

Parent Handbook Addendum Communicable Disease Edition

Including COVID-19 and Other Communicable Diseases

Bethel International Christian Preschool

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<https://mybethel.org/pages/preschool>

Please note: These plans supersede information provided in the Parent Handbook.

These policies are based on the best information we have able in August of 2022. Recognizing that COVID-19 is endemic and continues to be present in our communities, this policy reflects the need for equity, inclusion and evidence-based practices.

Goal

To promote a **healthy, inclusive and open** school building.

This handbook will lay out the safety standards aligned with evidence, equity and inclusion in mind.

BICP will not be held liable in the event your child becomes infected with COVID-19 or Monkey Pox. BICP will continue to follow the recommended guidelines set forth by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Ohio Department of Health (ODH), Columbus Public Health (CPH), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other scientific sources. However, this is not a guarantee that your child will not be exposed to any illness while in the care of BICP. We will continue to do our best to make BICP as safe as possible for all who enter.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the policies and procedures that are outlined in this Communicable Disease Parent Handbook Addendum. They are in place to ensure that BICP is a safe and inclusive place for your child and your family.

Sarabeth Collins

Director

Bethel International Christian Preschool

Health & Safety for Equity and Inclusion

The emotional health and safety of our children is as important as ever! **Schools are centers the of community** that bring together students, families, teachers and staff with different risks of severe disease or economic hardship due to COVID infections. Mitigating surges **supports mental health**. Mitigation policies support students remaining together, in person and reduces the chances that they, their families, or their teachers get COVID-19 that could harm their health, education, or work and economic stability.

We will embrace **layered mitigation strategies** that are shown to be most effective. Each mitigation strategy helps reduce COVID, and no mitigation strategy is sufficient to control COVID on its own.

Vaccination

- COVID vaccinations are greatly encouraged in our staff, families and any members of our community that have access to your children-extended family, other caregivers, etc.

Masks

- It is clear masks play a role in mitigating the spread of COVID. Schools can be crowded indoor setting that get hit first and most in surges. Children and teachers have little choice to be in schools even when transmission is high. Therefore, we will embrace the following:
 - **Data-driven mask mandates** that turn on when CDC county transmission level is substantial/high. ([CDC COVID Data Tracker: County View](#))
 - **Masking does not have to be never/always**
 - Temporary mandates for children and anyone entering the center may be indicated at key times, such as:
 - At the start of surges
 - For the first 1-2 weeks of the school year
 - For the first week upon returning from breaks
 - BICP will try to provide a small number of high quality KF94s to each family that can be reused (see [Project N95](#))
 - Children will be provided with more opportunities to interact without masks outdoors during periods when mandates are in place.
 - Outdoor lunches, more outdoor play, etc.

Testing

- BICP will try to work with CPH and ODH to obtain and distribute free tests. (see [Free COVID Tests](#)). Libraries are also a good source of free tests.
- **Testing may be encouraged:**
 - At the start of surges
 - Prior to the first day of school

- Before returning from breaks/holidays
- **Testing may also be appropriate** when a child or family member become sick.
 - Report any illnesses or positive cases to the director so they may make a note of it. Any onsite cases must be reported by BICP to [Columbus Public Health](#).

Ventilation

- **Increased ventilation** strategies including open doors and windows, Corsi-Rosenthal boxes and upgraded HVAC equipment.

Handwashing

- Teachers will handwash or use hand sanitizer often.
- Children will wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon arrival, upon coming in from outside, after toileting, before and after eating and before leaving the center.

Staffing

- Every effort will be made to reduce the number of people your child comes in contact with during COVID surges or high transmission levels. As much as we can, your child's class will be treated like a "bubble" with minimal contact with other children/adults.
- Teachers may need to provide coverage in two separate classrooms. While this is not ideal, keeping our highly experienced teachers is essential to our program. We will do everything we can to keep children safe as we move between groups.
- During high levels of transmission or surges, classes will have minimal mixing. Classes will not be present together in shared outdoor or indoor play areas. When lower levels of transmission as indicated by the CDC, classes may play outdoors or indoors together.

Closing BICP for a period of time after the school year has started

- If BICP is closed for two consecutive weeks or less, teachers will maintain some level of programming/connection with families and no tuition will be refunded.
- If we are closed for more than two consecutive weeks, tuition will not be collected during the closure. No programming will be offered during this time.

Illness Policy

Updated CDC ([August 2022](#)) guidelines concerning COVID-19 about exposure and isolation beginning August 2022.

Isolation

- Stay home for at least 5 days and mask for 5 days if positive for COVID-19. Isolation is still appropriate for those who cannot mask.

Exposure

- *Regardless of vaccination status* wear a mask for 10 days
- Test 5 full days after exposure
- Stay home if you are sick

Please continue to help us by:

- Be cautious if you or another member of your family is ill.
- Parents should notify school of any conditions or changes in their child's health status, to inform school if their child tests positive for COVID-19, if someone in their child's household tests positive, or if someone the child has been exposed to tests positive.
- BICP agrees to keep your child/staff member's identity confidential regarding illness, exposure, or testing.
- If a child or staff member exhibits any symptom of any illness from the [Communicable Disease Chart](#) during the school day, they will be taken to an area away from others and a call will be made to go home.
 - Parents must pick up their ill child within 30 minutes.
 - Be sure your contact information is current in Brightwheel and that your voice mailbox is activated and not full.

Monkey Pox

At this time, the risk of monkeypox to children and adolescents in the United States is **low**. Monkeypox virus can infect anyone – including children – if they have close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox. In this outbreak, most cases of monkeypox have been associated with sexual contact. Although less common in the current outbreak, monkeypox may also spread by touching contaminated objects (such as toys or eating utensils), fabrics (clothing, bedding, sleeping mats, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.

Best Practices for Reducing Exposure

- Follow everyday guidance for reducing exposure and transmission of infectious diseases.
 - Washing hands frequently, staying home when sick, routine cleaning and disinfecting, using PPE, etc.
- If there is an exposure, the health department will help determine next steps.

Rashes in the Child Care Setting

- Several childhood illnesses can cause fever and rash (chicken pox, hand-foot-mouth)
 - Each child with a fever and rash should be evaluated by a healthcare professional

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Parent or Guardian Handbook and Communicable Disease Addendum Receipt Form

Parents or Guardians,

Please thoroughly review the Parent Handbook and Communicable Disease Addendum for the 2022- 2023 school year, which contains the policies and procedures for BICP. After reading both handbooks, please sign this form and return it to the school as soon as possible. This form will be kept in your child’s file for the duration of the school year.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sarabeth Collins
Director
Bethel International Christian Preschool

I, _____(print your name), the parent/guardian of _____(print child’s name), hereby acknowledge receipt of Bethel International Christian Preschool’s Parent Handbook and Communicable Disease Addendum. I have read and agree to adhere to all the policies and regulations set forth in the handbooks provided to me.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____