



Merrifield Child Development Academy

Meaningful Learning & Play

Est. 1991

MCDA Reopening Guidelines and Reminders For Parents and Caregivers

Merrifield Child Development Academy is pleased to be able to reopen on Monday, June 29, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unexpected challenges to childcare centers across the country. Now, Merrifield Child Development Academy (MCDA) is tackling the challenge of navigating the reopening process. We have taken a number of considerations into account from the Centers for Disease and Control, ChildCare Aware, the Virginia Department of Social Services, reopening guidance from Governor Northam, and other trusted sources.

MCDA will continue to adhere to specific phase-in guidelines and provide frequent updates to requirements and timelines in the ever-changing environment. This guidance outlines the steps MCDA is taking to properly monitor staff and children for potential exposure or symptoms of COVID-19. Putting in place these enhanced health and safety procedures will help reduce the possibility of viral transmission and help us establish our “new normal”.

Read carefully the details below regarding enhanced procedures and how you can educate yourself and child(ren) about best practices. Fortunately, best practices for infection control, including handwashing and sanitizing procedures, are already standard operating procedures at MCDA. Similarly, we are already accustomed to monitoring group sizes, maintaining ratio, and paying careful attention to staffing patterns.

Safety First, Always

Signs will be posted at the entrance of the academy to remind you of social distancing guidelines. Additionally, MCDA will provide visual cues to remain six feet apart during arrival and departure times.

All staff will be cleaning and sanitizing frequently throughout the school day by wiping high-touch surfaces like door knobs, light switches, toys, tabletops, etc. Signs will be posted throughout the academy to remind children and staff of healthy practices and what symptoms of COVID-19 and other illness look like.



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Children will be taught practices to reduce the spread of germs, such as avoiding touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands and covering or “catching” coughs or sneezes with the inner elbow or a tissue.

Remember: Toys from home are not permitted inside the academy.

Parent Zone

Parents, caregivers, and visitors will not be permitted inside the academy. Masks and approved face coverings will be worn while in the “Parent Zone”. This zone is where a staff member will greet you and your child(ren), deliver a daily health check (details below), and escort children to immediately wash their hands with soap and water after a successful screening.

Prior to Arrival

We highly encourage caregivers to take their child’s temperature before arrival and apply sunscreen to their child. Please provide MCDA with **sunscreen sticks** (examples are found at the end of this document) that will minimize touching during application and encourage the development of your child’s independent and adaptive skills.

Drop Off

The same designated person should drop off and pick up children every day. Older people, such as those 65+ years of age or adults with serious underlying conditions should not pick up children.

1. Call us at (703) 204-0203 to notify a staff member of your arrival.
2. Put on your mask and your child(ren)’s mask. *Children under the age of two (2) will not be considered for cloth face coverings as they may not be able to reliably wear, remove, and handle masks following CDC guidance.*
3. Bring your child(ren) to the Parent Zone, adhering to social distance guidelines and visual cues.
4. A staff member will greet you and deliver the daily questionnaire:
 - Do you live with anyone or have you had close contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
 - Do you or anyone in your household have a fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath?
 - Do you or your child(ren) have any other signs of communicable illness such as a cold or flu?



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- Have you given your child any fever reducing medications in the past 24 hours?
 - Has your child traveled internationally or outside of the DC-Metro area in the last 14 days?
 - Lastly, what is the estimated pick-up time for your child?
5. If you answer “yes” to any of the numbered questions, you will be directed to return home and contact your child’s physician or urgent care facility as soon as possible.
 6. If you answer “no” to all questions, the staff member will then take and record your child’s temperature using a contactless infrared thermometer.
 7. Once the daily screening is complete, the staff member will sign your child(ren) in on an iPad while still in your presence.
 8. The staff member will finally escort your child(ren) to the bathroom to wash their hands with soap and water for a duration of 20 seconds or longer before joining their classroom.

Pick Up

The same designated person should drop off and pick up children every day. Older people, such as those 65+ years of age or adults with serious underlying conditions should not pick up children.

1. Call us at (703) 204-0203 to notify a staff member of your arrival.
2. Put on your mask.
3. A staff member will take your child to the bathroom to wash their hands with soap and water.
4. A staff member will gather your child’s belongings and escort them to the Parent Zone for pick up.

If a student begins to experience symptoms of illness, MCDA will require them to be excluded until their caregiver picks them up. The child should be seen by a medical professional and the caregiver is required to immediately notify MCDA if the child has been diagnosed with any communicable illness.

Facial Coverings

All staff and children over the age of two, when feasible, should wear cloth face coverings when inside the child care facility and when unable to maintain social distancing of at least six feet distance.



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Consider cloth face coverings for children over the age of 2 if it is determined they can reliably wear, remove, and handle masks following CDC guidance.

Face coverings should be cleaned, following CDC guidelines, or a new disposable face covering should be used each day.

Classroom Instruction and Group Sizes

Children are separated into smaller groups that fall within state and local guidelines. These groups are stable in that the same group of children are with the same teacher each day.

Group size is limited to 12 (including staff) for children under four years old, providing age-based adult:child ratios are followed. MCDA will implement small group activities and encourage individual play/activities. Our classrooms have been rearranged to promote individual play.

For children age four and above, including school-age children up to age 13, group size maximum is 22 (including staff) as long as social distancing of six feet apart is maintained. Age-based adult:child ratios must be followed.

Children will be taught practices to reduce the spread of germs, such as avoiding touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands and covering or “catching” coughs or sneezes with the inner elbow or a tissue.

We will avoid immediate contact such as shaking or holding hands, hugging, or kissing.

Meal Times

MCDA will feed children/serve meals in their individual classes and meal times will be staggered. Tables are at least six feet apart between groups and are disinfected between lunch shifts.

It is still important (and required) to sit with children and facilitate social conversation and eye contact during meal times. Seating arrangements will be spread out during meals so children are not touching on another, e.g., leaving an empty space between children who are seated at the table.

When possible, MCDA will use paper cups, paper towels, and paper napkins that can be thrown away after one use or ask families to supply all disposable utensils, if needed.



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MCDA will continue to plate and serve the hot meals prepared by parents and caregivers.

Nap Time

Cots will be spaced out as much as possible (ideally six feet apart) and children are placed head to toe for naps.

Cots will be sanitized daily and after each use, taking care to use only EPA-approved disinfecting supplies, a diluted bleach (sodium hypochlorite) solution (1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water) or 70% alcohol solutions. MCDA will primarily be using diluted bleach solution with a contact time of 10 minutes for all surfaces being disinfected.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play equipment will be cleaned and sanitized after use. Social distancing will be maintained during play. We will allow children to play outside as much as possible and be mindful of alternating play times to reduce group sizes.

A designated staff member will clean high traffic areas (such as swings and climbing play equipment) between groups. Fresh air improves everyone's health and MCDA will reimagine traditional indoor activities and create an exciting outdoor classroom.

COVID-19 Reporting

MCDA will notify the local health department and licensing inspector and follow all recommendations if there is confirmation of a positive case of COVID-19. Guidance dictates that facilities with a confirmed case of COVID-19 among their population may need to close classrooms or the facility temporarily. This will be determined in consultation with the local health department.

Additional Resources

- For contact information for local health departments, see: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/>
- For COVID-19 testing sites near you, see: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites/>
- [Coronavirus Resources to Keep Kids Safe from Injury](#)
- [Coronavirus Hub for CCR&Rs and Child Care Providers via ChildCare Aware of America](#)
- [Grab, Adapt, and Go – COVID-19 Resources for Child Care Programs](#)



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We remain grateful for the support you have shown to Merrifield Child Development Academy as we navigate this changing landscape. Thank you for being safe and adaptable as we serve our community's children and families at a time we are needed the most.



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Appendices

FDA-Approved Hand Sanitizer and Warnings

Young children who accidentally ingest hand sanitizer and young people who drink hand sanitizer as an alcohol substitute are at [increased risk for methanol poisoning](#).

See below for the FDA's list of specific products to avoid:

- All-Clean Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-002-01)
- Esk Biochem Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-007-01)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 75% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-008-04)
- Lavar 70 Gel Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-006-01)
- The Good Gel Antibacterial Gel Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-010-10)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 80% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-005-03)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 75% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-009-01)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 80% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-003-01)
- Saniderm Advanced Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-001-01)

Sunscreen Sticks

