



Hello Families,

Here you will find our school's revised guidelines, which reflect an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 while still offering in-person learning. These guidelines have been created in alignment with the State of Vermont, Vermont Health Department (VTHD), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Agency of Education (AOE), World Health Organization (WHO), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As more information becomes available and/or as state/federal guidelines change, this policy may change as well, in which case we will notify you. *Please note:* Timson Hill Preschool = THP.

### **Shared Responsibility:**

It is the responsibility of our entire community to protect the health of our students, staff, families, and greater community. By choosing to send your child to school, you are agreeing to possibly limit other activities so as to keep our community safe. The following is a mutual commitment to do our best to protect each other:

1. We trust that our parents will be forthcoming in answering screening questions.
2. We trust that all families will also be forthcoming in reporting possible exposures, to help other families make choices that are right for them.
3. **Please do not send your children to school if they are showing signs of illness.** Do not give a child fever-reducing medicine to reduce a fever and then send them to school. Parents must report if their child is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms to the school on the day the symptoms first appear, in order to help protect all other children and families. If a child becomes unwell at school, they will be isolated until picked up, which must happen as soon as possible. If you will be out of town or otherwise unable to pick up your child, communicate with your emergency contacts to identify who will pick your child up in an emergency.
4. Vermont travel restrictions must be followed by all students and staff, including quarantine requirements when you return, or if loved ones visit from another area. At this point, that means **do not go to a county with more than 400 cases/million people in the last two weeks of August, and visitors must self-quarantine prior to coming into contact with your family.** Vermont travel guidelines can be found here, and on your resource list: <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>
5. Please do not socialize with an extended group of people in a way that significantly increases your risk of exposure and/or makes contact tracing more challenging.

Consider keeping a diary of the people you and your family have seen, in the event of an increase in positive cases in the community. From the State of Vermont's guidance on school operations during the pandemic:

- a. "Recognizing that community (not school) transmission will be the primary mode of infection, and due to the long period of time between exposure and illness, **students, families, and staff should make extra effort to avoid large gatherings and other situations that put them at greater risk of coming into contact with someone who may have been exposed.** This will help to create the safest environment possible for return to school."
6. Help your child succeed within the current framework: the transition to school during the pandemic will be much easier if children are already comfortable with the "new normal." Here are some ideas to support your child's transition:
- a. Promote good hand-washing with every activity change and meal at home, starting today. Sing a song, see who can make the most bubbles, try a soap with a nice smell or a miniature bar that is just for them. Make it fun, happy, and most of all: normal.
  - b. Practice wearing masks at home. One idea is for them to wear a mask during screen time.
  - c. Start enforcing social distancing now, if you haven't already. One idea is to have everybody stretch their arms out as far as they will go to "make sure they have enough body space."
  - d. Attitude is everything. Be intentional about how adults discuss things like masks and social distancing in front of your child, to help support their natural optimism and excitement about school, more than concern or nervousness about the changes.

We really want to be able to meet in person, and doing so successfully requires a commitment from everyone in the community to follow safety guidelines and exercise good judgement. **All parents and staff are required to commit to our mutual responsibility to promote the health and well-being of our children, each other, and the community as a whole.**

### **COVID-19 Policies:**

#### **1. Cleaning**

Timson Hill Preschool has always provided a space for children to grow in an environment with staff who share a strong value for cleanliness. Staff will follow or exceed all state recommendations for cleaning. High touch surfaces, playground structures, toys and materials, and bathrooms will be disinfected as appropriate throughout the day. The building will be thoroughly deep cleaned weekly.

#### **2. Safety Measures**

**Masks** Per the Governors new guidance, It is required that all students and staff wear cloth facial coverings while at THP. Masks should be washed and dried after each use, and a clean face mask should be worn each day. Each child should bring a spare mask each day.

Exceptions to this rule are made during snack and lunch times as well as during the rest period, and for any student who is unable to wear a mask for medical or developmental reasons.

We will work to present children with three choices: playing alone, at least 6 feet apart from a friend, or in a group wearing masks, in order to offer choices while providing safer options. Face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing, but we want to give students choices and social opportunities that are consistent with their development needs. Students and staff will be taught how to take safe “mask breaks” outside and distanced from others. We ask our parents to discuss and practice the use of face coverings with their children in the weeks before school.

**Handwashing** Any person entering or leaving our building is required to wash hands for a minimum of 20 seconds. There will be an increase in the amount of times students and staff must wash hands beyond what is already outlined in our original policy and that will include before and after using classroom materials. Please work with your child at home on proper hand-washing technique and help to reinforce this habit. Per the Governors new guidance, it is required that all students and staff wear cloth facial coverings while at THP. Exceptions to this rule are made during snack and lunch times as well as during the rest period, and for any student who is unable to wear a mask for medical or developmental concerns.

**Outdoor Classroom** Children at THP will spend as much time as possible outside each day. Please be sure to dress your child accordingly and pack additional warm layers. Staff will also work to increase fresh air flow in the building, and this may result in cooler indoor temperatures.

**Sick Policy Addendum** Temperatures will be checked at drop-off and again mid-day. Timson Hill Preschool reserves the right to isolate and send home a child exhibiting any sign of illness and parents must be able to pick a child up immediately. Families must indicate their arrival time for such an occurrence; if the child cannot be picked up within 45 minutes, a back-up person must pick up the child. If you will be more than 45 minutes away from the school, it is essential that you establish in advance who will pick your child up in this circumstance, so the 45 minute timeframe is met. This guideline is specific to our Covid-19 response and is in addition to the sick policy found in the Timson Hill Preschool Handbook.

### 3. **Visitors**

Timson Hill Preschool has temporarily canceled in-person special presenters to limit social contact to other communities and avoid additional non-essential social events or activities. District staff will continue to serve students at THP. Outside visitors are not allowed into the building, and at this time this includes parents and family members; parents may make an appointment via email if necessary.

### 4. **Communication**

The CDC recommends conversations about a child's day be done by phone or digitally to support physical distancing. Phone calls and emails are always welcomed and anticipated, but please be aware that we may be busy teaching children and may need to call you back at a

later time. Timson Hill Preschool additionally provides a weekly newsletter that discusses programming, activities and discoveries made through the week (be sure to add us to your contact list to make sure we don't go to spam). Photos are uploaded onto our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages regularly to give you a glimpse into your child's day. Please be sure to read all Timson Hill Preschool emails for updates on changing policies or potential closures; these are still fragile times and we must be cautious when reopening a program during an active pandemic.

**Absences** Any children who do not arrive at school and have not previously communicated an absence will receive a phone call from a staff member to inquire as to the reason for the child not attending school, and determine whether or not the child is showing COVID-19 symptoms. If the child is symptomatic, we will call the VTDH and the AOE and follow their direction. They are planning to work directly with schools to determine on a case-by-case basis if the school needs to close for quarantining. In such a case, we would move to Remote Learning.

**Exposures** THP will communicate with our community regarding exposures via email. In turn, families are expected to communicate with THP regarding exposures (your information will be anonymous). More detail on what THP can and cannot share in point # 9, below.

## 5. **Drop off & Pick up Procedures**

Please arrive during your assigned drop-off window. It is important to be on time to streamline the process, decrease contact, and ensure the children have a smooth transition to school. If you will be late, please call the school to inform the teacher of your arrival time. A pattern of lateness may result in us being unable to admit children to school after the day has started, due to the extra steps required during the pandemic.

Park in front of the school in the designated drop off spot. If you arrive after someone else, please form a line with your car, and wait in your car until the car ahead of you departs. When you are parked in the designated drop off spot, you may exit your vehicle in a mask to help your child get out of their car seat, put their mask on, and gather belongings. Then you may approach the teacher on the playground or in the lobby for the daily screening. Staff will welcome the child to school for the day by escorting them inside to wash hands and put belongings away, at which point you may depart. Please wait in your vehicle to help ensure privacy for the screening questions, and to ensure an organized drop-off line. If you need/want to talk to another parent/guardian after drop off, please move your vehicle out of the designated drop-off spot so the line can continue to move.

For pick-up, park your vehicle in the parking lot and approach the designated pick up area (there will be a sign indicating where pick up is). Please wear a mask, maintain a 6 foot distance from other families picking up, and only one family is allowed in the lobby at a time if pick up is happening inside.

Please continue to practice physical distancing during drop off and pick up, giving each other at least the recommended 6 ft distance and one family at a time in the pick up area. Adults are required to wear masks. Ideally, the same person should drop off and pick up your child every day. If possible, older adults such as grandparents should not pick up/drop off children because they are more at risk for illness. Anyone who is self-quarantining due to contact with a COVID-19 positive individual should not drop off or pick up.

**Screening** Staff members will greet families and conduct a daily health check. During a health check, a staff member wearing personal protective equipment will inspect each child for signs of infection, take their temperature, and ask questions such as:

- *Has your child had contact with a person who has COVID-19?*
- *Does your child feel unwell with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19?*
- *Have you attended any gatherings of more than 25 people?*
- *Has your family followed the Vermont travel requirements?*

Students with a temperature greater than 100.4 F must be sent home until they have had no fever for a minimum of 48 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Advil, Tylenol).

**Self-Screening** Families are asked to take their child's temperature prior to school each day, and to consider keeping a record of people they have come into contact with outside of school. **If the child, a family member, someone who lives with the child, or other close regular contact has signs of illness, fever, cough or sore throat, please stay home.**

## 6. **Supplies from Home**

In addition to the supplies listed in the handbook:

- Please pack 2 clean masks for your child every day, in case one becomes wet or dirty. Masks must be washed before being reused, using hot water and soap.
- All children must have an extra change of clothes at all times. Clothes will be changed if they have any body fluids on them, including saliva. Warm layers and appropriate outerwear are essential.
- For children staying after lunch, please pack bedding that can be machine washed. Bedding must be washed weekly/over the weekend, using hot water and soap.
- Wash and dry lunch boxes daily
- At this time, teachers will not be heating up food in the microwave. Please send food that can be eaten cold, or use a thermos.
- Water bottles may be left at school if needed and we will wash and sanitize daily.
- Families will now provide all food, including snacks. Typically, 2-3 healthy snacks each for the morning and afternoon will give your child a strong base for the busy day ahead, in addition to lunch. We recommend avoiding single-serving items that require the teacher to touch the packaging where it goes in the child's mouth, or the food itself, such as yogurt tubes and lunchables. Instead, try to choose packaging that opens without touching the food or the part that goes in the child's mouth, such as cheese sticks, a

reusable squeeze container, or a regular single serving yogurt. Please be mindful of choosing healthy snacks that are low in sugar.

## 7. **Travel & Visitor Self-Quarantine**

Please follow all State of Vermont travel recommendations and requirements, including quarantine protocols, for traveling out of the state and/or hosting out of state visitors. These recommendations are updated weekly. As of August, travel to any county with 400 active cases per million people requires self-quarantine when you return. Out of state visitors are also subject to self-quarantine requirements. Please be flexible, and be sure to check the state recommendations before making travel plans.

<https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>

## 8. **Testing**

At this time COVID-19 testing is optional. Requirements may change as more information becomes available.

## 9. **Positive Cases**

Anyone awaiting test results for any member of their household must self-quarantine.

Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 must self-quarantine until all of the following are met:

- It's been 3 full days of no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g. Advil, Tylenol)
- Other symptoms have improved
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- Negative COVID-19 test

THP, as per state guidelines, requires a negative COVID-19 test to return to school following exposure to a confirmed case. Alternatively, a family may choose to self-quarantine for a full 14 days following exposure; if no symptoms arise in 14 days, a COVID-19 test will not be necessary.

The VT Department of Health requires that we notify families of first degree contact with a positive COVID test result.

- We, THP, are defining "first degree contact" as a staff person, student, or anyone that resides with a staff person or student.
- In addition to the state guidelines, we will share the following information:
  - If a child's or staff member's family is quarantined at home because of symptoms, awaiting test results, or exposure to a confirmed case.
  - If we are provided any information of a confirmed case that has had potential contact with a family, we will share that with our community in a manner that protects everyone's privacy, and update the community if additional information is provided.

- All communicated information will be anonymous. We will not disclose the name of the child, the name of the family, or the last day the child was at school.
- If a child or staff member in the program has a confirmed case, THP will contact the state and await their instructions. These instructions are on a case-by-case basis, depending on multiple factors.
- Important to note: some of our parents are essential workers who are at high risk of exposure.

#### 10. **Remote Learning**

While we recognize that in-person learning and play is the most important and beneficial for this age group, THP is planning for a comprehensive remote learning schedule including morning circle time and optional lessons, should we have to transition to remote learning. Visit our Google classroom page (available on our website and linked in our weekly newsletters) for more information about our remote learning plans.

#### 11. **Tuition Credits**

In the event that THP must close for in-person learning for an extended period of time or for the remainder of the school year, and the State of Vermont is unable to provide tuition reimbursement and/or subsidy, we will offer tuition credits and/or prorated tuition payment terms for the remainder of the year.

#### **Additional Information**

- [Parent Resources Document](#)
- [THP Google Classroom](#)
  - Click on large plus symbol...select JOIN CLASS
  - enter code: edwflby

**TIMSON HILL PRESCHOOL COVID-19 POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE**

I/we commit to share our mutual responsibility to promote the health and well-being of our children, each other, and the community as a whole. I/we have read through Timson Hill Preschool's modified guidelines and policies outlined in this document and understand that they could update again as a result of state requirements, CDC recommendations, or other changes to the COVID-19 crisis.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 1 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent 2 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_