



Phebe Anna Thorne COVID Mitigation Strategies

Fall 2022
(as of Aug 25)

We are so looking forward to having your children with us at Thorne! Below are some updates to our COVID mitigation strategies. Public guidance has shifted and responsibility for disease prevention is being tied more closely to personal decision making. We are looking forward to working with you to keep our school community safe.

COVID is still a concern, and we are watching transmission rates as well rising population immunity through vaccination and previous infection. Also, on our radar is monkeypox. We will monitor guidance on that issue as well.

As always, we will be flexible and will pivot when changes need to be made. Now more than ever, our use of prevention strategies will be tied to COVID levels in the larger community.

We are counting on the partnership of parents to keep our students and staff safe. We are all in this together!

Vaccinations:

Vaccination continues to be an important protection against COVID. Vaccination is recommended for all who are eligible by the CDC, CHOP Policy Lab and the Montgomery County Dept of Health. Bryn Mawr and Haverford College require all staff and undergrads to be vaccinated and boosted. Fortunately, many of the children coming to Thorne this fall have already been vaccinated (or are in the process of getting vaccinated) which will add a protective layer for individuals and our entire community. Thank you!

At this time, the CDC and CHOP Policy Lab are not differentiating their guidance for vaccinated vs. unvaccinated, and we will do the same.

Masks

Bryn Mawr College and Thorne will move to a “mask-friendly” policy in all indoor and outdoor spaces. Mask-friendly means that we will support all those who want to wear masks, but masks will not be required in most situations. Please let your child’s teacher know if you would like your child to wear a mask at school regardless of school policy. Masks will be required for some in certain circumstances (i.e.: exposure, returning to school after having COVID or exhibiting symptoms when waiting to be picked up). We will pivot and require if there is an increased risk (i.e.: a school wide outbreak or county level moving to high).

Cleaning

Cleanliness is a high priority. The school will be cleaned daily by the Bryn Mawr College/Haverford College Housekeeping staff. All Thorne staff will have a role in continuously cleaning the classroom “high touch” surfaces including tables, chairs, manipulatives and classroom supplies. Children and staff members will be required to wash/sanitize their hands upon arrival, before and after mealtimes and at other scheduled times during the day. Disinfectant wipes/spray, and soap and water will be used.

Ventilation

All Thorne buildings have high quality, updated ventilation systems that are monitored on a regular basis by BMC/HC college Facilities Departments. Each classroom has an additional HEPA filter which runs all day. When possible, windows will be open to bring in fresh air.

Social Distancing

Play is the cornerstone of our philosophy, and we will encourage children to engage, talk and interact with each other. We will not be distancing the children unless there are risk factors that warrant keeping children distanced (ie: COVID cases in the class). The preschool classes (Older and Younger Class) will be interacting on the playground, at lunch and for the afternoon program. There will be some overlap with LEPP and the Preschool. LEPP classes will not mix as children attend on different days. There is only one class for Kindergarten.

Health Screenings

Children should only come to school when healthy. Before coming to school, we ask that parents screen their children to be sure they do not have a temperature of or above 100 degrees or any other symptoms. If your child is not well or exhibiting any symptoms (see Guidelines for Contagion) keep them home! Additionally, if anyone in your household is exhibiting COVID-like symptoms, please test to be sure there is not COVID in the house. If there is someone sick in the household, please send your child to school with a mask. Children will be sent home if showing symptoms. With monkeypox now an issue, please be sure to monitor any suspicious lesions and consult your pediatrician before sending children to school.

Illness

While COVID-19 is a top priority, it's important to remember that the usual childhood illnesses will continue to be a part of our everyday lives. Please be sure to follow our Guidelines for Contagion and keep your child home if they are not feeling well. If a child becomes ill during the day, the child will remain with a teacher, Amanda, Marcia or Bev in a quarantined area until the caregiver arrives for pick up. Please know we expect parents to be able to pick up their child within 30 minutes of the call. Your child may return to school if symptoms are fully resolved and with a negative COVID test. If your child has a negative COVID test but is still ill, do not send them to school. Wait until all symptoms are resolved. If your child is absent for any reason, please be in touch and let us know the circumstances.

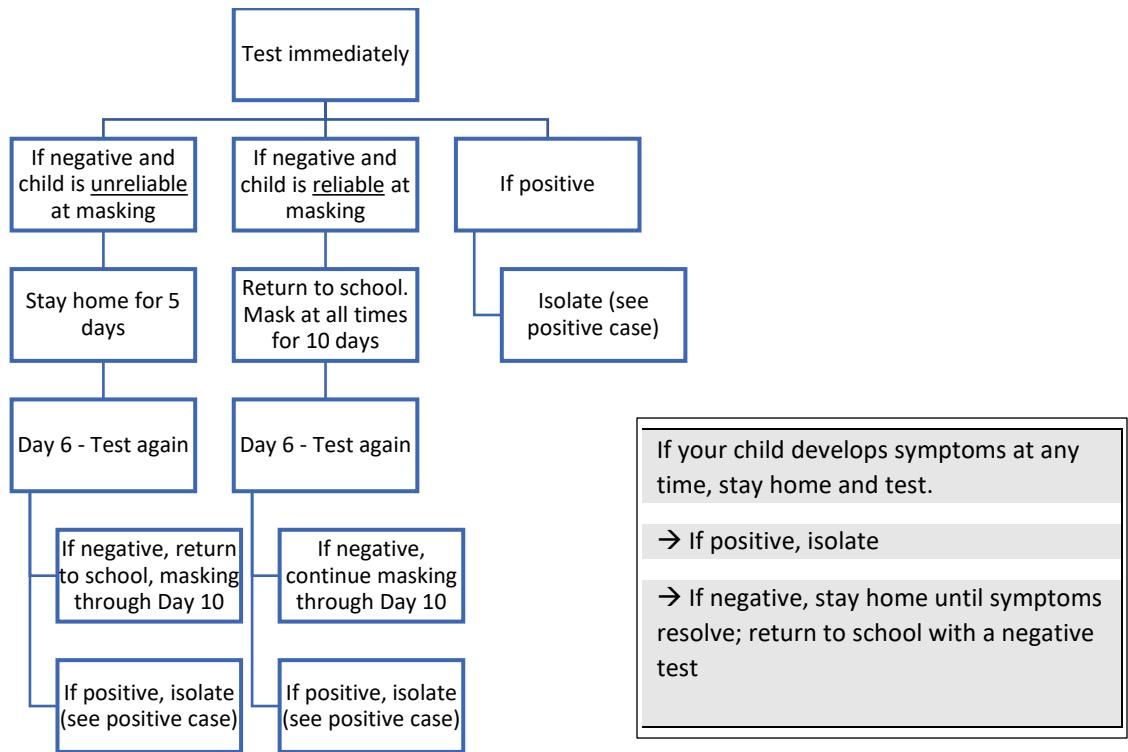
COVID Testing

Children will need a negative COVID test (done within 24 hours of coming to school) when returning to school after a vacation or if a child has been on an airplane, train or mode of transportation where there is a possibility of COVID exposure. Please confirm the result with your child's teacher, Marcia, Bev or Amanda. Please consider a similar protocol if you are participating in a large gathering (concert, sporting event, big party).

REMINDER: Children must provide proof of a negative COVID test (done within 24 hours) before their first day of school.

What to do if your child is exposed to COVID

If your child is exposed to COVID from a classmate, household member, or out in the community, please let us know about the exposure and adhere to the following guidelines:



Regarding COVID cases at Thorne

Parents will be informed if there is a positive COVID case in their child's classroom. Our goal is to continue in person whenever possible. Class closures will be considered if there is an outbreak (multiple cases) or if there are a substantial number of staff members out. Please help us avoid such circumstances by keeping your children home when sick and enforcing masking if your child is exposed.

IF YOUR CHILD TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID

Please let the school know ASAP.

Isolate for 5 days.

For children who are reliable at wearing a mask: If child is symptom free and tests negative on day 5 and 7, they may return to school on day 8. Child must wear a mask at all times through day 10.

For children who are unreliable at wearing a mask: Child must stay out of school until day 10 and may return to school with a negative test on day 11.

Masking:

*Individuals should mask indoors and outdoors when exposed or coming back from being positive.

*Consult Amanda, Bev or Marcia about whether your child is a reliable or unreliable masker before your child returns to school.

Household Exposure:

If there are multiple cases in a household, the exposure timeline starts again after each positive case. Please reach out to Amanda to talk through scenarios.

Distance Learning:

We have in place a distance learning plan with the Seesaw educational platform and will be ready to implement it at any time during the school year if necessary. Online learning will only be used if full classes are out, not for individual absences.

Community Responsibility

We are all members of the Thorne community and we ask families and staff to do their part to ensure our collective well being. Please do your best to keep our community healthy and safe. If there are circumstances in which safe practices cannot be implemented, we hope that parents will respond with caution and keep their children home. We appreciate your partnership!