



Mask Policy

Mandatory Use of Mask or Face Covering within KinderAcademy for Young Scholars

In an effort to further reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 among our employees, children, parents and community, KAFYS will institute a more comprehensive universal mask policy beginning **January 4, 2021 at 6:00 AM**.

Community spread is the most important mechanism of COVID-19 transmission. Social distancing is the most important public health approach to reduce the spread. In our child care environment, we have adopted physical distancing policies and procedures. However, it still can remain a challenge to ensure such distancing with young children. ... Part of the experience of coming to a *child-care* center is that social experience.

This new policy for universal mask use in our facility should help us to further reduce the COVID-19 transmission risk in our environment.

Face Mask Age Requirements

Before implementing a face mask policy, it is important to note that the World Health Organization (WHO) warns that face coverings should **not** be placed on:

- Children under age 2.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing.
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

In other words, newborns, infants and toddlers should definitely not be wearing masks, and they should only be considered for older children if they are able to remove them themselves.

1. Beginning January 4, 2021, all employees, parents and visitors are required to wear a mask or face covering upon entering and remaining within KinderAcademy for Young Scholars. Children 5 years of age and under, are not required to wear a face shield or face covering but it is highly recommended due to small classrooms which makes the 6 feet social distancing a challenge. The mask or face covering must cover the nose, mouth and chin.
 - a. The following persons are exempted from the requirement to wear a mask or face covering and will not be required to provide proof of such exemption:



- i. Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years who are sleeping, unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering or face shield without assistance; or due to a developmental, medical, or behavioral health condition must not wear a face covering or face shield or who refuse to wear a mask or face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
 - ii. Children age 2 through 5 years who can reliably wear a face covering or face shield in compliance with WHO guidance on **How to Wear Cloth Face Covering** may do so. This means they can do so without frequently touching and removing it.
 - iii. Persons with medical conditions who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering (e.g. due to breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties);
 - iv. Persons who cannot wear or remove a mask or face covering without assistance, including people who are accommodated under the Jamaica-Disabilities Act,2014
 - v. Employees who are in an area of the premise that is not designated for public access, or who are within or behind a physical barrier (e.g. Plexiglass).
 - b. Temporary removal of the mask or face covering is permitted provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent feasible. for the following purposes :
 - i. Consuming food or drink;
 - ii. Actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activities;
 - iii. For any emergency or medical purpose.
 - iv. When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with a face covering difficult.
2. Staff and children may remove their face covering temporarily when alone, including when alone in an office or other enclosed work area, classroom, or a cubicle with walls that are higher than face level when social distancing is maintained. Walls separating a room or partition must be high enough to block the breathing zone of the person working in a room or and any person(s) in adjoining rooms.
3. This policy will be implemented and enforced in “good faith” to primarily educate people on masks and face coverings and promote their use in enclosed public spaces.
 - a. Persons with exemptions listed under 1a) are not required to show proof of exemption.
 - b. Signs about the requirement to wear masks or face coverings shall be posted at all public entrances.
 - c. Persons entering or remaining without a mask or face covering will be given a verbal reminder of the policy’s masking requirement.
 - d. Employees will be trained on the policy, including where and how to properly wear a mask or face covering, and how to help and respond to parents/visitors who do not have a mask or face covering.



- e. A copy of this policy will be made available on request to a public health inspector or other person authorized to enforce the rule.

Key Messages about Face Coverings

- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth while wearing face coverings or face shields to prevent potential contamination.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting on a face covering or face shield.
- Remove your face covering or face shield carefully and wash your hands thoroughly after removing.
- Wash the face covering or face shield after each use.
- Wearing a face covering or face shield does not replace the need to continue frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, and practicing social distancing, which are our best tools to help prevent the spread of illness.
- Continue to use your typical systems and processes for cleaning toys, keeping sick children home, washing hands, and other practices that are used every day. These actions help to keep the community healthy and safe.
- Face coverings and face shields do not provide adequate protection for others if a person has symptoms compatible with COVID-19. Ill persons should stay at home.