



## COVID-19 Policy 2021-2022 School Year

The safety of our Nest Nature School staff, students, and families is our highest priority. We have developed these policies to best support our program in providing a safe space for our community while maintaining the integrity of our curriculum and mission. We are grateful for your cooperation in understanding that school safety and the ability to maintain healthy students is a community effort and requires all of us to collaborate. We want to work in partnership to ensure that we are addressing everyone's needs as best we can. We will continue to take all the precautions and steps possible to prioritize the safety of our Nature School community. Please reach out with any questions about this policy, we are happy to discuss further.

Thank you in advance for your support and adherence of these policies to keep our students, school, and community safe. The policies listed below are subject to change as we adapt to changing conditions to best support the health and safety of our school and community. Please note that as circumstances change and data emerge, we will continually update you on any changes.

### **I. Policy Overview and Development**

The Nest Nature School COVID-19 Policy has been developed in collaboration with the following regulating agencies, partner organizations and data sources: Cibolo Center for Conservation, Texas Department of Licensing and Family Protective Services, Texas Department of Health and Human Safety (TDHHS), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The Nest Nature School will be regularly reviewing local and state-wide transmission trends and public health data to identify the most relevant mitigation strategies to comply with current recommendations and support best practices.

### **II. Health Screening**

Teachers will administer a health screening (consisting of a series of questions and a temperature check) for each child as they arrive at school. If the student is presenting any of the symptoms listed below and does not pass the health screening at arrival or is sent home from school with an elevated temperature of 100.4 or greater, please follow the guidance outlined in section VI below.

Please inform our teachers if you have medicated your child for any reason (including allergies). All staff will adhere to daily health screenings and will be subject to the guidelines as outlined above.

*More Common Symptoms of COVID-19 include:*

- Fever equal to or greater than 100.4°F
- New onset and/or worsening cough
- Difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste/smell

*Less Common Symptoms of COVID-19*

- Sore Throat
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Excessive fatigue
- New onset of severe headache
- New onset of nasal congestion or runny nose

### **III. Drop Off/ Pick Up Procedures**

At this time, we encourage but do not require that adults wear a mask when entering the Nest campus outdoor spaces. We do require that staff, families, and visitors wear a mask when entering the Welcome Center.

#### **Drop Off**

- When parents/caregivers enter the Nest campus, they will park and walk their students directly to their classroom. Teachers will administer the health screening to students before they are signed-in to the class.
- Parents will not be allowed into the indoor classroom spaces at this time.
- Students and staff will wash their hands as they enter the classroom, and all teachers and staff will wear a mask when inside the classroom space.

#### **Pick Up**

- Students will be picked up by parents/caregivers at their classroom. After signing out their student, caregivers will escort students back to their vehicle.

### **IV. Support Physical Distancing**

We believe that our most powerful tool to reduce transmission is physical distancing, ensuring that children's exposure is at a minimum. To support this:

- Parents/caregivers will be the primary adults on the campus. Other outside visitors will not be allowed to visit The Nest Nature School while school is in session, except at the discretion of the Administration.
- Staff allowed inside school spaces during programming will be limited to teachers and some Cibolo Center for Conservation staff, persons with legal authority to enter including law enforcement officers and department of family and protective services or licensing staff, professionals providing services to children, children enrolled at the operation, and parents who have children enrolled and present at the operation. All adults entering the space will be required to wear masks.
- Classes and programming will be held outside to the maximum extent possible to include mealtimes, circle times and group times when curriculum allows, and any other scheduled activity that can be accommodated outside (pending weather considerations).
- Each class will remain in self-contained pods with extremely limited interaction with other classes.

**V. Hand Hygiene**

- Thorough hand washing practices will continue to be followed by staff and students. Staff will increase monitoring and frequency of hand washing throughout the day to ensure that students are following the proper procedures. Washing with soap and water is preferred, but when it is not available, hand sanitizer (with at least 70% alcohol) will be available for students and staff.

**VI. Masking of Teachers and Students Indoors**

- All teachers and any other approved staff entering the classroom space will be required to wear a mask while indoors. Teachers will have the option to take masks off outdoors during outdoor learning and play time.
- At this time, students will not be required to wear a mask while indoors. Indoor classroom time will constitute a limited percentage of the school day, and we will promote time on the classroom's screen porches and outdoors in the 5 Outdoor Learning & Play Spaces or on the Herff Farm Campus.

**VII. Classroom Cottage Design & Ventilation**

- The Nest Nature School classroom cottages are designed for maximum ventilation. As weather permits, we will open the classroom windows, turn on the many fans indoors and outdoors, open the French doors, and provide time for children on the classroom screen porches.

**VIII. Meals/ Water**

- There will be no family style snacks or lunches and no utensils will be used.
- All meals will be facilitated outside at the picnic tables on the classroom porches (pending inclement weather).
- Surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected after meals.

- Individual drinking cups for water will be provided for each child or children will have personal water bottles.

**IX. Sanitizing and Cleaning**

The Nest Nature School will continue to follow rigorous regular cleaning schedules and disinfecting practices.

**Daily**

- Staff will sanitize classroom items and high traffic areas prior to the start of each school day, regularly throughout the day as needed, and will conduct a thorough cleaning at the end of each school day.
- Staff will clean the bathroom daily.
- Soiled and/or dirty items will be sanitized and cleaned as necessary.

**Weekly**

- The classroom space is deep cleaned once per week in addition to daily AM and PM cleaning and sanitizing routines as listed above. In addition to these daily routines, weekly cleaning involves deep cleaning classroom and bathroom spaces to include doorknobs and handles, all surfaces including but not limited to high touch surfaces, faucets, sinks, and light switches.

**X. Response Plan Due to Outbreak or Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis**

Our staff is committed to clear lines of communication to our Nest families, and we appreciate your understanding and trust during this time of high transmission in our community.

Please refer to the Parent Handbook “Policy for Unforeseen School and/or Classroom Closure” for additional information. If a child must miss school due to quarantine or illness, Cibolo Nature School will not issue refunds. If we experience a positive COVID-19 case on campus, the Nest Nature School staff will make decisions on quarantine and classroom closure and will let families know immediately.

We encourage families to reach out to administrative staff directly to discuss questions or considerations around these policies as our priority is to accommodate each family as best we can and to make decisions that align with the guidance from the CDC. In the event of an extended closure, the school may transition to an online learning model at the discretion of the administration.

**VI. Actions to Take with Symptoms or Exposure Risk**

**Note:** The Cibolo defines “contact” per CDC guidelines: within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more with or without a mask.

**If your child exhibits any symptoms listed above in Section II,**

- 1) Stay home; contact your teacher and inform them of symptoms.

- 2) Contact your healthcare provider for next steps, including being advised to get tested.
- 3) If the child is tested, they should remain at home until the pending test results are known and negative. The student may return once they have been free of fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours without the use of medications and the other symptoms have reduced.
- 4) If the child is not tested, they should remain at home for 10 days and not return until they have been free of fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours without the use of medications and the other symptoms have reduced.

**If your child receives a COVID-19 test and they test negative:**

The student may return once they have been free of fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours without the use of medications and the other symptoms have reduced.

**If your child receives a COVID-19 test and they test positive:**

- 1) Inform the Nest Administration immediately.
- 2) Your child may return to The Nest campus:
  - a. after completing a quarantine of 10-days from onset of symptoms;
  - b. free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours;
  - c. all other symptoms reduced.

**If a student or teacher tests positive for COVID-19:**

- 1) We will inform all families as necessary and close that classroom for an established period to be determined, based on the current CDC guidelines and State licensing requirements.
- 2) We will enact extensive cleaning procedures in that classroom during that time.

**If the student is traveling to a major metropolitan area within Texas (outside of Boerne and San Antonio), outside of the state of Texas, or internationally:**

Inform the Nest Administration as soon as you know your plans. A plan of action will be determined taking many factors into consideration, including CDC guidelines, modes of transportation, potential risks and case counts in the area to be visited.

**If your child comes into direct contact with someone who has a positive COVID-19 diagnosis:**

- 1) Stay home; inform The Nest Administration.
- 2) Contact your healthcare provider for next steps, including being advised to get tested.
  - a. If the student is tested, the test should be administered no sooner than 3-5 days post positive contact.
  - b. If the student is not tested, the student must stay home and quarantine for 14 days post positive contact.
- 3) The student may return to school once the quarantine period has exhausted or they have received a negative COVID-19 test.

**XI. Parent and Family Resources**

More information about Texas COVID-19 Testing Sites  
<https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/testing.aspx>