouraged but typically not required for staff or students. Face masks **are** mandatory when an individual is recovering from Covid-19 and able to work/attend school but still considered infectious.
  + In this instance, staff and students are required to consistently and correctly wear a KN95 or higher grade mask throughout the potentially infectious period as dictated by the NYC Department of Health. If students are not able to tolerate consistently and correctly wearing a mask for the entirety of the day (except while eating and drinking) during the infectious period, they will be required to stay home and will be provided with remote instruction assuming they are well enough to receive it.

Face masks are also strongly encouraged when an individual has recently been exposed to someone who tested positive for Covid-19, even when they themselves have tested negative.

* Staff are expected to have clean hands at all times and/or be wearing gloves. Disposable gloves will be available and should be worn when contacting student bodily fluids or when touching food items or soiled/contaminated surfaces.
* Hand sanitizer will be available at all student work stations and in common areas.
* Additional protective equipment (e.g., gowns, face shield, goggles) will be available and may, at times, be required. These items should always be put on, worn, and taken off as directed.
* Students must remain within NYCACS spaces during all times of the day. Staff should also remain within NYCACS spaces with the exception of lunch. Shared building spaces should only be accessed when approved by the Classroom Supervisor or Head of School. Outdoor spaces will be accessed on a predetermined schedule (created in conjunction with co-located schools), weather permitting.
* Staff must remain in their designated classrooms or an approved alternate designated space during prep periods and non-instructional hours.
* Each student will have a designated storage space for personal belongings (e.g., cubby, locker, bin). Storage spaces should remain closed when not in use.
* Each staff member will have a designated storage space for personal belongings (e.g., locker, closet, bin). Spaces should remain closed when not in use and only accessed by individual staff members as needed.

**SECTION 2: CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION**

General Guidelines:

* Table arrangement should allow for some separation between students and there should be distance between students during dyad/group work when possible. Additionally, students should ideally be assigned individual workspaces (e.g., desks and chairs) that will not be shared with other students across the day. If an individual’s workspace is shared for whatever reason, furniture should be cleaned between uses.
* Classroom windows should be easily accessible and able to be opened readily. Windows should be opened periodically to increase air flow unless the space has an air conditioning system that circulates air.
* Classroom doors should always remain open. If a door must be closed, the windows should be opened more frequently and/or for longer durations to increase air flow.

Staff Materials and Organization:

* Staff should try to limit direct exposure to other students and staff outside of their classroom during the workday to the greatest extent possible.
* Staff should avoid sharing materials to the greatest extent possible. Each staff member will have access to an individual set of materials that can travel with them throughout the day.
* Each staff member will have their own walkie-talkie for their use only. Each staff member is responsible for ensuring that their walkie-talkie is charged at the start of the day and cleaned at the end of the day. Walkie-talkies should not be shared across staff, except in the case of an emergency. Regular cleaning should be conducted in the event that a walkie must be shared.

Students Work Areas and Material Organization:

* Students must have designated spaces for personal belongings to be stored.
* All students should, to the greatest extent possible, have their own individual materials used only by them.
* All snacks should be stored in air-tight containers and accessed by individual students or by staff members wearing gloves [(See Student Food and Meals)](#section6)

**SECTION 3: CLASSROOM HYGIENE AND CLEANING**

Cleaning and disinfection guidelines issued by New York State Department of Health include the following:

* Students should wash/sanitize their hands (rubbing hands together for 20-30 seconds with lots of lather) at the following times during the day at a minimum:
  + After arrival/unpacking
  + After using the bathroom every time
  + Before and after eating
  + Upon contacting their own or anyone else’s bodily fluids (e.g., hands in mouth, blowing nose, coughing on hands)
* Staff should wash/sanitize their hands at the following times during the day at a minimum:
  + After arrival/unpacking
  + After using the bathroom every time
  + Before and after eating
  + Upon re-entering the school at any point (e.g., after getting lunch)
  + Upon contacting any bodily fluids or assisting a student with an activity that involves bodily fluids (e.g., wiping, eating, nose blowing)
    - Gloves should be worn while assisting students with any self-care skills in which contact with bodily fluids may occur
* Cleaning Bins are available in all rooms containing sanitizing wipes, disinfectant spray, paper towels, and gloves. These bins should be kept stocked in a clear, central location along with hand sanitizer and tissues. All supplies will be restocked by a designated person at specific times during the week.
* Any surface or item that is used by more than one person should be disinfected after each use.
* Once students are dismissed, classroom staff are responsible for cleaning the following items in their classrooms:
  + Tables and desks
  + Chairs
  + Door handles
  + Window handles
  + Technology (e.g., computers, iPads, timers)
* All classrooms, offices, bathrooms, and hallways will be cleaned each day by building custodians and the NYCACS contracted cleaning service after students dismiss.

**SECTION 4a: STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL** **(BRONX)**

General Protocols:

* All staff must wear a walkie-talkie during arrival and dismissal and ensure that it is on with the volume turned up.
* Throughout the arrival and dismissal process, staff should attempt to maintain a reasonable distance from one another and encourage students to do so as well.
* During the arrival and dismissal process, staff should avoid conversation with one another that does not immediately pertain to students’ arrival/departure and/or their wellbeing.
* During arrival, staff will remain at the arrival location from 8:30 AM – 8:45 AM to account for late arrivals.

Roles and Responsibilities:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Arrival Responsibilities | Dismissal Responsibilities | Materials Needed | Person  Assigned |
| Student Coordinator | - Announces over the walkie-talkie when each student arrives.  - Lets bussing personnel and parents dropping off know when students can be released from the vehicle.  -Alerts clinical team if student is not on the bus/dropped off as expected. | - Announces over the walkie-talkie when each bus/pickup vehicle arrives.  - Ensures that students get onto the correct bus. | Bussing roster, bussing backpack, cell phone, walkie-talkie | Clinical Team/Supervisor |
| Bus Coordinator | - Communicates with bus personnel regarding any route changes/concerns and late bus arrivals.  -Ensures magnetic signage along doors in stairwell to block access by others in the building are posted. | - Communicates with bus personnel regarding any route changes/concerns and late bus arrivals. | Bussing roster, walkie-talkie, cell phone | Operations Manager |

**STUDENT ARRIVAL**

Entering the School Building

* School busses and parent vehicles will be directed to the playground on the corner of Tinton Avenue and Home Street for drop off.
  + If a parent/caregiver does not have a vehicle, they will be directed to the student drop-off area.
* All staff members should be outside for student arrival.
* All staff members are encouraged to maintain a reasonable distance from one another.
* Only one bus or vehicle will be unloaded at a time.
  + Before students exit the vehicle/bus, each student’s name will be announced over the walkie and the assigned staff member will meet the student at the bus.
    - For parents/caregivers who do not have a vehicle, staff will meet them in the designated pick up area.
    - For parents who do not see their child’s assigned arrival staff person, they should bring them to the Student Coordinator upon arrival at the building.
  + All students will be escorted into the building and to their NYCACS classrooms by a staff member.
    - Independent student transitions must be approved by the Head of School.
    - Students in reduced ratio classrooms will be escorted in small groups
* Temperature checks will be conducted using a contactless thermometer by classroom staff within the classroom as necessary. ([See Covid-19 Diagnosis and Sickness Policy](#section9)).

Transition from School Entrance to NYCACS Hallways

* All NYCACS staff and students will use the designated stairwell when transitioning from the arrival location to classrooms.
* Staff and students should always use the right side of the stairwell.
* Students should maintain a reasonable from one another throughout the transition to NYCACS classrooms. Staff should assist students in maintaining this distance.

Entering NYCACS Hallways

* Upon entering NYCACS hallways, students should go immediately to their assigned classrooms.
* All personal belongings should be removed and placed in the students designated storage area (e.g., cubby, locker, bin).
* After unpacking, students and staff should wash and/or sanitize hands before moving on to the next activity.

Late Arrivals

* If a bus arrives after staff have re-entered the building, the Bus Coordinator will announce the late bus over the walkie-talkie and will meet the assigned staff members at the arrival entrance.
  + The Bus Coordinator will bring the bussing roster, bussing backpack (with door key), cell phone, and walkie talkie.
* The arrival process outlined above will be followed as students exit the bus.
* One staff member must remain at the school building entrance.

\*The same protocol should be followed when a student is dropped off late by a parent or caregiver at the main entrance, factoring in the adjusted location.

**STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Packing Up

* Any student belongings that are outside of the classroom will be collected by one staff member and brought into the classroom for pack up.
* Once packed up, students should remain seated at an assigned location in the classroom until their bus is called.
* Students should be completely packed up by at least five minutes prior to dismissal time.

Transition from NYCACS Classrooms to Dismissal Location

* All NYCACS staff and students will use the designated stairwell during dismissal.
* Staff and students should always use the right side of the stairwell.
* When a student’s bus is announced, the student should be escorted downstairs and to the dismissal location.
  + Exceptions to this process for individual students must be approved by the Classroom Supervisor and the Head of School.
* Staff should assist students in remaining a reasonable distance from one another throughout the dismissal process.

Dismissal

* The Student Coordinator will report to the outside dismissal area 5 minutes prior to dismissal time and begin announcing busses as they arrive.
* Busses will be announced over the walkie-talkie one at a time.
  + Parents/caregivers will wait in their vehicle or in the dismissal area for pick up.
* Students will be guided to maintain a reasonable distance from one another throughout the dismissal process.
* Students may wait outside by the dismissal area (when accompanied by a staff member) until their transport has arrived.
* Staff should immediately return to their classrooms once their assigned student is on the bus.

Early Pick Up

* If a parent/caregiver wants or needs to pick up a student before the regularly scheduled dismissal time, the parent/caregiver will call the office or send a Remind message to let staff know when they are at the school.
* The parent/caregiver will wait outside of the school or in the lobby of the main entrance.
* The Packing Up and Transition from NYCACS Classroom to Dismissal Location protocols outlined above should be followed.

**SECTION 4b: STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL (EAST HARLEM)**

General Protocols:

* All staff must wear a walkie-talkie during arrival and dismissal and ensure that it is on with the volume turned up.
* Throughout the arrival and dismissal process, staff should attempt to maintain a reasonable distance from one another and encourage students to do so as well.
* During the arrival and dismissal process, staff should avoid conversation with one another that does not immediately pertain to students’ arrival/departure and/or their wellbeing.

Roles and Responsibilities:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Arrival Responsibilities | Dismissal Responsibilities | Materials Needed | Person Assigned |
| Student Coordinator | - Announces over the walkie-talkie when each student arrives.  - Lets bussing personnel and parents dropping off know when students can be released from the vehicle. | Announces when each bus/pickup vehicle arrives. Ensures that students get onto the correct bus. | - Bussing roster  - Walkie-talkie | Supervisor rotation |
| Bus Coordinator | -Communicates with bus personnel regarding any route changes/concerns and late bus arrivals. | -Communicates with bus personnel regarding any route changes/concerns and late bus arrivals. | -Bussing roster  -Walkie-talkie | Operations Team Member |
| Student Attendance Monitor | - Coordinates calls to parents if a student does not arrive without prior notice.  - Monitors building entry door. | N/A | -Attendance sheet  -Entry door key | Operations Team Member (may be the same as Bus Coordinator) |

**STUDENT ARRIVAL**

Entering the School Building

* School busses and parent vehicles will be directed to a designated area for drop off along east 100th Street between 1st Avenue and the FDR Service Road.
* All staff members should be outside prior to student arrival.
* Only one bus or vehicle will be unloaded at a time.
* Only one student will exit the bus or vehicle at a time.
  + Before students exit the vehicle/bus, each student’s name will be announced over the walkie-talkie and the assigned staff member will assist the student to their classroom.
  + All students will be escorted into the building and to their NYCACS classrooms by a staff member.
    - Independent student transitions must be approved by the Head of School.
    - Students in reduced ratio classrooms will be escorted in small groups.
    - Reasonable distance will be maintained between students, to the greatest extent possible, during the transition.

Transition from School Entrance to NYCACS Hallways

* All NYCACS staff and students will use the designated stairwell when transitioning from the arrival location to classrooms.
* Staff and students should always use the right side of the stairwell.
* Students should remain a reasonable distance from one another throughout the transition to NYCACS classrooms. Staff should assist students in maintaining this distance.

Entering NYCACS Hallways

* Upon entering NYCACS hallways, students should go immediately to their assigned classrooms.
* All personal belongings should be removed and placed in the students’ designated storage area (e.g., cubby, locker, bin).
* After unpacking, students and staff should wash or sanitize hands before moving on to the next activity.

Late Arrivals

* If a bus arrives after staff have reentered the building, the Bus Coordinator will announce the late bus over the walkie-talkie and will meet the assigned staff members at the arrival entrance.
  + The Bus Coordinator will bring the door key.
* The arrival process outlined above will be followed as students exit the bus.
* One staff member must remain at the school building entrance.

\*If a student is brought in after 8:45AM by a parent/caregiver, the student must be brought to the security desk at the main entrance of the building where a staff member will be meet them.

**STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Packing Up

* Once packed up, students should remain seated at an assigned location in the classroom until their bus is called.
* Students should be completely packed up by at least five minutes prior to dismissal time.

Transition from NYCACS Classrooms to Dismissal Location

* All NYCACS staff and students will use the designated stairwell during dismissal.
* Staff and students should always use the right side of the stairwell.
* Staff should assist students in remaining a reasonable distance from one another throughout the dismissal process.

Dismissal

* Busses/Caregiver pick-ups will be announced over the walkie-talkie one at a time.
* Students will be guided to maintain a reasonable distance from one another throughout the dismissal process.
* Students may wait outside by the dismissal area (when accompanied by a staff member) until their transport has arrived.
* Staff should immediately return to their classrooms once their assigned student is on the bus.

Early Pick Up

* If a parent/caregiver needs to pick up a student before the regularly scheduled dismissal time, the parent/caregiver will call the office or send a Remind message to let staff know when they arrive at the school.
* The parent/caregiver must meet the student at the security desk by the main entrance of the building.
* The Packing Up and Transition from NYCACS Classroom to Dismissal Location protocols outlined above should be followed.

**SECTION 5: CURRICULUM AND TEACHING MODIFICATIONS**

School Hours and Curriculum Modifications:

* All students will be expected to attend school in person barring the need to follow isolation protocols as directed by the NYC Department of Health. The school-day will remain at a full six hours of synchronous instruction for all students.
* Community Based Instruction (CBI) will begin again for East Harlem Upper School students starting in October 2022.
* Students who meet the following criteria are permitted to attend field trips
  + The student tolerates a face covering if required for transportation or by staff at the destination.
  + The student demonstrates low levels and rates of challenging behavior which can be easily managed in the community.
  + Parental consent has been granted.
* Adjustments to teaching procedures and skill acquisition programs to minimize potential health and safety risk for students and staff will be implemented only if students or staff are recovering from Covid-19 and potentially still infectious. In such instances:
  + Modifications to teaching procedures will be made to ensure that the target skills can continue to be taught.
  + Modifications to teaching procedures will be reflected within data collection procedures.

**SECTION 6: STUDENT FOOD AND MEALS**

The following guidelines are in place to continue to reduce the amount of contact staff have with student food.

Parent Guidelines for Food Sent from Home:

* Prepare all foods at home to the greatest extent possible (e.g., cut food into bite size pieces, ensure that sauce or dressing is already on food).
* Ideally, food should not require heating or refrigeration at school. Food should be warmed at home and sent in a thermos or with ice packs.
* Any food that requires heating at school should arrive in a microwave safe container.
* Food should be sent in daily. No food will be stored overnight at school unless approved as part of instruction. Such food should not require preparation by staff in order to be consumed.
* Families are strongly encouraged to send in snacks that might be needed throughout the day.
* Families are asked to provide their child with a reusable water bottle. Water bottles will be sent home daily for cleaning.

Snacks During the School Day:

* Staff must wash or sanitize their hands prior to handling student food.
* Students must wash or sanitize hands prior to eating.
* Snack bags/containers should be stored at each student’s individual workstation.
* Staff and students must wash or sanitize hands once a student is finished eating.

School Meal Pickup and Distribution

* A designated adult will be responsible for picking up and distributing school-provided breakfast and lunch to each classroom.
* Any materials used during this process (e.g., lunch bag, transportation cart) should be disinfected prior to and after use.
* Food should remain covered at all times prior to consumption.
* Any opened, leftover food should be thrown away immediately at the end of each meal.

Student Meal Periods

* Students must eat all meals in their designated classrooms or in an alternative approved location (e.g., Life Skills Room).
* Students must wash or sanitize hands prior to and after meals.
* Students will remain a reasonable distance from one another during mealtimes.
* Staff will remain a reasonable distance from students during mealtimes unless the student requires assistance and/or specific mealtime skills are being taught. Staff may choose to wear additional PPE (e.g., facial shield, gown, goggles) while assisting students during mealtimes.
* At the end of the meal period, students may assist in cleaning up while maintaining a reasonable distance from all other students.
* At the end of the meal period, students and staff must wash or sanitize their hands.
* All surfaces used during the meal period should be disinfected.

**SECTION 7: STUDENT BATHROOM USE**

Student Bathroom Protocol:

* All student bathrooms will be gender neutral.
* More than one student will be permitted in the bathroom at one time, based on the size of the bathroom. Students of different genders will never be allowed in the bathroom at the same time.
* If a student requires assistance with any part of the bathroom routine, staff may accompany the student into the bathroom.
* When assisting a student in the bathroom, the staff member must wear gloves and may choose to wear a mask.
  + If prolonged close contact (e.g., manual guidance throughout bathroom routine) or contact with bodily fluids (e.g., assistance with wiping) is required, the staff member may wear additional protective items (e.g., face shield, gown, googles).
  + Protective equipment must be discarded or cleaned upon exiting the bathroom.
* Students must wash hands prior to exiting the bathroom. Staff should ensure that handwashing is thorough [(See Proper Handwashing and Use of PPE)](#section12) If there are concerns about thoroughness, students should also use hand sanitizer before exiting the bathroom.
* When waiting for an occupied bathroom to become available, the student and accompanying staff member must wait in the designated waiting area outside of the bathroom.

**SECTION 8: STAFF BREAKS**

Staff Lunch Break

* Staff will have a scheduled 30-minute lunch break during the day. Lunch breaks will be staggered so as to allow for an appropriate level of classroom coverage.
* Staff may store food in designated refrigerators.
* All staff are required to sanitize or wash hands before and after their lunch breaks.
* Lunch breaks must be taken in designated locations as directed by the Classroom Supervisor or Head of School.
* Staff must maintain safety practices and a reasonable distance between one another during lunch breaks.
* Weather permitting, staff may take lunch breaks outside.
* When taking a lunch break in a designated area of the classroom, the following rules must be followed:
  + No phone calls.
  + If using a device that makes sound, headphones must be worn.
  + Minimize conversation and interaction with other staff and students in the classroom.
* At the end of the lunch break, the staff member is responsible for disinfecting all chairs, tables, and surfaces used.
* Absolutely no dishes should be left in the sinks or on counters. Any dishes found in these locations at the end of the day will be disposed of.

Bathroom Breaks and Usage

* All staff will use the designated staff bathrooms (e.g., East Harlem - library bathrooms closest to Hallway One; Bronx - bathrooms across from co-located school science and art rooms).
* Bathrooms will be gender neutral and can be used by any NYCACS employee.
* Only one person is allowed in the bathroom at a time.
* The bathroom doors should remain open when the bathroom is not in use. When exiting the bathroom, the staff member must insert the doorstop and/or ensure that the door remains open.
* All staff members should maintain a reasonable distance from one another when waiting for the bathroom.
* All staff members are required to wash hands thoroughly before exiting the bathroom.

**SECTION 9: COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS AND SICKNESS POLICY**

**RESOURCES AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

* Information on Covid-19 prevention and symptoms can be found [HERE](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)
* Information on Covid-19 testing can be found [HERE](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page). Scroll down to search for testing sites by zip code.
* All Covid-19 cases are reported to the [New York State Contact Tracing Program](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-contact-tracing). If you receive a call from the contract tracing program (518-387-9993), please pick up/call back as soon as possible.
* CDC travel requirements can be found [HERE](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory).
* The definition of a close contact is being closer than six feet to another person for more than 10 minutes across a 24-hour period.
* All employees working in charter schools are required to be fully vaccinated. Additionally, staff at NYCACS are required to have at least one booster vaccine on a schedule supported by health guidelines.

Covid-19 Symptoms, Exposure, and Diagnosis

Positive Diagnosis of Covid-19

* The school should be notified immediately if a student or employee receives a confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19. Documentation must be provided. For staff, this means a PCR test result, not just results of a rapid test.
* Any staff member who tests positive for Covid-19 must isolate for a minimum of five days with Day One being the day of testing or symptom onset, whichever comes first. The staff member may return to work on Day 6 after first testing positive OR after first showing symptoms and subsequently testing positive (whichever comes first) under the following conditions:
  1. Per NYC DOH guidance, the positive staff member must be asymptomatic OR meet the following criteria:
     1. Fever free for 72 hours without the use of medication
     2. No excessively runny nose
     3. No significant cough (cannot be couching up phlegm)
     4. Generally improving or mild symptoms
  2. At work from Day 6 through Day 10, the positive staff member must consistently and correctly wear a well-fitting high-grade face covering such as a KN95 mask, which will be provided if they don’t have one.
* Students who test positive, regardless of vaccination status, are required to isolate for a minimum of five days with Day One being the day of testing. They may return to school on Day 6, without additional testing, under the following conditions:
  1. Per NYC DOH guidance, the positive student must be asymptomatic OR meet the following criteria:
     1. Fever free for 72 hours without the use of medication
     2. No excessively runny nose
     3. No significant cough (cannot be couching up phlegm)
     4. Generally improving or mild symptoms
  2. At school from Day 6 through Day 10, the positive student must consistently and correctly wear a well-fitting high-grade face covering such as a KN95 mask. If a student is not able to wear a mask consistently and correctly, they will be required to remain home for the entirety of the 10-day infectious period, with remote instruction being provided as long as the student is well enough for such instruction.
* Upon receiving information about a confirmed diagnosis, the school will contact the appropriate authorities and engage in contact tracing protocols as directed by that office. Such efforts may include providing Department of Health (DOH) personnel with a list of individuals at our site who have been in close contact (see definition above) with the diagnosed individual.
* Adherence to all DOE and DOH Guidelines will be followed.

Exposure to Covid-19

* Staff and students (regardless of vaccination status) who are exposed to Covid-19 within the school/classroom will be notified as soon as the School learns of the exposure. They will then receive two at-home Covid-19 tests.
  1. The first test must be taken that same day/evening or, if the exposure is learned about after school hours and no test is available, the next day. The student or staff member may remain in school as long as that test result is negative and assuming they have remained symptom free.
  2. The second test must be taken on Day 5 after exposure. The student or staff member may continue remain in school if that test result is negative and assuming they have remained symptom free.
     1. If symptoms develop prior to Day 5, the second test should be administered right away.
  3. If at any point a test result is positive, the school must be notified immediately. The steps outlined above related to positive cases of Covid-19 will be followed at that point.
  4. If parents refuse to test their child after exposure, the student will be required to quarantine for 5 consecutive days with Day Zero being the day of exposure or symptom onset, whichever comes first.
* Staff and students (regardless of vaccination status) who are exposed to Covid-19 *outside* of school, must obtain testing independently and follow the testing schedule outlined above.

Symptoms Exhibited at School

* If a student or staff member exhibits one or more Tier 1 symptom or two or more Tier 2 symptoms (see chart below), they will be required to go home. In the case of students, parents will be called to pick up their child.
* The school will distribute at-home rapid Covid-19 test kits to any staff or student who exhibit such symptoms, and will be strongly encouraged to test.
* In order to return to school, the individual must:
  1. Be fever-free for at least 24 hours in the absence of fever reducing medication
  2. Be free of diarrhea or vomiting for at least 24 hours
* After receiving a negative test result, symptoms should continue to be monitored closely. Additional testing may be suggested if symptoms persist or worsen.
* A positive test result should be reported to school immediately. The steps outlined above related to positive cases of Covid-19 will be followed at that point.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Isolation Requirement | Criteria for returning to school | Impact on others/school | Notification policy |
| Confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19 for STUDENT (vaccinated or unvaccinated) | At least five days of isolation from the date of test. | Return to school on Day 6 only if all of the following criteria are met:  -Fever free for 72 hours without the use of medication  -No excessively runny nose  -No significant cough (cannot be couching up phlegm)  -Generally improving or mild symptoms  -The ability to correctly and consistently wear a well-fitting high-grade face covering such as a KN95 mask.  \*If the student is not able to do so, they will be required to remain at home for the remaining 5 days, with remote instruction provided as long as the student is well enough to receive it. | If the diagnosed student was in school at any point within the prior 48 hours of testing or symptom onset, anyone who was within 6 feet of the student for 10 minutes or more in a 24-hour period is considered a close contact and must follow the exposure protocol.  If the diagnosed individual is a student who travels to/from school by bus, all other students who ride the same bus and are considered a close contact and must follow the exposure protocol. | Any family whose child is considered a close contact will be notified and informed of the exposure protocol.  Any staff member who is considered a close contact will be notified and informed of the exposure protocol.  Information on the number of confirmed cases will be available and updated weekly on the School’s website. |
| Confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19 for STAFF (vaccinated or unvaccinated) | Five days of isolation from date of test or symptom onset (whichever came first). | Return to school on Day 6 only if all of the following criteria are met:  -Fever free for 72 hours without the use of medication  -No excessively runny nose  -No significant cough (cannot be couching up phlegm)  -Generally improving or mild symptoms  \*At work from Day 6 through Day 10, the positive staff member must consistently and correctly wear a well-fitting high-grade face covering such as a KN95 mask. | If the diagnosed staff member was in school at any point within the prior 48 hours of testing or symptom onset, anyone who was within 6 feet of the staff member for 10 minutes or more in a 24-hour period is considered a close contact and must follow the exposure protocol. | Any family whose child is considered a close contact will be notified and informed of the exposure protocol.  Any staff member who is considered a close contact will be notified and informed of the exposure protocol.  Information on the number of confirmed cases will be available and updated weekly on the School’s website. |
| Individual (student or staff) experiences one or more Tier 1 Covid-19-like symptom or two or more Tier 2 Covid-19-like symptoms at school or home (see Covid-19 symptom breakdown below) | No immediate isolation requirement. Testing protocol is highly recommended.  \*The school’s Sick Policy must be followed. | The individual will receive a Covid-19 test kit. One test should be used immediately.  The individual can return to or remain at school if symptoms do not meet the “stay home” criteria under the school’s Sick Policy. | None unless a diagnosis is confirmed. At that point, see above for confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis protocol.  If the test result is negative, the school’s Sick Policy should determine next steps. | Families will be notified of the results of any tests conducted at school. |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Isolation requirement | Criteria for returning to school | Impact on others/school | Family notification policy |
| Individual (student or staff) is exposed to a positive case of Covd-19  Exposure definition:  -An individual (staff or student) who had close contact (closer than 6 feet for 10+ minutes across a 24-hour period) with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 during their contamination period (48 hours prior to the individual testing positive or showing symptoms up through onset of their isolation). | No immediate isolation requirement if testing protocol is followed.  \*The school’s Sick Policy must be followed in the event that an individual exhibits symptoms. | The individual will receive a Covid-19 test kit from the school. The first test should ideally be administered that same day. The individual may return to or remain at school if the test is negative test and if they remain symptom free.  The individual must test again on Day 5 after exposure and may return to school the following day with a negative test result if they have remained symptom free.  \*The second test should be administered sooner if symptoms develop prior to day 5. | None unless the exposed individual ultimately tests positive. If that is the case, see above for confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis protocol. | Families will be notified of the results of any tests conducted at school.  Families will be required to send verification of any tests conducted at home. |

Covid-19 Symptom Break Down

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tier 1 | Tier 2 |
| * Fever of 100 degrees or higher * Excessive or new cough * Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing * Loss of taste or smell | * Fatigue * Muscle and/or body aches * Headache * Nausea * Vomiting * Diarrhea * Sore throat * Congestion or excessive runny nose * Conjunctivitis |

**NYCACS STUDENTS**

Screening:

* Students will be visually screened for Covid-19 related symptoms (see list of symptoms in the table above) and may have their temperature taken with a contactless thermometer.
* It is strongly suggested that students remain home even if they are experiencing different or milder symptoms than those listed in the table above such as excessive sneezing or other symptoms that result in the frequent expulsion of body fluids.
  + Should a student exhibit these symptoms while at school, the parent/caregiver will be notified and pick up will be strongly recommended. If pick up is not available, teaching opportunities and activities may be limited for the remainder of the day. The student may also be removed from the classroom and monitored in a separate room.

Student Arrives with a Temperature:

* If a student shows a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, and/or other Covid-19 related symptoms, parents/caregivers will be contacted immediately for pick up and testing strongly recommended
* The student may then be escorted to the school’s isolation room (separated from other students and staff) and monitored there until pick up.

Student Becomes Sick During the School Day:

* If, at any point during the school day, a student shows a tier 1 symptom (i.e., fever of 100 degrees or higher, excessive or new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell) or excessive runny nose, vomiting, and/or diarrhea, the student’s parent/caregiver will be notified immediately and must pick up their child as soon as possible. The school will inform the parent of the corresponding protocol that must be followed based on the symptoms.
* The student, along with all of their belongings, may be brought to the school’s isolation room (separated from other students and staff) and monitored there while awaiting pick up.
* A student will not be sent home on the bus after displaying a tier 1 symptom or multiple tier 2 symptoms.
* Parents will be strongly encouraged to test their child if they exhibit a single tier 1 symptom or multiple tier 2 symptoms.

\*When a parent/caregiver is picking up a student during the school day for any reason (e.g., sickness, early dismissal), they must contact the school as soon as they have arrived at the building. The student will be escorted out of the building by a staff member and brought to the parent/caregiver.

\*Anytime a student must remain home due to a mandated isolation protocol related to Covid-19, remote instruction can be provided assuming the student is able to participate ([See Remote Instruction Implementation)](#section11).

**NYCACS EMPLOYEES**

Staying Home:

* All staff will be required to submit a questionnaire daily prior to arriving at work. This information will be collected via a secure application designed for this purpose. Staff MUST remain home if they experience vomiting, diarrhea or meet criteria for remaining home as part of the Covid-19 protocols outlined in the table above.

Staff Becomes Sick During the School Day:

* Staff should alert their supervisor if they begin to experience Covid-19-like symptoms (listed above) during the school day and will be guided through the testing protocol outlined above.

\*If a staff member is remaining home due to a mandated quarantine requirement resulting from a positive test but is not actively ill, they **may** be offered remote work (e.g., providing remote instruction, material preparation) but only if such work is available. Otherwise, they will be required to use their allotted COVID-related sick days and then personal days once the COVID-related sick days have been exhausted.

**SECTION 10: CONTACT TRACING, REPORTING WITH LOCAL AGENCIES, AND SCHOOL CLOSURE**

Upon a confirmed case within the NYCACS community, the school will immediately notify the NYC Department of Health (DOH) Situation Room.

NYCACS will comply with all outlined guidance from the DOH and may opt for a more conservative response given the size of our student population and their specific profiles (e.g., difficulty tolerating masks).

In addition to reporting Covid-19 cases to the DOH Situation Room, the school(s) may be required to submit a daily Covid-19 report card to NYS Department of Health indicating the number of individuals referred for testing, confirmed cases of Covid-19, and number of tests conducted. Those data are accessible [HERE](https://schoolcovidreportcard.health.ny.gov/#/home).

A COVID-19 Safety Coordinator (or their designee) will be assigned as the main point of contact after a positive COVID-19 case has been identified and will be responsible for overseeing all subsequent communication. At NYCACS, the Operations and HR Manager will serve in this capacity. Coordinators are responsible for answering questions from students, families, staff, and parents or legal guardians of students regarding the COVID-19 public health emergency and plans implemented by the school. Coordinators will also work closely with local health departments and other schools to monitor public health conditions and jointly develop monitoring strategies.

In addition, a designated COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will be appointed whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school’s Covid-19 Response Plan, as well as any activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities fully return to normal levels. At NYCACS, the Executive Director will serve in this capacity.

In the unlikely event of a classroom or school closure, staff and families will be notified immediately, and remote instruction will be started as soon as possible.

Steps to Be Taken Upon Potential Whole School Closure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Responsibility | Task Details | Timeline | Person Responsible |
| Contact local health officials | DOHMH at 866-692-3641, Monday through Saturday, 9AM-5PM | Immediately | Executive Director |
| Contact families | Inform families of closure – send message through Remind, email, and call. | Immediately | Operations and HR Manager with support from Executive Director and Heads of School |
| Contact staff | Inform staff of closure – ensure all staff are alerted. Send message through Remind and email. Include any interns or others working at the school. | Immediately | Operations and HR Manager with support from Executive Director |
| Contact building partners | Follow DOE process for alerting building partners.    East Harlem:  Central Park East 2  DREAM Charter School  Children’s Aid Society  Bronx:  PS 463 Urban Scholars Community School  PS X188 at X198 (District 75)  Montefiore Medical Center School Health Program | Immediately | Head of School or Executive Director |
| Contact bus companies and transportation paraprofessionals | Contact all bus companies with potential timeframe of closure. Contact transportation paraprofessionals and agencies. | Immediately | East Harlem:  Office and Parent Relations Manager  Bronx:  Office Manager |
| Parent needs assessments | Reach out to families to determine needs related to childcare, food, etc. | Once initial closure notices have been sent | Clinical Supervisors and Head Teachers |
| Initiation of remote instruction | Reach out to families to solidify remote instruction schedules. | Once initial closure notices have been sent | Clinical Supervisors and Head Teachers |
| Contact and cancel scheduled services | If a school-wide closure has been initiated, review staff calendar and cancel all services that were scheduled during the closure period (e.g., AC maintenance) | Once all items above have been completed | East Harlem:  Office and Parent Relations Manager  Bronx:  Office Manager |

**SECTION 11: REMOTE INSTRUCTION IMPLEMENTATION**

At times throughout the year, individual students may not be able to attend school as a result of Covid-19 isolation requirements. In these cases, students may continue their education through remote instruction. The guidelines below are in place to ensure that remote instruction can be implemented as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Remote Instruction Preparation

* **Classroom Preparation for Remote Learning:**
  + Staff will take their assigned iPads and laptops to and from school on a daily basis with limited exceptions.
  + Student Remote Instruction Plans will be developed for all students and updated on a regular basis. Head Teachers are responsible for working with their classroom teams and supervisor to keep these plans updated.
* **Student Preparation for Remote Learning:**
  + Any remote learning technology (e.g., laptops, iPads) that has been loaned to students by the school, will remain at students’ homes.
  + Equipment and materials that have previously been provided to families by the school will remain at students’ homes.
  + Materials developed during the course of in-school instruction that would benefit remote instruction may be duplicated and sent home with students.

Conditions Under which Remote Instruction is Implemented:

* **Remote Instruction Implementation during School-Wide Closure:**   
  While unlikely, the city, state, or school leadership may make a decision to close schools for a period of time.
  + Families will be notified of the closure date and the timeline for remote instruction to commence.
  + Head Teachers/Clinical Supervisors will contact families to discuss their child’s remote instruction schedule.
  + Head Teachers/Clinical Supervisors will work with supervisors to determine a classroom remote instruction schedule.
  + If possible, staff will return to the school building to gather additional materials required for remote instruction. These materials should be clearly listed on each student’s Remote Instruction Plan.
  + If necessary and when possible, remote instruction materials will be delivered to student homes.
* **Remote Instruction Implementation for Individual Students who have been attending school in-person:**   
  To be used when a student is required to stay home due to mandated isolation.
  + Head Teacher/Clinical Supervisor will contact the family to discuss the remote instruction schedule.
  + If necessary and when possible, remote instruction materials will be delivered to student homes.
  + The student may return to in-person instruction as per the protocols listed above ([See Covid-19 Diagnosis and Sickness Policy).](#section9)

**SECTION 12: TRAINING MATERIALS FOR PROPER HANDWASHING AND**

**PPE USE**

All NYCACS staff members will be required to review the training materials and resources outlined below prior to the reopening of schools.

Handwashing

1. Wet your hands under running water.
2. Put soap on your hands.
3. Scrub your hands together for 20 seconds making sure to target:
   * In between fingers
   * Backs of hands
   * Wrists
   * Under fingernails
4. Rinse your hands under running water.
5. Dry hands with a paper towel.

**Staff and students will be required to wash hands including but not limited to:**

* After using the bathroom
* Before and after handling food

Using Hand Sanitizer

(Note: Use of hand sanitizer does not replace washing your hands with soap and water, but may help in times that soap and water are not available)

1. Use enough to wet hands completely (about dime or quarter size).
2. Rub over both hands until dry, which takes approximately 20 seconds.

How to Put on and Take Off a Mask

1. Use hand sanitizer or wash hands before applying a mask.
2. Remove the mask from the box and make sure there aren’t any tears.
3. Locate the top edge of the mask (stiff bendable edge that can be molded to fit your nose).
4. Face the colored side of the mask outwards.
5. Place the mask on your face so it is covering your nose and your mouth.
6. Place the loops on the side of the mask around your ears or tie the ties behind your head and nape of neck to affix the mask to your face.
7. Mold the top of the mask to fit your nose and pull the bottom of the mask to fit your chin.
8. When removing the mask, wash or sanitize your hands.
9. Remove the mask by the loops or bands.
   * Avoid touching the front of the mask.
10. Discard disposable masks.

How to Put on Gloves

1. Wash or sanitize your hands.
2. Pick up the glove on the side and slide your hand into the glove; pull it down over the wrist.
3. Pick up the other glove on the side and slide your other hand into the glove; pull it down over your wrist.

How to Take Off Gloves

1. Slide your finger inside of the glove at the wrist and pull the glove off so it turns inside out.
2. Use the inside of the first glove to pinch the bottom edge of the other glove by the wrist and pull the glove off so it turns inside out.
3. Discard both gloves.

How to Put on a Gown

1. Unfold the gown.
2. Place your arms in the arm holes so that the opening of the gown is at your back.
3. Tie the strings at the top of the gown and flip the gown over your head.
4. Place the strings around your waist and tie in front of your body.

How to Take Off a Gown

1. Untie the ties at the neck and around the waist.
2. Pull the gown so that it can be rolled up inside-out.
3. Discard in the trash.

How to Clean a Computer

1. Unplug and turn off your device before cleaning.
2. Using an alcohol wipe or Clorox Disinfectant Wipe, gently wipe the hard, nonporous surfaces of the computer.
3. To clean the display, place the laptop so that the display lays on the table.
4. Allow to sit for at least two minutes until the active ingredients dry.
5. Do not get moisture into any openings.
6. Do not submerge your computer in cleaning agents.

Video Tutorials That Must Be Viewed by All Staff Members:

1. [How to Wear a Mask](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=cdc+how+to+wear+a+face+mask+correctly&ru=%2fvideos%2fsearch%3fq%3dcdc%2520how%2520to%2520wear%2520a%2520face%2520mask%2520correctly%26qs%3dMM%26form%3dQBVDMH%26sp%3d3%26pq%3dcdc%2520how%2520to%2520wear%26sk%3dMM2%26sc%3d8-15%26cvid%3d535A4D66094C47918B805A1271475DC9&view=detail&mid=5091E54D96C52CC6863F5091E54D96C52CC6863F&&FORM=VDRVRV)
2. [How to Wash Hands](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=cdc+video+handwashing&&view=detail&mid=5C5B64C4C64A54C7425C5C5B64C4C64A54C7425C&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dcdc%2Bvideo%2Bhandwashing%26%26FORM%3DVDVVXX)
3. [How to Put On and Take Off Gloves](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=cdc+how+to+properly+wear+gloves&&view=detail&mid=E8391392CC0C21BCC2ABE8391392CC0C21BCC2AB&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dcdc%2520how%2520to%2520properly%2520wear%2520gloves%26qs%3DRI%26form%3DQBVDMH%26sp%3D2%26pq%3Dcdc%2520how%2520to%2520wear%2520gloves%26sk%3DAS1%26sc%3D3-22%26cvid%3D95D913B173E344BABF3F6B91947766B6)
4. [Proper Use of PPE](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=cdc+how+to+wear+ppe&&view=detail&mid=CC23FB5F38AD264B7FB6CC23FB5F38AD264B7FB6&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dcdc%2520how%2520to%2520wear%2520ppe%26qs%3DAS%26form%3DQBVR%26sp%3D1%26pq%3Dcdc%2520how%2520to%2520wear%2520ppe%26sc%3D2-19%26cvid%3D2CBDB6447DC64A4E9E38BF5E7728766F)
5. [How to Clean a Computer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMv549wXaWo)

Additional Resources

1. [CDC – Wearing Face Coverings](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html)
2. [CDC – Handwashing: How and When](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html)

**SECTION 13: PARENT MEETINGS, OBSERVATIONS, AND VISITORS**

Starting in the 2022-2023 school year, parents, visitors, interns, and observers will all be allowed back into the school. This policy may be adjusted if there is a significant increase in rates of Covid-19 or directives from the NYC Department of Education or Department of Health.

Parent Clinics and Observations

* In-person clinics, observations, and planning meetings will be available to parents starting in November. Virtual clinics, observations, and planning meetings will still be an option as well.
* A parent/guardian may schedule observations (virtual or in person) by contacting the Classroom Supervisor and Head Teacher.

Open Houses and Accepted Students

* Open houses will continue to be available via video on our website.
* Should a family be offered placement during the year, an in-person tour and intake meeting may be scheduled.

Internship Program, Student Observations, and Professional Visitors

* NYCACS Internship Program and student observations will be re-instated starting in October. Determinations about such visits will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Head of School.
* Visitors who are allowed admittance into the building will be required to show proof of vaccination (with some exceptions for delivery personnel and others who are not in contact with students and staff).