

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS COVID-19 GUIDELINES- DROP-IN CLASSES

We are committed to making our programs safe for children and staff and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. To do so, we consult the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and the Baltimore County Health Department (HD). Please keep in mind that these guidelines will be updated as needed based on local transmission trends, vaccination rates, official guidance or state/county regulations, and as evolving science dictates.

OUTDOOR CLASSES

Nearly all activities will occur outdoors. In the event of thunder, lightning, strong winds that result in the closing of trails, or prolonged periods of torrential rain or excessive cold or hot temperatures, we will move class out of the elements into a conference room (Fern A). Please note that since we will still be outside on cold, hot, or rainy days as much as possible, please dress your child appropriately. If Irvine must cancel class due to a weather-related event, all participants will be refunded.

Whenever indoors, staff will do their best to distance students and windows will be kept ajar to increase air flow. In Fall 2020, Plasma Air Needlepoint Bipolar Ionizers were installed in Irvine's HVAC system to meet CDC guidelines and to provide a supply of sustainable, clean, uncontaminated air. Each indoor space also employs [Corsi-Rosenthal boxes](#).

VACCINATION

As of October 13, 2021, Irvine Nature Center requires all staff and all ECE volunteers and interns to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Individuals with an approved medical or religious waiver can opt out of vaccination and instead submit weekly COVID-19 test results. Staff are offered paid leave to get the vaccine or any recommended boosters. At this time, all Irvine staff have been fully vaccinated.

The best protection you can provide your children against COVID-19 is by getting them vaccinated. The vaccine is now readily available, safe, and effective at protecting children as young as 6 months against severe cases of COVID-19. While Irvine Nature Center does *not currently require* students or their families to be vaccinated against COVID-19, we *strongly encourage* families to vaccinate their child. It not only protects them, but our whole community—especially those at high-risk. For more information about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine please visit [the CDC](#). To find a vaccination site please visit [Maryland's Vaccine Locator](#).

If your child develops rare but possible vaccine side-effects that are also on the COVID-19 symptom chart (see p. 5), they will need to be tested or get a doctor's alternate diagnosis **only if the symptom lasts more than 24 hours**. This is to rule out the possibility that they had COVID at the time of vaccination. You CANNOT contract COVID-19 from the vaccination. Children must still be fever-free without the aid of medication for 24 hrs to attend.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

When you arrive at Irvine, please first pause at the gate house to let them know you are here for Bauer Explorers. Then park and walk your child down the path to the Glen outside the Woodland Garden. **Caregivers may not send students to the Glen unattended.** Caregivers may not linger in the Glen.

HEALTH AND EXCLUSION POLICY

The very best thing you can do to ensure the health of other students and staff and to help classes continue to operate is to keep yourself and/or your child home if they are unwell or had *prolonged* exposure to COVID-19. If your child will be absent due to any health reason, please let us know by emailing the Director of ECE and Stephanie Holzman. Please see the following page for information about when your child should NOT attend class.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS COVID-19 GUIDELINES- DROP-IN CLASSES

Individuals may NOT participate if	Until ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they tested positive for COVID-19 	quarantine is completed (5 full days) and there is an improvement of symptoms with no fever for 24 hrs without the aid of medication. Must mask until day 11. (See flow chart on p. 7.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they exhibit any symptom below, despite no known exposure to COVID-19. <div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center; color: green; margin: 0;">COVID-19 SYMPTOMS**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever of 100.4 deg. + OR chills • Cough • Difficulty breathing • Nausea or vomiting • Diarrhea • New onset of severe headache • New loss of taste or smell • Sore throat </div>	EITHER: A) a negative PCR test result is issued, B) a doctor’s note is provided documenting symptoms are due to specific alternative diagnosis , or C) it has been at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> symptoms have improved, no fever for 24hr w/out medication AND applicable Communicable Criteria have been met.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they were exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19. 	may attend <u>masked</u> but must be tested on Day 6. (See flow chart on p. 8 .)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they had <i>prolonged</i> exposure to an individual with COVID (e.g., a household member, close indoor encounter for a prolonged period of time, etc.) 	Five days of quarantine have passed after last contact, then must be tested on Day 6. (See flow chart on p. 8 .) Please note, Day 1 is the first full day after the ill individual is released from quarantine OR after the last contact with the sick individual.
If individuals have any of the following non-COVID related symptoms they may not attend: *Fever of 100 degrees or more *Unexplained rash (until cleared by a doctor) *Infectious pink eye (until cleared by doctor and on antibiotics for 24 hrs) *Head lice (until treated) *Green or yellow runny nose if paired with other symptoms <p style="text-align: center;">Individuals must be fever/vomiting/ diarrhea free for 24 hours w/out the aid of medication.</p>	

*If an individual is unable to mask consistently and appropriately or they refuse to test and are due to attend a class within 10 days sense exposure or positive test, they may not attend class.

When Symptoms Develop After Drop Off

If an individual develops symptoms consistent with a COVID-19- like illness or typical exclusionary symptoms during class, they will be sent home without exception. A child with symptoms will be isolated, but still under supervision until they are picked up. **Children must be picked up within 30 minutes if they are ill.**

Health Advisory Notification

All families must promptly inform the Director of Early Childhood Education if a student tests positive for COVID-19 or develops any symptoms of COVID-19 within the 48 hours after attending a class. Failure to promptly inform the Director may result in the unintentional spread of disease and possible dismissal from future Irvine Programs.

When Irvine ECE is informed of a child or staff that developed a communicable disease or probable or confirmed COVID within 48 hours of attending class, Irvine will inform families in that child/staff’s class. This communication will be provided so that parents can monitor their children for any symptoms and quarantine as needed. Please note, Irvine will abide by all privacy laws and not divulge the identity of sick individuals.

MASKING

Irvine will **not** require staff, students, or families to wear masks (indoors or out) unless...

- an individual was exposed but asymptomatic (case-by-case basis, indoors at all times and outdoors when not distanced)*
- our [CDC community level](#) rises to high (ECE wide)

***Please note, if your child is unable to or refuses to properly and consistently wear a mask, they may not attend class for the 10 days after exposure or positive test.**

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Strict social distancing limits children’s play and social development. If indoors, staff will do their best to social distance.

HAND WASHING

All individuals must wash their hands frequently throughout the day and at the following times:

- Upon arrival (using hand washing stations in the class grove)
- Before and after putting on or assisting with a face covering
- After touching their face, preparing food, or eating
- After using the restroom and at appropriate transitions

When a sink and soap are not available, a hand sanitizer will be used. If water and soap are not available after eating, a handwipe will be used to remove food residue prior to using hand sanitizer.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

ECE staff will follow CDC guidelines for appropriate cleaning and disinfection. When local infection rates have risen to the **“high”** level or after an illness in class, all surfaces and materials will be disinfected fully.

COMMUNICATION-Who to Contact

If you have questions or concerns about the class: Head of Homeschool programs, Stephanie Holzman

If you are unsure if your child should attend due to possible symptoms or a possible exposure: contact Katie Rooney directly. If you are leaving a voicemail please include your name, your child’s name, and your phone number.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason: email Stephanie Holzman and Katie Rooney.

For questions about payment or registration: contact Education Program Coordinator, Moriah Munsch.

If you are running late or an urgent matter arises during class: contact Stephanie Holzman.

Contact Information

Katie Rooney Director of Early Childhood Education	RooneyK@ExploreNature.org (443) 738 9223
Moriah Munsch Education Program Coordinator	MunschM@ExploreNature.org (443) 738 9215
Stephanie Holzman Head of Homeschool Program	HolzmanS@ExploreNature.org (443) 738 9221 CELL: (410) 979 4616