

Over the last school year, Acorn Hill has been able to provide an environment that met the physical, social, and developmental needs for the well-being of our children. We look forward to offering a similar environment during this next school year, and we know that in order to do so, it will require a commitment from our entire community.

Community Responsibility

Families, teachers, and employees agree to behave in socially responsible ways both in and out of school—avoiding large groups of people, wearing masks as necessary (especially indoors), maintaining physical distancing, washing hands frequently, sanitizing home and car surfaces, and informing the school if there is an illness or fever in any member of the family. Our safety as a community is dependent on each and every one of us as individuals.

Vaccinations

All of our teachers and staff are fully vaccinated. We encourage our families to get vaccinated if that is possible for you.

Masks

Children learn through imitation. Masks will be required by teachers, 3 and 5 Day children, and caregivers while on the Acorn Hill campus regardless of vaccination status. Masks will be worn at all times except during eating, rest, and other periods when the children are outside and

physically distanced from each other. Please put masks on before leaving the car. Children under the age of 2 are not required to wear masks.

Indoor Time

We will continue to offer an outdoor program for the school year. Children will come inside to use the bathroom, during inclement weather, and for cooling and warming breaks. Children will wear masks indoors, however they will remove their masks for eating and resting. When children are indoors, windows will be open and fans will be on. Last year we installed air scrubbers / air purifiers on our HVAC system.

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather (continuous rain, heat index above 95 degrees or below 20 degrees, thunderstorms, snowstorms, hurricanes, high winds) children will come inside. Children will be masked unless they are eating or resting. Children will be kept indoors until it is safe for them to return outdoors.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

1. Before school, take your child's temperature and check to make sure your child is healthy and well. If your child has a fever (temperature above 100.4 F) or any COVID-19 symptoms, please stay home.
2. Have your child use the bathroom before leaving your house.
3. Bring your own masks. Children must put on their masks prior to leaving their car or bike.
4. If possible, when you drop off and pick up children, please do not bring siblings with you that do not attend Acorn Hill.
5. Adults are required to wear masks and adhere to physical distancing guidelines on school property.
6. Parents & caregivers should walk children to their designated outdoor classroom gate where there will be a health screening station. Everyone will wear masks at the entrance area. You will be asked questions about symptoms and potential exposure to COVID-19. You will take your child's temperature with your personal thermometer, and show the temperature to the staff, to confirm their temperature is below 100.4 F. The health screening data will be recorded.
7. After the screening, please sign your child in on the sign-in form. Children will wash their hands using outside washing stations upon entering the outdoor classroom.
8. If your child is known to have difficulty with separation from you, please contact your child's teacher before school begins to discuss safe strategies that might ease your child's discomfort. Please make sure to say goodbye outside of the gate to make drop off easier for your child.
9. Access to the school building and the playground is limited to students only. If you need to go to the office, please phone or email the office in advance to arrange an appointment. Parents, caregivers, and siblings may not use the restrooms in the school building.
10. There are staggered pick-up times for each class. At pick up, wait outside your child's classroom gate, while keeping a distance from others. Teachers will bring the children to meet their parents or caregivers. Once you have picked up your child, return to your car right away to allow time for the next dismissal.

Health and Wellness Policy

Children and teachers exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms must stay home and self-quarantine until the symptoms clear. Parents and employees should contact the Administrator, monica@acornhill.org. If you exhibit symptoms or believe to have been exposed to COVID-19, please stay home

and self-quarantine, and let [Monica](#) know as soon as possible.

Symptoms include

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- New onset of severe headaches
- New onset of loss of taste or smell

If a child or teacher develops symptoms during the school day, they will be separated from others and asked to go home as soon as possible. If we do not hear from parents that they are on their way, we will reach out to their emergency contacts to come pick up the child.

If a teacher or child's parent suspects COVID-19, receives a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, or has been exposed to a person with COVID-19, you **must** notify the Administrator (monical@acornhill.org). Acorn Hill will consult with the MD Dept of Health for guidance to assess the need to close a class or the entire school.

Physical Distancing

- Young children are not expected to follow physical distancing guidelines when playing with peers. Therefore, the teachers will provide an environment where this can happen as safely as possible.

- Each class will function as a "pod," and except for siblings and children of teachers and staff, there will be no mixing of persons in one pod with another pod.
 - Children will be distant from each other at snack and lunch time. Utensils and food will not be shared among the children.
 - Physical distancing may also be practiced during "formed" portions of the morning, such as story time, circle time and puppet shows.
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Travel

If you travel out of the country, you should not return to class until:

- 5 days of last exposure has passed
- a negative PCR test result is obtained on day 5
- showing no symptoms

We look forward to partnering with the community this year.