



## **Back to School Plan 2021–2022**

At Pre-K 4 SA, the health and safety of our children, their families, and our staff are our top priority. Our policies have been developed with input from our consulting pediatrician, whose guidance is consistent with the broader medical community, including Metro Health.

We will continue to utilize many of the safety features and sanitation protocols that were put into place last year to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These protocols and procedures will be evident from the moment children arrive at Education Centers or bus depots to the moment they are picked up at the end of the day.

Although COVID-19 has disrupted our normal way of life, we want the children in this year's cohort to have the same sense of wonder and awe that previous groups of children experienced at Pre-K 4 SA. Young children learn through play, which includes active exploration and tactile interactions. To ensure children are able to safely move about the room and touch instructional materials, face masks are recommended, and Pre-K 4 SA will frequently sanitize materials. This approach makes cleaning and sanitizing a normal part of the classroom routine and avoids creating a sense of fear about being in the classroom or using materials.

Teaching children healthy habits has always been part of our approach at Pre-K 4 SA. We teach children how to brush their teeth, eat vegetables, and properly wash their hands because those are things we do to keep ourselves happy and healthy. This year, we are including lessons that teach children the proper way to put on their masks and discussing the importance of handwashing and sanitation as part of a general routine of safety and healthfulness.

## Safety Precautions

We are here to continue providing a safe and welcoming environment where children can continue learning and receive a high-quality early childhood education at Pre-K 4 SA. We learned a lot last year about what it takes to keep families and staff safe and healthy. We will be implementing many of these same protocols this year in our ongoing effort to keep diseases out of our buildings, reducing the chances of outbreaks.

### ■ Contactless check-in and dismissal process

- Curbside check-in and dismissal processes at our Education Centers.
- See Arrival/Dismissal procedures for additional detail.

### ■ Education Center modifications

- Frequent sanitization of tables and chairs.
- Shared materials are frequently sanitized.
- Heavily used toys are sanitized daily.
- HVAC systems have been modified to provide better air filtration and more fresh air.
- Touchless sinks, toilets, doors, and paper towel dispensers mean fewer opportunities for hands (big and little) to spread germs.
- Outdoor learning spaces are sanitized regularly.

### ■ Personal Protective Equipment

- Masks are recommended indoors for all children, teachers, staff, and visitors.
- Disposable masks will be readily available for adults and children.

### ■ Healthy habits

- Children and adults will wash hands upon entering a classroom, as well as before and after eating, using the restroom, coughing and sneezing, etc. Visuals and adult modeling will be used to demonstrate how to properly wash hands.
- Children will be taught about the power of social distancing. When possible, children will be asked to keep a safe distance from one another.
- We have always taught children healthy habits (how to brush their teeth, eat vegetables, and properly wash hands). This year, we are including lessons that teach children the proper way to put on masks and the importance of handwashing and sanitation as part of a general routine of safety and healthfulness.
- Children will be taught the importance of telling an adult when they feel sick.
- Our Education Centers will provide supplies for children, including personal water bottles.
- Any items brought into the building by an adult (e.g., purse, lunch bag) will be sanitized upon entry.
- Nursing staff will help monitor for symptoms in children and staff throughout the day.

### ■ Rest time

- Individual mats and blankets will be provided for the children.
- Mats and blankets will be stored in individual slots/shelves.
- Mats are cleaned and sanitized at least 2x / week.
- Blankets will be washed weekly.
- Mats are spread throughout the room, and children lie head to toe.

### ■ Mealtime

- Meals and snacks will be individually packaged to reduce cross-contact.
- The teacher will wear gloves while serving meals.

## Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

We have modified our morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal procedures to reduce contact and increase safety for children, families, and staff. We will be using a contactless smartphone application, ProCare, to check-in children in the morning and again to sign them out in the afternoon. [Note: families without a phone may use a Pre-K 4 SA iPad to complete this process.]

- **Contactless check-in process (arrival by car):** As families arrive for morning drop-off, they are directed to pull up to designated curbside locations where they are greeted by a Pre-K 4 SA staff member who is wearing a mask. Families remain in their vehicle and use the ProCare app to begin the check-in process. The app guides families through the COVID health screening questions while our staff member uses a touchless thermometer to take the child's temperature. Once health screening is complete, a secure one-time QR code pops up on the Center's device. Our staff member scans the code to automatically update the system to alert the classroom teacher that the child has arrived and is on the way to the classroom. The child puts on a face mask and exits the car with the staff member. Our staff escorts the child into the building where they stop at the hand sanitizing station and then onto the classroom. Our staff member scans the child in on the teacher's iPad to complete the check-in process.
- **Contactless check-in process (bus depot):** As families arrive at the bus depot, they are directed to pull up to designated parking spots. Families remain in their vehicles and use the ProCare app to begin the check-in process. The app guides families through the COVID health screening questions. Once health screening is complete, a secure one-time QR code pops up on the Center's device. The parent and child put on their face masks and walk to the bus loading zone where our Pre-K 4 SA staff member is waiting. Our staff member takes the child's temperature, scans the QR code, and escorts the child onto the bus where they are greeted by a driver wearing a mask. Children are seated from the back of the bus to the front. Windows will remain partially open to allow fresh air. Instruction begins as soon as the bus begins moving with our staff member leading the children in songs and rhyming games. When the bus arrives at the Education Center, our staff member unloads the children from front to back and escorts the children to the classroom, stopping by the hand sanitizing station on the way. Once at the classroom, each child is checked in on the teacher's iPad. Buses will be sanitized after each route.
- **Dismissal (car):** Staggered dismissal times allows each classroom of children to be safely escorted outside where their families are waiting for curbside pick up. When a parent is at the curbside pick-up and signs into the app, the Center will be notified that the parent has arrived. Our staff will escort the child to the car, and the parent will scan the QR code on the Center's device to check out the child. This automatically updates the system to indicate the child has been safely returned to their family.
- **Dismissal (bus):** The same bus monitor goes to the children's classroom to pick them up and take them to their designated buses. He or she helps the children get on the bus and makes sure all children are buckled in safely. The windows on the bus will be slightly open to allow natural airflow. During the bus ride to the bus depot, our bus monitor will be wearing a mask and will engage children in songs. Once they arrive at the bus depot, our monitor will greet parents, who will sign out their child using the ProCare app. We will scan the parent QR code which will automatically sign out each child.

## Response to Potential COVID-19 Exposure

We have developed the following response protocols to address potential or confirmed COVID-19 exposure.

- **Actively monitor for COVID-19.** Our Pre-K 4 SA teachers have always been mindful to watch for signs that children may not be feeling well. This year, they will proactively monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and seek guidance from our nursing staff at the first sign of illness.
- **Isolate potential cases.** If any symptoms are detected, the child will rest in our health clinic away from others until a family member arrives to pick him/her up. Our Center Directors will contact the family to discuss protocols and resources for confirming exposure to COVID-19. Families are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19. Testing locations are listed on the City of San Antonio's website at <https://covid19.sanantonio.gov/What-YOU-Can-Do/Testing#TestingLocation>
- **If a child or adult is suspected of having COVID-19,** children will be isolated in our on-premise clinic until a parent is able to pick her or him up. Adults will be separated from children and others while pending resolution of symptoms or a negative test result.
  - Each of our centers has a registered nurse who works with Metro Health Professionals to assess each situation.
  - We report all confirmed cases to Health and Human Services childcare licensing and Metro Health.
- **If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19,** children will be isolated in our on-premise clinic until a parent is able to pick her or him up. Adults will be separated from children and others while pending resolution of symptoms or a negative test result. Contact tracing will be conducted to determine whether or not children need to be quarantined. Our classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected, and in some situations, may remain closed for up to 14 days.