



# **Reopening Safety Plan - Fall 2020**

**Schools: PreK-12 Grade School**

**Submitted to the New York State Department of Education**

**Brooklyn Heights Montessori School**

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## Revision History

| Revision Date | Notes   |
|---------------|---|
| 2020-08-11    | Updated the Before and After Care section to reflect a temporary suspension of these services   |
| 2020-08-07    | The metric used to determine whether school will close because of increased infection rate in NYC has been adjusted to align with the standard set by the City of New York. |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| Preparation of the Plan                                       | 5         |
| <b>REOPENING</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| Capacity  | 5         |
| Social or Physical Distancing                                 | 6         |
| PPE and Face Coverings  | 6         |
| Students  | 6         |
| Faculty, Staff and Other Individuals                          | 7         |
| Operational Activity  | 7         |
| Cohorts and Program Locations                                 | 7         |
| Visitors  | 8         |
| Field Trips   | 8         |
| Community Events  | 8         |
| Restart Operations  | 8         |
| Hygiene, Cleaning & Disinfection                              | 8         |
| Routine Cleaning  | 9         |
| Cleaning and Disinfection of Shared Eating Spaces             | 9         |
| Child Nutrition and the School Food Authority                 | 9         |
| Extracurriculars  | 9         |
| Before and After Care   | 9         |
| Vulnerable Populations  | 10        |
| Policy Regarding Vulnerable Students, Faculty & Staff         | 10        |
| Transportation  | 10        |
| Food Service/Meals  | 10        |
| Communication   | 10        |
| Student & Family/Caregiver Communication With The School      | 10        |
| Required School Safety Drills                                 | 11        |
| Modifications to Fire (Evacuation) Drill Protocols            | 11        |
| Modifications to Lockdown Drill Protocols                     | 11        |
| Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism                            | 11        |
| Changes or Additions to Facilities                            | 11        |
| Stair/Corridor Door Hold Open Mechanisms                      | 12        |
| <b>TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>                                  | <b>12</b> |
| Start of 2020-21 School Year                                  | 12        |
| Continuity of Learning  | 12        |
| Regular and Substantive Contact with Competent Teachers       | 12        |
| Equity and Access to Learning Opportunities For All Students  | 13        |
| Non-Public High Schools Alignment with NYS Learning Standards | 13        |
| <b>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH</b>                            | <b>13</b> |
|   | 3         |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Mental Health, Behavioral, and Emotional Support Services and Programs   | 13        |
| School Counseling Plan   | 13        |
| Social and Emotional Health Advisory Team  | 13        |
| Community Referrals and Resources for Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Support   | 13        |
| Faculty/Staff Professional Development Opportunities   | 14        |
| <b>MONITORING</b>  | <b>14</b> |
| Screening  | 14        |
| Faculty and Staff  | 14        |
| Parents & Students   | 14        |
| Testing Protocols  | 14        |
| Testing Responsibility   | 15        |
| Early Warning Signs  | 15        |
| Responding To A Positive COVID-19 Case Within The School Community   | 15        |
| COVID-19 Medical Advisory Team   | 15        |
| <b>CONTAINMENT</b>   | <b>15</b> |
| School Health Office   | 15        |
| Isolation  | 16        |
| Collection of Symptomatic Students   | 16        |
| Positive Screening Protocols   | 16        |
| Return to Work/School After A Positive COVID-19 Test or Screen   | 16        |
| For Individuals Who Screened Positive for COVID-19 Symptoms  | 16        |
| For Individuals Who Screened Positive for Close or Proximate Contact With A Person Who Tested Positive for COVID-19 With OR Without Symptoms | 16        |
| For Individuals Who Tested Positive for COVID-19   | 17        |
| Hygiene, Cleaning & Disinfection   | 17        |
| Contact Tracing  | 17        |
| Communication  | 17        |
| <b>CLOSURE</b>   | <b>18</b> |
| Closure Triggers   | 18        |
| Operational Activity   | 18        |
| Communication  | 18        |
| <b>CONCLUSION</b>  | <b>18</b> |

## INTRODUCTION

Brooklyn Heights Montessori School (BHMS) is a PreK through Eighth grade day school located in Brooklyn, NY with a current enrollment of 222 students. Guided by the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, BHMS is a diverse community committed to educational excellence. At our center is respect for the individual child's development and potential. Our classrooms are organized in multi-age groupings in two divisions. The Lower School division includes the Twos (ages two to three), Preschool (ages three to six), and Lower Elementary (ages six to nine) programs. The Middle School division includes the Upper Elementary (ages nine to 12) and Middle School (ages 12 to 14) programs.

## Preparation of the Plan

Our plan for reopening reflects the collaborative work of administrators, faculty, staff, members of the Board of Trustees, parents and medical professionals. The plan was developed under the guidance of the New York State and New York City Departments of Health, the New York State Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS).

## REOPENING

*Protocols and procedures for restarting school operations including students, faculty, and staff returning to in-person instruction*

### Capacity

BHMS is located in three contiguous buildings consisting of 47,600 square feet of indoor space as well as 9,400 square feet of outdoor space including terraces used as outdoor classrooms and playground space located on the roof. BHMS has evaluated all available spaces inside as well as outside of its buildings to determine room capacity and maximum occupancy based on 6 feet of social or physical distancing. At the time of this plan's development, a return to in-person instruction for all program levels can be accomplished using existing spaces, although many spaces on the BHMS campus will be reconfigured to accommodate smaller groups of students and promote the health and safety of the students and faculty and staff. We will also limit capacity of individual rooms and spaces, as well as utilize outdoor spaces on the roof. We have done the analysis of physical spaces and have concluded that we have the capacity available to maintain appropriate social or physical distance requirements, and have sufficient PPE equipment available for our school.

Additionally, the following re-opening qualifications have been met:

- On-hand inventory of PPE and availability through identified supply chains is sufficient
- Safe and reliable transportation to and from our campus is available in the form of both subway and bus service<sup>1</sup>
- Local hospital capacity in the New York City area is sufficient

We have developed a schedule that aligns with our educational philosophy and Montessori tenets of experiential learning. The schedule prioritizes in-person learning for four and a half days a week for the youngest students ages two through third grade and a hybrid approach of in-person learning and remote learning for fourth through eighth grades.

We are currently working on a phase-in plan for all students to return to school. That phase-in plan will be determined based on a variety of factors including the age of the students and the ability to work with and teach the students how to maintain appropriate social and physical distancing.

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<sup>1</sup> [MTA Action Plan for Safe Return](#)

## **Social or Physical Distancing**

We have developed protocols and procedures for students, faculty, and staff to ensure appropriate social or physical distancing both inside and in the outdoor portions of the school facilities. To the extent possible, all individuals will observe appropriate physical distancing of 6 feet of space in all directions between individuals or with the use of physical barriers that do not affect air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation. To remind individuals of the physical distancing requirements we will install signs in all areas of the school. Hallways will also be designated and marked accordingly with signage and directional arrows on the floor. Stairwells will be assigned to be used by certain cohorts of students and their teachers.

We are fortunate to have three different entrances to our buildings, located on Court Street, Bergen Street, and Dean Street. Students from different programs will enter and exit the school through these three different entrances and the arrival and dismissal times for different programs will be staggered. Students in the Middle School program, Twos program and Preschool classroom 4 will enter and exit through the Bergen Street entrance, Preschool classrooms 1-3 and Lower Elementary will enter and exit through Court Street entrance, and Kindergarten and Upper Elementary will enter and exit through the Dean Street entrance. Faculty and Staff will also use the Bergen Street entrance to enter and exit the buildings.

Inside, the classroom work areas for students will be arranged to ensure that each student has sufficient space around them to accomplish their schoolwork, and maintain social or physical distancing requirements to the extent possible. This may be accomplished through the use of shelving units and marked spaces on the floors. We are developing a plan to ensure that students have access to all of the instructional materials that would normally be shared freely by students in the classroom to ensure that those materials are available to students for instruction but are also properly disinfected between uses. In addition, we will provide the necessary school supplies such as work rugs, pencils, scissors, etc. and chromebooks or laptops as developmentally appropriate to each student individually to keep in their work area so that they have the supplies they need to complete their work.

In terms of other areas of the school, we will restrict access to larger communal spaces such as the Conference Room and Staff Lounge to discourage congregation and maintain social or physical distancing requirements. Certain areas of the school will be designated as places where teachers can take breaks observing social or physical distancing guidelines.

## **PPE and Face Coverings Students**

Students (Preschool through 8th grade) are required to wear appropriate face coverings (unless an accommodation based on the student's individual circumstance is necessary) . Appropriate face coverings are defined as homemade sewn, quick cut, or surgical masks that cover the mouth and the nose.

Students enrolled in the Twos program will be strongly encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings. All students are required to wear face coverings during arrival and dismissal time and when moving throughout the building. Students will be required to bring a clean face covering to school every day. Students will be allowed to remove face coverings in the following situations only:

- During meal times
- For short breaks outside (as long as 6 feet of physical distance is maintained on all sides)

Students are encouraged to use their own appropriate face covering. Any student who does not arrive at school with an appropriate face covering will be provided with a disposable paper face covering to wear for the day.

## **Faculty, Staff and Other Individuals**

Faculty, Staff, and other individuals are required to wear an appropriate face covering at all times while in the school building. BHMS will provide, at no cost to Faculty & Staff, an acceptable face covering and a face shield, if requested, which will be maintained by the employee. Disposable paper face coverings are also available in the event that a face covering is lost, soiled, or damaged during the day. Face coverings can be removed in the following situations only:

- During meal times
- When an individual is the sole occupant of an office or space that is not accessible by other individuals.

The school nurse will instruct faculty, staff, and students in the proper procedure for wearing and disposing of face coverings.

BHMS has sufficient PPE for faculty, staff (including health staff), and students and has identified supply chains with enough capacity to ensure PPE availability.

## **Operational Activity**

As stated above, many spaces on the BHMS campus will be reconfigured to promote the health and safety of all individuals by reducing the numbers of students and individuals in classrooms and other areas of the school. Student schedules have been adjusted to allow for fewer transitions and the cohorting of students. A variety of schedules have been created to allow for differing amounts of in-person and remote instruction based on student age and developmental appropriateness. Shared outdoor spaces will be scheduled so that all students have opportunities to be outdoors (weather permitting).

## **Cohorts and Program Locations**

Students will be assigned to cohorts in order to reduce class size and limit in-school interaction with other students. Cohorts will generally be limited to 8-15 students (except in the case of Middle School where a cohort may be 17 students). Cohort groups of students will not intermingle or interact with students from other cohorts. Cohort assignments will not be changed during this time.

In order to accommodate these smaller cohorts, we will relocate certain groups of students to other areas in the school as follows:

All Twos/Preschool/Kindergarten cohorts will be located on the first floor and will be comprised of eight cohorts

- Two-year-old students will be split into 2 cohorts who will attend class after an extended phase-in period on either a three-day schedule (Mon-Wed) or a two-day Schedule (Thurs-Fri).
- PK3/PK4 students will be split into 4 cohorts of mixed aged students in their assigned classrooms and after an extended phase-in period will attend four-and-a-half days a week.
- Kindergarten students will be split into 2 cohorts in the Firehouse and after an extended phase-in period will attend four-and-a-half days a week.

All Lower Elementary cohorts (First through Third grade) will be located on the second floor, occupying the Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary space and will comprise six cohorts. Each of the three classrooms will be split into two cohorts and will attend four-and-a-half days a week.

Upper Elementary cohorts (Fourth through Sixth grade) will be located in the Middle School suite and the 3rd floor Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) suite and will be comprised of 6 cohorts. Each of the three classrooms will be split into two cohorts and will attend four days a week, with the fifth day remote.

Middle School cohorts will be located on the 4th floor in the Gymnasium and will be comprised of two cohorts (one 7th grade and one 8th grade). The 7th grade cohort will attend in-person classes on Monday and Wednesday and attend remote classes on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The 8th grade cohort will attend in-person classes on Tuesday and Thursday and attend remote classes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

### **Visitors**

Access to the school for individuals other than the students, faculty and staff will be extremely limited. In-person visitors to the building (including parents) will be limited to absolutely necessary visits only and will require advance notification and scheduling. BHMS will temporarily suspend all use of our facilities by outside entities.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips and overnight trips (other than short walking excursions in the neighborhood) will also be suspended at this time.

### **Community Events**

BHMS will also temporarily suspend all in-person congregate or community events. Community is at the heart of the BHMS school experience and we will work with all of our community members, faculty, staff, students, and parents to reimagine our community events in virtual form.

### **Restart Operations**

Our BHMS building was closed during quarantine except for when it was necessary for our facilities team to respond to an emergency situation. A COVID-19-level cleaning was also performed throughout the building. When NYC entered Phase 1 of reopening, the building was reopened, and facilities staff and other staff have had access. The buildings are cleaned nightly by an outside janitorial service. All building systems and key components are constantly being monitored and will be re-evaluated prior to reopening and appropriate maintenance will be performed. The cleaning and disinfection protocols and procedures for the building spaces are in place as of the creation of this plan.

In addition, BHMS has consulted with its HVAC service contractor to evaluate the HVAC systems in all areas and to make modifications as necessary to increase outside airflow into the building as well as filter and condition air throughout the building as supported and indicated by the capabilities of our HVAC system. BHMS will utilize MERV-13 filters as well as installing CO<sub>2</sub> sensors throughout the school for air monitoring purposes.

### **Hygiene, Cleaning & Disinfection**

BHMS will adhere to and promote hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection protocols as set forth by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We will provide training to all students, faculty and staff on proper hand and respiratory hygiene.

These protocols include:

- Temporarily suspending the use of reusable dishes, cups, and utensils during this public health emergency.
- Instructing individuals on when to wash hands
- Instructing individuals on how to wash hands
- Instructing individuals on proper respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette

The school nurse will take a lead role in working with the community on all proper hygiene and hand washing instruction. Students and faculty and staff will wash their hands at the start and end of the school day, before



and after eating, after toileting, and frequently throughout the school day. Signs will be posted throughout the school to enforce proper hand washing protocols.

### **Routine Cleaning**

Routine cleaning is the everyday cleaning practice that BHMS uses to maintain a healthy environment. Surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles, bathroom surfaces, and handrails, will be cleaned with soap and water or another detergent at least daily when facilities are in use. More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use. Brooklyn Heights Montessori School will use cleaning agents [identified by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and NYC Department of Environmental Conservation as effective against COVID-19](#). Cleaning and Disinfection of all facilities will be conducted as per the schedule below.

All outdoor areas, such as the roof playground, the outdoor classroom and the terraces will be cleaned routinely.

| <b>Cleaning and Disinfection Schedules</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Area of the School</b>  | <b>Frequency</b>  |
| Entire Facility  | Daily   |
| Restrooms  | 4 times daily (and as needed)   |
| High Touch Surfaces<br><i>Tables, Doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.</i> | Before and after use  |
| Any Space Where an Infected Person Has Visited   | Per the guidelines outlined below in the section titled <b>Hygiene, Cleaning &amp; Disinfection</b> |

We have upgraded our outside cleaning service to a higher level of cleaning, installed plexiglass shields in our reception area, installed touchless sink and toilet fixtures, and have hand sanitizer stations located throughout the school.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection of Shared Eating Spaces**

Students will eat lunch in their designated classrooms. Since the classroom space is not shared with other groups of students, cleaning and disinfection will happen in the evening between school days.

### **Child Nutrition and the School Food Authority**

BHMS does not participate with the School Food Authority.

### **Extracurriculars**

During this time, BHMS will temporarily suspend all athletic and other extracurricular activities. Any athletic or extracurricular activities will be delivered virtually.

### **Before and After Care**

During this public health emergency, BHMS will temporarily suspend all before and after care (MAP) services.

## **Vulnerable Populations**

### **Policy Regarding Vulnerable Students, Faculty & Staff<sup>2</sup>**

BHMS complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) and accordingly will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of their job. BHMS will also work with members of the faculty and staff with respect to their individual circumstances concerning returning to an in person educational environment.

Students who are defined as vulnerable individuals or who have immediate family members who fall into this category will be accommodated for remote learning on a case by case basis in close consultation with the program head and a learning specialist.

### **Transportation**

BHMS does not utilize school busses for student transportation to and from school.

Students who take public transportation to and from school are encouraged to wear face coverings and maintain appropriate physical distance around them at all times. Parents are encouraged to drop off or walk students to school when at all possible.

### **Food Service/Meals**

BHMS does not provide food service for our student or faculty and staff populations. Students and faculty and staff members bring their own lunches and snacks to school. During meal times, individuals must maintain 6 feet of space in all directions. Individuals may remove face coverings to eat during meal times. To protect students with food allergies, classroom teachers will be informed by the school nurse of any students in their classroom with an allergy. Additionally, no sharing of food or drinks will be permitted.

### **Communication**

Brooklyn Heights Montessori School will inform stakeholders and community members (including administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians, the NYC Department of Health, the NY State Department of Health, and the NY State Department of Education) of decisions about health and safety and operations of the school.

BHMS will employ the following means to communicate with families regarding daily operations, training on health and safety matters (i.e., hand hygiene, proper face covering, physical distancing, and respiratory hygiene):

- A special COVID-19 Plan & Reopening section of our website where this and other important information and resources can be found including an archive of communication and resources for helping families educate students about the requirements of returning to in-person instruction
- Email - to communicate general and regular non-urgent messages to the community
- SMS Text Messages to relay any urgent messages to the community
- Canvas (our Learning Management System) to communicate academic schedules and information related to classroom work

### **Student & Family/Caregiver Communication With The School**

Within the BHMS Parent Portal, families/caregivers have access to staff and teacher email addresses and phone numbers. In addition, the school will publish administrator and teacher assigned office hours during which they may be contacted. Families/caregivers may also request an appointment with administrators, staff,

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<sup>2</sup> [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: People Who Are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness](#)

and teachers. Questions regarding Technology can be addressed to the designated Technology Help Line staffed Monday-Friday from 8am to 4pm at (929) 359-7123.

### **Required School Safety Drills**

BHMS will conduct fire (evacuation) drills and lockdown drills as required by education law and regulation and the fire code without exceptions. We will continue to conduct mandatory fire and lockdown drills according to the existing statutory schedule. Drills will be conducted in a manner that maintains physical distancing at exits and gathering points outside the building, while still preparing students to respond in emergencies. Protocol to conduct required school safety drills with modifications ensuring physical distancing between persons:

- BHMS will modify its Crisis Management & Response Plan to include the necessary modifications for Fire Safety, Evacuation and Lockdown protocols that include physical distancing
- BHMS will comply with Education Law § 807 and will conduct (8) evacuation and four (4) lockdown drills each school year. When planning drills, consideration will be given to modifications necessary to minimize risk of spreading COVID-19
- Regardless of the modification to plans or procedures used when conducting a drill, students will be instructed that if it was an actual emergency, the most imminent concern is to get to safety; maintaining physical distancing in an actual emergency that requires evacuation or lockdown may not be possible and should not be the first priority

### **Modifications to Fire (Evacuation) Drill Protocols**

Fire Drills will be conducted as normal with the following changes:

- Students and Staff will wear appropriate face coverings
- Students and Staff will walk toward their designated egress maintaining at least six feet of physical distance
- Students will line up outside in designated areas and continue to remain quiet and maintain physical distance.
- When returning to the building, students will continue to wear face covering and maintain physical distancing protocols
- Fire (evacuation) drills will occur on a schedule to ensure that all students are able to participate in said drills

### **Modifications to Lockdown Drill Protocols**

Lockdown Drills will be conducted as normal with the following changes:

- Lockdown drills will take place in the classroom setting while maintaining physical distancing using face coverings
- Lockdown drills will be conducted in the classroom without “hiding” or “sheltering” and teachers will provide an overview of how to shelter or hide in the classroom in the event of an actual emergency. A written “script” will be provided to faculty to help instruct students.
- All other aspects of Lockdown Drills will remain the same, (i.e. teachers will resume teaching only after their classroom has been cleared by a senior administrator)

### **Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism**

On a daily basis (whether in-person or remote), teachers will enter a student’s attendance into the Veracross Student Information System. Standards for what constitutes present, tardy, absent, and excused absence are defined in the Faculty/Staff and Family Handbooks.

### **Changes or Additions to Facilities**

No changes or additions to our facilities have been made that require building permits or review by local municipalities and/or code enforcement officials.

## **Stair/Corridor Door Hold Open Mechanisms**

BHMS does not have stair or corridor doors that are held open automatically. Additionally, doors rated with fire suppression capabilities will be clearly marked and be required to be left in the closed position.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Start of 2020-21 School Year**

All students will begin the school year remotely focusing on connection and community building and will slowly phase-in to in-person learning. Phase-in will start with the youngest students and will be paced according to the social, emotional, and educational needs of our students. When permitted to operate in-person, our Twos through third grade students will be prioritized for on-campus instruction while older students in grades four through eight will be offered a hybrid schedule of on-campus and remote learning.

### **Continuity of Learning**

For in-person, remote, and hybrid models of instruction BHMS will ensure continuity in curriculum planning and instruction so that teachers and students can seamlessly switch between learning modalities. Instructional content will follow the same guidelines and learning goals no matter the model of instruction. Care will be taken to address the needs of all kinds of learners whether instruction is provided in person, remotely or through a hybrid model.

### **Regular and Substantive Contact with Competent Teachers**

Our academic program will include regular and substantive interaction with a competent teacher, regardless of whether or not instruction is in-person, remote, or hybrid. Our daily schedules can be summarized as follows:

- Twos and Preschool
  - After an extended and developmentally appropriate phase-in period, the in-person school day for our youngest students will include work cycles during which teachers will establish routines and procedures, time for community building, and individualized mini-lessons on the use of classroom materials, which support the scaffolding of academic skills and concepts. After use of a shelf material by a child, it will be set aside until sanitized before being made available again for another child. The need for repetition with materials will be accommodated through personalized mini material kits for a child's independent use. Time for outdoor gross motor activity will be included, weather permitting, along with developmentally appropriate materials that work on basic concepts and skills in the areas of sensory and fine and gross motor development, as well as academic areas of reading, writing, math, science, geography, art and music.
  - The remote school day will include parent education sessions on the fundamentals of a Montessori Education, along with practical techniques on how to develop a child's ability to work independently without the help of the adult. The personalized mini material kits used in school will be sent home for remote learning. These will form the foundation of the independent work expected to be done at home along with daily family life activities to ensure the child's sense of purpose and belonging at home. Remote learning will include both synchronous and asynchronous work periods.
- Grades one through three
  - After an extended and developmentally appropriate phase-in period, the in-person school day will include a morning and afternoon work cycle for academic instruction in the areas of reading, writing, math, science and social studies, along with two cohorts engaging both in-person and asynchronously in their classrooms with one of the following per term - drama, art or music. Spanish and PE instruction will be asynchronous. Designated cohort teachers will include individualized instruction, with appropriate distancing.
  - The remote school day will include all of the above through synchronous and asynchronous

content. There will be regular synchronous small group and 1-1 instruction with students, including individual conferencing to support students in their work choices and continued growth of skills.

- Whether in remote or in-person instruction teachers will keep in regular contact with families.
- Grades four through eight
  - After an extended and developmentally appropriate phase-in period, the in-person school day will include 60-100 minute blocks for teaching reading, writing, math, social studies/humanities, PE and arts classes. In addition to academic subject interaction, students will also have time with their classroom teachers or advisor for small group or one-on-one sessions that focus on developing a student's social and emotional health.
  - The hybrid or remote school day will include 60-100 minute blocks for learning synchronously and asynchronously in reading, writing, math, social studies/humanities, PE and arts classes. Students will also have time to meet with their advisors for small group and one-on-one instruction and connections. Students will also be expected to complete follow-up assignments.

### **Equity and Access to Learning Opportunities For All Students**

Equity is at the heart of our instructional decisions for in-person, remote or hybrid instructions. We have implemented a learning management system, Canvas, to support the seamless transition between different modes of teaching and learning. Teachers will post instructions, materials, videos on Canvas and students will access and post assignments there as well. In cases where students are unable to connect to the internet, classroom teachers and advisors will call and follow-up with each students' family. Our learning specialists and program heads will support classroom teachers in ensuring that students are able to access and complete assignments. BHMS will provide laptops to students who do not have access to one.

### **Non-Public High Schools Alignment with NYS Learning Standards**

BHMS is a PK-8th grade school and as such is not bound by this requirement.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

### **Mental Health, Behavioral, and Emotional Support Services and Programs**

BHMS employs a school psychologist, available to all students, parents, faculty and staff. Our learning support team also includes two full-time learning specialists to support students with learning differences or disabilities. The Social emotional learning and well being of all members of our community are important parts of the curriculum and experience at BHMS.

### **School Counseling Plan**

The School Psychologist will work closely with volunteer faculty and staff providing training and support in the area of identifying signs of crisis in students and ways to support them until such a time that the school's psychologist can intervene.

### **Social and Emotional Health Advisory Team**

A mental health team has been established and will hold regular meetings throughout the summer and school year. The team is made up of the school psychologist, faculty and staff from all programs, school administrators, and the school nurse and will focus on ways to support our community throughout this summer and over the course of next year, whether we are remote or in-person.

### **Community Referrals and Resources for Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Support**

Through a combination of internal support, outside referrals, and work in the health and wellness curriculum, students and families are provided the necessary support to address mental, emotional and behavioural support needs. Crisis intervention happens with support of the school psychologist, until such time as the family can be referred to an outside support system. When a child is referred for outside support, the school

psychologist follows up with the family to ensure that the support is happening. Furthermore, throughout the time that the child is receiving support, the school psychologist acts as a liaison with the family and therapist in order to keep the lines of communication open, and to make sure that faculty are supporting that student appropriately.

### **Faculty/Staff Professional Development Opportunities**

In addition to professional development offered by the school psychologist for faculty and staff, faculty and staff receive training in the concepts of positive discipline and are also encouraged to pursue opportunities that contribute to the health and well-being of the community. During the summer of 2020, a group of volunteers from all programs are meeting regularly with the school psychologist so as to learn ways to support our community over the course of this summer and the year ahead.

## **MONITORING**

*Protocols and procedures to track health conditions at school*

### **Screening**

#### **Faculty and Staff**

On a daily basis, prior to arrival at school, all employees will self screen for COVID-19 Symptoms via the Magnus Health App and answer the screening questions developed in accordance with associated CDC Recommendations regarding COVID-19 symptoms. These screening questions may change from time to time as the CDC modifies their guidance. Information collected during this process is confidential and will only be shared (if necessary) with the Head of School, Director of Finance and Operations as designated human resources representative, Director of Risk Management as designated COVID-19 safety coordinator, and the School Nurse.

Faculty and Staff will be subject to additional screening checks upon entry including temperature checks conducted by a trained employee or the school nurse.

Visitors to the school will be limited to absolutely necessary visits only. All visitors will be screened and temperature checked upon entry. ***Advanced notification is critical to helping the visitor understand the procedures for entry so that they can pre-screen themselves prior to arrival and bring the necessary documentation.***

### **Parents & Students**

On a daily basis prior to arrival at school, all families will self screen each of their children via the Magnus Health App and answer the screening questions developed in accordance with associated CDC recommendations regarding COVID-19 symptoms. These screening questions may change from time to time as the CDC modifies their guidance. Information collected during this process is confidential and will only be shared (if necessary) with the Head of School, Director of Finance and Operations as designated human resources representative, Director of Risk Management as designated COVID-19 safety coordinator, and the School Nurse.

Students will be subject to additional screening and temperature checks upon entry conducted by a trained employee or the school nurse.

### **Testing Protocols**

Individuals will be encouraged to consult with their primary healthcare provider for referral for diagnostic testing for COVID-19. Individuals without a primary healthcare provider can consult the [NYC COVID-19 Testing Information Site](#) for testing information and locations. All individuals are encouraged to get tested for

COVID-19. Individuals who are symptomatic, or those who have come into close contact with someone who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 are required to quarantine for 14 days from the date of last contact with suspected or confirmed infected individuals. In addition, those who have travelled internationally or to a state listed in the [New York State Travel Advisory](#) are also required to quarantine for 14 days from the date of last international travel or travel within such designated state as well as have a negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result prior to returning to school in-person. At the time of this plan, BHMS is considering testing all employees prior to school reopening as well as requiring all students to be tested. No decision has yet been made.

### **Testing Responsibility**

Individuals should consult with the school nurse for referral to testing locations throughout the city. In the case that widespread testing at school is recommended by the NYC or NYS Department of Health, the school nurse, Director of Finance and Operations as the designated human resources representative, and the Director of Risk Management as the designated COVID-19 safety coordinator will either source testing to be done in-house (performed by the school nurse) or at a local partner facility.

### **Early Warning Signs<sup>3</sup>**

The school will continue in-person learning when the New York City infection rate remains at or below 3% using a seven-day average as reported by the City of New York. If the level of COVID-19 infections in New York City rises above 3% in any seven-day period, BHMS will transition to full Remote Learning for at least seven days OR until the level of COVID-19 infections remains below 3% for a seven day period AND The City of New York and the Department of Health clears a return to in-person learning. BHMS will work closely with the NYC Department of Health and the NYS Department of Health to monitor the infection rate of our community and will act on their guidance along with the guidance and recommendations of our medical advisory team in our decision-making processes.

### **Responding To A Positive COVID-19 Case Within The School Community**

BHMS has developed a protocol (including a decision tree) for actions to be taken if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the school. This protocol includes isolation of the infected individual and possibly the cohort of students and teachers connected to the individual (based on a medical evaluation of the particular case), the notification of the NYC DOH, notification of individuals who were in close, proximate contact with the infected individual. All individuals involved will follow the return to work/school protocol to understand at which point they are able to return.

### **COVID-19 Medical Advisory Team**

BHMS will establish a COVID-19 Medical Advisory Team consisting of at least one medical doctor, the School Nurse, the Head of School, the Director of Risk Management, and the Director of Finance and Operations that will meet at least weekly to review school-specific infection rate data to aid in data-driven decision making regarding early warning signs and school closure.

## **CONTAINMENT**

### **School Health Office**

The school's health office includes a consultation space as well as a separate quarantine space. The quarantine space will be used to separate students, faculty, or staff who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day until they can go home or be picked up by a designated contact. The quarantine room allows for visual supervision of symptomatic students by a staff member who is physically distanced.

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<sup>3</sup> [Mayor Bill de Blasio Announces 3% Metric for NYC School Closure](#)

## Isolation

Individuals who screen positive on arrival or become symptomatic at school will immediately be escorted to the nurse's office and placed in the quarantine room. The school nurse will have appropriate PPE for her use in caring for any individuals.

## Collection of Symptomatic Students

The school nurse will reach out to the parents and emergency contacts of students who develop symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day. Students will be required to be picked up from the school as soon as possible.

## Positive Screening Protocols

Individuals who screen positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms at the school, will be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

If an individual develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, they will immediately be separated from others and brought to the school nurse until they can go home or their parent, guardian, or emergency contact can pick them up from school. An assessment will be conducted in consultation with the school nurse and the Department of Health to determine a course of action for those who were in close contact with the individual who screened positive.

BHMS **requires** individuals to **immediately** disclose if and when their responses to screening questions changes, such as if they begin to experience symptoms, including during or outside of school hours.

## Return to Work/School After A Positive COVID-19 Test or Screen<sup>4</sup>

Prior to an individual being allowed to return to work or school they must meet the criteria listed below per the specifics of the individual's situation. Discharge from isolation or quarantine will be coordinated with the NYC Department of Health.

## For Individuals Who Screened Positive for COVID-19 Symptoms

Individuals can return to work or school AFTER:

- At least 14 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **and**
- Symptoms are resolved **and**
- Receiving clearance and documentation from a healthcare provider **and**
- Negative COVID-19 test results

## For Individuals Who Screened Positive for Close or Proximate Contact With A Person Who Tested Positive for COVID-19 With OR Without Symptoms

*The New York State Department of Health considers a close contact to be someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the person was isolated.*

- At least 14 days since symptoms first appeared or 14 days since last contact with infected person **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **and**
- Symptoms are resolved **and**
- Receiving clearance and documentation from a healthcare provider **and**
- Negative COVID-19 test results

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<sup>4</sup> Based on [CDC Guidelines](#) and [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at PreK-12th Grade Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#), pp. 20 and [Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](#)



## For Individuals Who Tested Positive for COVID-19

Individuals can return to work or school AFTER:

- At least 14 days of isolation since the first positive test results **and**
- At least 14 days of no symptoms **and**
- Release from isolation **and**
- Receiving clearance and documentation from a healthcare provider

Employees will provide documentation required for return to work to the Director of Finance and Operations as the designated human resources representative.

Students and Families will provide documentation required for return to school to the school nurse.

## Hygiene, Cleaning & Disinfection

When it is discovered that a person has been sick or is diagnosed with COVID-19 and they have been in the facilities for more than 10 minutes, the following procedures will be used:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick
  - It is not necessary to close operations, if the affected areas can be closed off
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls
- Vacuum the space if needed. Vacuums will be equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available
  - Rooms will be vacuumed when the room or space is empty, such as at night, for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms
  - Room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space will be temporarily turned off, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility
- Once area has been appropriately disinfected, the area will be opened for use
  - Students or employees without close contact with the person who is sick will be able to return to the space immediately after disinfection
- If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary and we will continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

## Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is the process of contacting all people who've had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. The Director of Risk Management and the school nurse have been trained using an [approved course](#) related to contact training in order to assist the NYC and NYS Departments of Health in their contact tracing efforts.

## Communication

See communication plan and procedures listed above.

In addition:

- Faculty and Staff will be required to report any positive COVID-19 cases or COVID-19 exposure in their immediate household to the Director of Finance as the designated human resources representative.
- Families will be required to report any positive COVID-19 cases or COVID-19 exposure in their immediate household to the Director of Risk Management as the designated COVID-19 Safety Coordinator.

## **CLOSURE**

*Contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale of in-person education, and/or closing the school*

### **Closure Triggers**

Increased community infection rates or an increased number of quarantine or isolation cases may warrant reducing in-person instruction or the closure of the school. These decisions will be made in close consultation with the NYC Department of Health and the NYS Department of Health.

### **Operational Activity**

In the case of a move to close the school and transition to remote learning, a period of transition will take effect to allow faculty, staff, and students to make any needed adjustments and preparations. At that time the school will determine which operations will be decreased and moved to a remote status that will be based on the health and safety of its community members.

### **Communication**

See communication plan and procedures listed above.

## **CONCLUSION**

Although we are submitting the plan at this time, we continue to work on policies and procedures necessary to protect the health and safety of all of our community members. We anticipate that the further release of guidelines from both New York City and State will result in further updates and we will file a revised plan at that time.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Flanigan, Head of School

Chris Koble, Director of Risk Management and Designated COVID-19 Safety Coordinator

Robin Walker-Randolph, Director of Finance & Operations and Designated Human Resources Representative

On behalf of Brooklyn Heights Montessori School