

Lake Harriet United Methodist Preschool's Safe Learning Plan

Lake Harriet United Methodist Preschool (LHUMP) is committed to providing the safest early childhood education (ECE) setting that we can. Many of the layered prevention strategies described in this guidance can help prevent the spread of several infectious diseases, such as flu, RSV, and norovirus - not just COVID-19 prevention - and support healthy learning environments for all.

The CDC and MDH guidance help ECE programs remain open and help their administrators support safe, in-person learning while reducing the spread of COVID-19. Based on the [COVID-19 Community Levels](#), this guidance provides flexibility so schools and ECE programs can adapt to changing local situations, including periods of increased community health impacts from COVID-19.

The LHUMP Community should use a variety of actions every day to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including the virus that causes COVID-19. The following set of strategies for everyday operations should be in place at all COVID-19 Community Levels, including low levels.

1. Staying Up to Date on Vaccinations

- a. For COVID-19, [staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations](#) is the leading public health strategy to prevent severe disease. Not only does it provide individual-level protection, but high vaccination coverage reduces the burden of COVID-19 on people, schools, healthcare systems, and communities.

2. Staying Home When Sick

- a. People who have symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea, should stay home. Testing is recommended for people with [symptoms of COVID-19](#) as soon as possible after symptoms begin.
- b. For more information on staying home when sick with COVID-19, including recommendations for isolation and mask use for people who test positive or who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, see [Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19](#).

3. Ventilation

- a. LHUMP takes steps to increase outdoor air intake and improve air filtration. For example, safely opening windows and doors and using portable air cleaners with HEPA filters, are strategies to improve

ventilation. We also consider holding some activities outside if feasible when the COVID-19 Community Level is high.

4. Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- a. LHUMP teaches and reinforces proper handwashing to lower the risk of spreading viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19. We also monitor and reinforce these behaviors, especially during key times in the day (for example, before and after eating, after using the restroom, and after playing in the muscle room and outdoors).
- b. LHUMP teaches and reinforce covering coughs and sneezes to help keep individuals from getting and spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

5. Cleaning

- a. LHUMP follows the recommended procedures for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection in the preschool such as after play, meals, and exposure to bodily fluids.

COVID-19 Community Levels and Associated Prevention Strategies

CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) help communities and individuals make decisions about what COVID-19 prevention strategies to use based on whether their community is classified as low, medium, or high. These levels take into account COVID-19 hospitalization rates, healthcare burden, and COVID-19 cases. Recommendations outlined for the COVID-19 Community Levels are the same for schools and ECE programs as those for the community. Schools and ECE programs that serve students from multiple communities should follow prevention recommendations based on the COVID-19 Community Level of the community in which the school or ECE program is located.

When the COVID-19 Community Level indicates an increase, particularly if the level is high or the school or ECE program is experiencing an outbreak, schools or ECE programs should consider adding layered prevention strategies, described below, to maintain safe, in-person learning and keep ECE programs safely open. Although most strategies are recommended to be added or increased at a high COVID-19 Community Level, schools might want to consider adding layers when at medium based on school and community characteristics.

Masking

Masking will be optional **at low and medium Covid-19 Community Level**. Anyone who chooses to wear a mask or respirator will be supported in their decision to do so at any COVID-19 Community Level, including low.

- Wearing a well-fitting mask or respirator consistently and correctly reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. At a **high COVID-19**

Community Level, universal indoor masking in schools and ECE programs is recommended, as it is in the community at-large.

- People who have known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 should also wear a well-fitting mask or respirator around others for 10 days from their last exposure, regardless of vaccination status or history of prior infection.
- At a **medium and high COVID-19 Community Level**, people who are immunocompromised or at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 should wear a mask or respirator that provides greater protection
- When the **COVID-19 Community Level is medium or high** or in response to an outbreak, ECE programs may choose to implement universal indoor mask use to meet the needs of the families they serve, which could include people at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19.

Testing

Students and staff with symptoms of COVID-19 or who were exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the ECE setting, should test at a community testing site, healthcare provider, or use an at-home test.

CDC no longer recommends routine screening testing in schools.

Management of Cases and Exposures

People with COVID-19 should [isolate](#) away from others and do not attend school until they have completed isolation. Once isolation has ended, people should wear a well-fitting mask or respirator around others through day 10.

Testing is not required to determine the end of isolation or mask use following COVID-19 infection; however people can use the test-based strategy outlined in the [isolation guidance](#) to potentially shorten the duration of post-isolation mask use. If using the test-based strategy, people should continue to wear a well-fitting mask or respirator in the school or ECE setting until testing criteria have been met.

Quarantine is no longer recommended for people who are exposed to COVID-19. People who were exposed to COVID-19 should follow [recommendations](#) to wear a well-fitting mask and get tested.

Responding to Outbreaks

If LHUMP experiences a COVID-19 [outbreak](#) we would consider adding prevention strategies regardless of the COVID-19 Community Level. Strategies that can help reduce transmission during an outbreak include wearing well-fitting masks or respirators, improving ventilation (for example moving school

activities outdoors, opening windows and doors, using air filters), screening testing, and case investigation and contact tracing. Early identification of cases to ensure that they stay home and isolate is a critical component of outbreak response. If LHUMP experiences an outbreak, we would work with MN Department of Health and follow a timely outbreak response.