

## **Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

### **Reentry Plan Procedural Guideline**

Early years of formal education are critically important in giving children confidence and a desire to learn that should last throughout their lives. Monarch strives to create a place where children can lean into new concepts with enthusiasm, confidently challenged by figuring things out, and overall embracing learning as a fun and exciting mindset.

Kindergarten, being the first year of formal education is extremely important in developing this eager and joyous mindset. First Grade captures this desire, while giving students the skill sets to build and move forward with their knowledge and interests.

During this season of COVID-19, where so many things need to be altered to make sure our children and families remain safe, Monarch feels that it is important to stay true to our belief that school needs to be a fun, challenging, successful and overall happy place to learn. With this in mind, we have created learning environments that we feel are as optimal as possible for our young Monarchs.

When evaluating a thriving Kindergarten and First Grade experience that respects the development of the whole child, we were cognizant of taking into consideration the necessity of mandated safety and health measures. We looked to explore exciting and diverse learning environments that incorporate the indoor classroom, as well as optimizing outdoor spaces for activities and routines.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change daily, which requires us to adapt and adjust our procedures and protocols in order to follow the guidance provided by the CDC, local health departments and DCF, in our efforts to help keep our children, families and faculty safe. Monarch's procedures and policies are intended to do what we can to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, but will not necessarily eliminate risk.

To maximize the safety of each child and faculty member working within each classroom, we have created predictable routines that will provide children with whole group/class experiences, small collaborative experiences and one on one opportunities within the Kindergarten and First Grade Educational Wing setting. These experiences will utilize both indoor, as well as outdoor, spaces.

The Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Educational Wing is made up of the K-1<sup>st</sup> classrooms, the 2 hallway bathrooms and the Collaborative Room. No other students or faculty from other grades within the school will be utilizing this space. It is exclusive to the K-1<sup>st</sup> students and faculty. Only administration will continue to have access to the space.

**Monarch values the relationship of trust, love and safety that is built between children and their classroom teachers. Because we will not be able to hold a school wide 'Meet Your Teacher' event, each teacher will be reaching out to their individual families to schedule a time for you and your child to come and visit the classroom individually to allow these connections to begin to develop. These one on one meetings will be spaced out throughout July and the first part of August, in order to assure adequate cleaning between visits.**

Specific school wide policies and protocols involving health and safety requirements, such as sick policy and quarantine requirements, are being finalized and will be sent out the week of **July 13<sup>th</sup>**.

This document contains specific modified procedures for each class that will be enforced until further notice.

- Drop Off and Pick Up Routines and Locations
- Indoor/classroom procedures
- Outdoor procedures
- Safety procedures and hygiene

### **K -1<sup>st</sup> Wing Drop off and Pick Up Routine and Locations**

The transition of parent to teacher during drop off can be a challenge for some children. We want to respect each child's comfort level and seek to work with each family on a case by case basis in finding a smooth transition routine. This being said, for this point in time, we would like to minimize, as much as possible, parent presence within the Kindergarten and First Grade Educational Wing area because of levels of additional exposure. A video of the Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade drop off routine will be provided for you prior to our first day of school to minimize any confusion.

- The school day for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade begins at 8:30. Before and aftercare drop off and pick up procedures will be forwarded once finalized.
- Kindergarten and First Grade Students will arrive for school in the Courtyard. The Courtyard will be exclusively used by the K and 1<sup>st</sup> grades for drop off and for pickup during this time. Teachers will be waiting for their students in the Courtyard. Please enter the Courtyard through the gates that face Edgewater Drive. Administration will be present to support faculty to make sure this will be a safe drop off location and routine. Fever checks will be made during this drop off routine. Along with their teachers, students will enter into their Educational Wing through the double doors that enter into the Collaborative Room off of the courtyard. For late arrivals, parents are asked to text your teacher assistant and/or press the wireless doorbell, so that we may greet and escort your child to their classroom.

- For students who will not be participating in aftercare, pick up will be in the Courtyard as well. Pick up time is 1:30pm for Kindergarten and 2:30pm for 1<sup>st</sup> Grade.

Young children need to move, and in order to honor this, children should not spend an exorbitant amount of time in any one learning location. Since the freedom to move around the classroom is somewhat limited this year, Monarch is creating learning environments that utilize the classroom space, as well as additional inside and outside spaces as learning classrooms.

All Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students will be issued a Monarch Chrome Tablet to reinforce their learning. The use of this tablet will **not** replace direct instruction, but will be a tool for students to learn how to navigate practicing certain skill sets.

### **Kindergarten and First Grade Wing Indoor/Classroom Procedures**

- Per usual, each class will function independently within the indoor classroom setting. Each class will have a teacher and a shared teacher aide to work exclusively with that class/group of children. Teachers will not be moving into other K-1<sup>st</sup> classroom spaces, but will remain with their own class, within their designated classroom.
- Indoor Learning Spaces:
  - Individual classroom design has been altered to accommodate the 6' setting spacing, as suggested for optimal safety. Items from the classroom have been moved to storage to accommodate this necessary arrangement. In addition, this has meant capping off enrollment for each class to assure that we can adhere to this guideline. Individual classrooms will be utilized to teach and reinforce core subjects. Kindergarten children will have their own individual desk this year instead of a grouped table setting. Kindergarten desks have hooks on either side to accommodate optional backpacks and their lunchboxes. First grade will be establishing safe protocols within each of their classrooms, as well as hallway space for backpack and lunch box storage and visits.
  - The K-1<sup>st</sup> Grade Wing will be taking advantage of the Collaborative Room as a space to gather together and work alongside each other. This large room has been subdivided into 4 large Open Spaces. Each class will have their own Open Space that will be creatively arranged for center time activities, collaborative projects and a possible alternative to whole group instruction. There will be also be a large area designated for K -1 specials, such as art, music, Spanish and Monarch Serves, unless the Special is conducted within the classroom.
- Special attention will be given to each class's individual schedule so that hallway use will be used by one class at a time.
- Use of Masks/ cloth face coverings for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade students:
  - Within the Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Educational Wing, children will utilize a mask or cloth face covering under specific guidelines. When sitting at their desks

within the classroom, children will not be required to wear their masks, as desks and chairs are spaced the recommended 6' apart.

- When children leave their desk area, to move about the classroom, to go into the hall space, to use the restroom, and in line; they will be required to use their mask.
- While in the Collaborative Room Open Space, children will be required to wear their masks when working within their class designated open space, as they may be working closely together on activities.
- However, if their Specials class is offered in the Collaborative Room, such as Art, they will not be required to wear a mask as they will be separated by 6'.
- Children will not be required to wear their masks once they reach their outside destination for playtime and for PE, as well as for any appropriately spaced learning activities and instruction. However, if children are working outside together collaboratively on a project or learning activity and remain closer than 6', they will be asked to wear their mask.
- Use of Masks/Cloth Face covering with Faculty: Faculty will utilize a mask or cloth face covering if they are closer than 6 feet from any child or adult. Monarch has purchased clear masks so that our children can see and utilize the whole face as means of connecting, gaining information and effective communication. All faculty are asked to social distance from each other as much as possible, even when wearing masks.
- Individualized Art and Writing items: Each child will have their own box of items that will be safely stored for individual use for project activities in order minimize cross exposure. Each box will have an assortment of developmentally appropriate and necessary subject related items. Boxes will be labeled with individual names and kept in their individual desk cubbies.
- Individualized Curriculum: Each child will utilize curriculum that is either a consumable or a textbook that is assigned to them personally and kept in their desk cubby to eliminate the need to share any school work related items.
- Classroom Libraries: For the time being, students will not be visiting our Monarch Library. Individual Libraries will be set up in each classroom so that students will be able to choose and possibly check out books. Books that have been looked at will not be returned to the shelves, but will be placed in a book bin to be cleaned after school.
- Lunchtime typically will be inside, so that handwashing and social distancing can be managed. There will be times that children will take their sitting mat outside to enjoy a picnic lunch.

## **Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Wing Outdoor Procedures**

The use of the outdoors as classroom space is a natural occurrence in every class, which will continue going into the new school year. Depending on weather, there will be more frequent opportunities for children to play and learn outside during their school day.

Children will be utilizing Dartmouth Park, the Greenspace and the Learning Garden as their outdoor spaces and, weather permitting, will spend significant blocks of time outside. Specific safety guidelines and protocols will be established for our Kindergarten and First Graders' use of Dartmouth Park.

- When utilizing the outdoors as a classroom space, children will have an individualized mat to sit on and to spread out their learning materials. Mats will be positioned so that they are the appropriate 6' separation recommendation. Children will have the option of using a portable lap desk as well.
- Physical Education will continue to be offered as a Special, twice a week.
- All children will have a personalized knapsack that they will take outside with them. Within the knapsack they will be able to carry their water bottle, sun hat, sunscreen, hand sanitizer and their individual supply box as well as other necessary learning materials, if they will be utilizing the outdoors as a classroom at that time.
- A utility sink has been installed on the Greenspace, so that handwashing can easily and routinely occur.
- A mister is being installed on the Greenspace so that children can easily cool off during their outside time.
- Children will spend time on the Greenspace and at Dartmouth playing and working on projects. The playground at Dartmouth will not be used by Monarch students. Activities will occur away from the playground areas. The Learning Garden will give children opportunities to have both instruction and exploration.

## **Safety, Hygiene, and Cleaning Procedures**

- Monarch has a modern high quality HVAC system that was replaced/installed as part of the school's renovation 3 years ago. The system incorporates the current code required for outdoor air requirements in a school by delivering outside air to each classroom and further incorporates a Global Plasma Solutions(GPS) Bipolar ionization generator (GPS-iclean) which further enhances indoor air quality by controlling odors, kills mold, bacteria and viruses. High grade filters along with a charcoal filter liner are being installed in all the classroom units and are on an increased replacement schedule.

- Monarch will be taking each child's temperature upon arrival to school and as needed during the course of the day. Faculty will also be required to have daily temperature checks. (Specific policy on temperatures and our sick policy will be sent out the week of July 13<sup>th</sup>.)
- There will be a designated sick area away from the classrooms for children who are not feeling well and need to be picked up.
- Children will routinely wash their hands upon entering their classroom after drop off. Frequent hand washing routines will occur throughout the day, both inside and outside.
- The use of hand sanitizer with children will be closely monitored and supervised to ensure that it is properly applied and dried to avoid ingestion.
- A washer and dryer are available in one of our 4-year-old classrooms for potential washing needs.
- Teachers will be reinforcing healthy habits, including washing hands, sneezing and coughing in sleeves, carefully respecting others' belongings, etc.
- Classrooms and the Collaborative Class Open Space area will be modified so that there are a minimum of high touch objects.
- Protocols will be established for cleaning all surfaces daily and routinely throughout the day. This is especially important for high touch surfaces, which will be disinfected as often as possible, using soap and water followed up by EPA approved disinfectants against COVID-19.
- Outdoor equipment on the Greenspace and in the Learning Garden, including tables, will be cleaned and disinfected regularly during the day, especially if regularly used, and routine hand washing will be emphasized before and after use of these spaces.
- A large plastic jug water cooler will be placed in the Specials area of the Collaborative Room. Teachers, versus the individual student, will be responsible for filling up water bottles during the day.

