



## COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines

**What are we doing to help our school community stay as safe as possible?**

At Garcia Street Club, the health and well-being of our families and staff is our highest priority. Garcia Street Club will engage in the following practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) and the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) in order to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and keep our school community as safe as possible.

**SOCIAL DISTANCING:** GSC staff members do their best to keep children as physically spaced as possible. We spend as much time as possible outdoors and engage in activities that allow the children to maintain six feet of distance between them. Furthermore, group of children are limited to no more than 10 children per group. The groups remain completely separate throughout the day. Groups will never share the same space at the same time and spaces are cleaned and disinfected between each use.

**MASKS:** All GSC staff members wear masks throughout the entire day. Parents must wear masks at drop-off and anytime they are on GSC property. Children three and over wear masks for the majority of the day. While we do not force children to wear masks if they are demonstrating fear, we continually encourage mask-wearing in fun and developmentally-appropriate ways.

**MATERIAL-SHARING:** GSC staff utilize and display learning materials in a manner that discourages item sharing. Each child has their own daily activity caddy in their cubby, which contains crayons, paints, scissors, books, and other project materials for the day.

**HANDWASHING:** All children, staff, and volunteers engage in an hourly handwashing routine in addition to handwashing at the following times:

- ✿ Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- ✿ Before and after preparing food or drinks
- ✿ Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
- ✿ Before and after administering medication
- ✿ Before and after diapering
- ✿ After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- ✿ After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- ✿ After playing outdoors or in sand
- ✿ After handling garbage

## **We facilitate the following hand-washing protocol for staff and children:**

- ✿ Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.
- ✿ We supervise children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion.
- ✿ We assist children with handwashing, including young children who cannot wash hands alone.
- ✿ After assisting children with handwashing, staff members also wash their hands.
- ✿ Visual posters describing handwashing steps are to be placed near sinks throughout the school.

## **DAILY HEALTH CHECKS and COVID TESTING**

All GSC staff members are regularly tested for COVID-19. In addition, GSC Staff members perform visual health and temperature checks at the door for each child, staff member, or visitor that enters the school. As part of our contactless drop off procedure, parents and guardians are required to answer a set of questions about their child and other household members to ensure there have not been any COVID-like symptoms present in the household and that no fever-reducing medications have been administered.

## **CONTACTLESS, STAGGERED PICK UP AND DROP-OFF**

GSC has temporarily adjusted our hours of operation and we have implemented a staggered pick-up and drop-off system in order to prevent gatherings of people at these times. We use an app called Brightwheel that allows family members to sign children in and out electronically by scanning a QR code.

## **FOOD PREPARATION and SERVICE**

- ✿ We will not engage in “Family-Style” Dining during the pandemic. Teachers and Kitchen Coordinator will plate and serve children’s food individually.
- ✿ Children sit 6 feet apart at meal times.
- ✿ Sinks used for food preparation are not to be used for any other purposes.
- ✿ Caregivers ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating. Caregivers wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.
- ✿ Parents will be encouraged to pack lunches that require little preparation and to use packaging that children can open themselves when possible. We have temporarily stopped using microwaves to warm children’s lunches. We are asking parents to send warm food in a thermos.

## **CLEANING, SANITIZING, AND DISINFECTION**

GSC uses the CDC-recommended three-step process for keeping classrooms and materials clean. There are 3 steps: Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting.

1. **Cleaning:** Physically removing all dirt and contamination. Surfaces and materials are cleaned, excess material is scrubbed off. (Soap and Water used.)
2. **Sanitizing:** Reducing germs to levels considered safe by health codes. (Bleach and water solution used.)
3. **Disinfection:** Destroying or inactivating germs on surfaces and materials. (EPA-approved disinfectants approved for disinfection of COVID-19 virus will be used.)

We have increased the frequency of our cleaning rotation and high-contact surfaces (door-knobs, tables, light switches, swing handles, toilet handles, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected with CDC-approved disinfectants every other hour. Children are closely monitored to limit item-sharing and any items that come in contact with a child's mouth or nose will be immediately removed. If a child or staff members shows any COVID-19-like symptoms, the area the child or staff member occupies will be closed off and deep cleaned.

**SOCIAL CONTRACTS:** In order to attend GSC, all families are required to sign a social contract agreeing to the following:

- ✿ Families (all household members) must agree to abide by any and all state and local public health orders when away from GSC, including travel restrictions, face covering mandates, and stay at home orders.
- ✿ Families must agree to carefully follow GSC's Sick Policy and keep children home when they are ill. (See Sick Policy below.)

**SCHOOL CLOSURE:** In the event that a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, GSC will notify all families immediately and parents will be asked to pick up their children immediately. GSC administrators will notify the NMDOH and the ECECD and work with both agencies to begin the Rapid Response protocol. The classroom or entire school will be closed for a minimum of 72 hours to allow for airing out, deep cleaning, disinfection, and contact tracing by the DOH. COVID testing will be scheduled for all families and staff. GSC will submit a completed COVID-19 Safety Plan to NMDOH and ECECD, which must be approved before reopening.

**SICK POLICY:** GSC has adopted an amended sick policy. Neither children nor staff are able to attend if they exhibit any of the following symptoms: Runny Nose, Cough, Fever over 100 degrees, Diarrhea, Vomiting, Sore Throat, Intestinal Pain, etc. GSC staff reserve the right to send children home at their own discretion if a child seems unwell. Parents are required to agree to the terms of the updated sick policy upon enrolling and known violations are cause for immediate dismissal.

**OUTDOOR PLAY AND VENTILATION:** GSC has an all-weather outdoor play policy and we spend as much time outdoors as possible. Our playground has been divided into five outdoor classrooms, which we utilize daily. The indoor classrooms have been equipped with high-efficiency air purifiers with HEPA-13 filters and a high air exchange rate. Even in colder weather, we will keep our windows open whenever possible and utilize wall-mounted heaters to offset the cold. The heating system in the building is radiant floor heating.