

First, Palisades would like to thank you for your support as we navigate together through this unprecedented time in history. A big question many parents have right now is "what can help keep kids safe from COVID-19 when they go back to school?"

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises schools to start with a goal of having students physically present in school. This is because of what we know about how the virus behaves in kids. It is also because children who are in school learn more than math, reading and science. They also learn social and emotional skills; get exercise, get mental health support and other important things that cannot be provided with online learning alone.

Palisades is focused on the safety guidelines and its three main components for responsibly operating in a school environment that include adequate and frequent health screening/monitoring, vigilant hygiene/cleaning practices, and keeping group sizes consistent and small. These policies will be updated to reflect any new guidelines required of us by means of the governor's order, CDC, or our local Board of Health.

We have enclosed a contract for you to sign and return if you have not done so already; a page of contract addendums and a page of anticipated frequently asked questions and answers in anticipation of our fall 2020 opening (please note that these may be subject to change).

Please sign and return all forms and payments by August 1, 2020

PCDS Fall 2020 FAQ

How has your visitors policy changed?

Palisades will be changing our "open door" policy to ensure the safety of our staff and students. Visitors will not be permitted to enter the school during operating hours, with the exception of emergency/law enforcement personnel in their official capacity, and the Department of Children and Families personnel. All other persons providing maintenance services and third party therapists shall be minimized, required to wear cloth masks unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health, and shall be subject to the same screening procedures as the staff.

What is the capacity limitations of your classrooms?

Palisades abides by the State of New Jersey's appropriate teacher to child ratios; in order to keep limited interactions between different people in compliance with recommendations from our governing agencies. We will adapt class sizes according to ages; at this time class sizes may consist of 10 children (please be aware that this is subject to change as more guidelines are released). Classes will include the same group of children each day to the greatest extent possible. The same staff shall be assigned to care for each group, each day.

May I request my child to be grouped with friends?

We understand the importance of friends especially at this time and we will do our best to accommodate requests with priority to our current Palisades families. In order to minimize numerous person-to-person contacts class sizes are being lessened.

How will you be screening staff and children before entering?

We will be screening staff and children for fever and other COVID-19 symptoms prior to entry into the school each day. Staff members are required to pass a daily health and wellness check. Parents must be able to answer "No" to the daily screening questions that will go home with all orientation packets before heading to school. Children and staff with a fever in excess of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, or exhibiting other symptoms will not be allowed to enter the facility, nor will persons that have exposure to persons known to have COVID-19 during the preceding 14 days. Children will have in-car screening prior to entering the building.

What will arrival and dismissal look like?

Kiss and Go drop-off will take place in front of your child's school (times may be staggered, please be on the lookout for more information). A staff member will greet you. Please stay in your car while we check your child's temperature, make a visual inspection of your child, and/or ask the drop off person a number of health related questions each morning. Afterwards, your student(s) will be escorted to their classroom to begin their day. Please make sure your child is wearing a face covering when leaving the car.

Kiss and Go pick-up will take place in front of the school (times may be staggered please be on the lookout for more information). Once again, you will be required to remain in your car while your student is escorted to you. Please only exit your car when picking your student(s) up only to buckle them into their car seat (teachers are not going to be available to have discussions at that time).

Will I be able to be in the classroom with my child?

Unfortunately, to ensure the safety of our staff and students we will not be permitting parents/guardians to stay in your child's classrooms. We understand under "normal" circumstances you are allowed to physically observe your child through our two-way windows and are comforted by seeing your child smiling and content. Rest assured that our professional, caring and loving teachers will continue with the same top notch early childhood school experience that you have come to depend upon. Photos and/or videos of the classroom may be sent to your email so that you can see your child's adjustment.

What about snacks and lunches?

Children must bring their own, labeled, non-perishable, nut-free snacks and lunches daily, as we are not able to refrigerate or heat food items. Meals and snacks will be served in the classroom and this year there will be no outside food vendors. Sharing of snacks or lunches will be strictly prohibited, staff will wear gloves when handling food, and tables will be sanitized and disinfected before and after each meal.

Will before or after care be offered?

For everyone's safety, we are committed to keeping each classroom consistent and separate from other classrooms (thus a "pod"); therefore, we are not offering extended care at this time. When this changes, you will be notified.

Will you still have your specialty classes?

At this time to ensure the safety of our students and staff, we are minimizing our personal outside contacts. Palisades is known for its impressive specialty programs (music, science, yoga, sports, etc...); therefore, our specialists will be presented virtually through pre-recorded videos, until we can resume in-person activities.

Will you still have your after school enrichment classes?

At this time to ensure the safety of our students and staff, we are minimizing our personal outside contacts. Therefore, Palisades will not be offering fall enrichment sessions. Spring sessions are contingent upon safety guidelines.

How will you maintain social distancing?

Palisades will have floor markings, physical partitions or other safeguards should they be necessary in the hallways indicating a six-foot safe distance, as well as, having visual cues to assure proper distancing within our classrooms. To allow a change of environment for our students, there will be designated areas (i.e. ball field, indoor gymnasium, etc...) assigned to each class for their use that day.

What is your policy on wearing a mask?

Staff shall be required to wear cloth masks while working unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health. When feasible, children shall wear face coverings if unable to be socially distanced or outside their "pods". Children under the age of two are not required to wear a mask due to the danger of suffocation and will not be placed on our students during nap time. Close person-to-person contact shall be strictly limited and extra caution will be reinforced, but no age-appropriate behaviors will be rebuked.

Will the children be sharing supplies, toys, etc...?

The sharing of supplies, toys and items will be strictly limited; we will ensure that each student has an adequate supply of school and art supplies. Each child's belongings will be kept in separate individual containers and stored in their cubbies. If items must be shared, they shall be used by one group at a time and cleaned/disinfected between uses. Palisades will not utilize soft or plush toys, and items from home for naptime will be sent home with that child each day for laundering. Please do not send in any toys from home, as we are unable to share any items at this time.

What is your hand washing policy?

Upon arrival, all students must wash their hands before engaging in any activities. All students must wash/sanitize their hands when they arrive and depart after each activity (i.e. Playground, gym, etc...). As per state policies, our students are required to wash hands before eating, after using the toilet, after sneezing or coughing into their hands, and in cases where it is necessary. Per the CDC recommendations, our students will be encouraged to wash their hands more often to contain the spread of any germs for 20 seconds. Sanitizing stations will be strategically located around our facility along with hand washing stations that are located in every room.

How often will you clean surfaces?

Disinfecting will be completed on all equipment and supplies before being used by another class. Commonly touched surfaces (switches, handrails, sink knobs, tables, etc...) will be wiped down continuously throughout the day. Palisades has contracted United Unlimited Cleaning Company to perform nightly approved cleaning for childcare facilities in accordance to the CDC guidelines and EPA approved disinfectants for use against COVID-19.

What if my child becomes ill?

We have designated a room within our facility that will be considered our "sick room"; this room will be sanitized and disinfected between each use. Parents/guardians must have someone available to pick up your child from our facility within a half an hour if Palisades deems that they either have a fever or sick symptoms and need to be picked up to go home (refer to the parent handbook for more information on illnesses). Teachers will fill out the appropriate sickness log when sending children home; per our usual illness policies, children are not able to return to school until they are symptom and fever-free without fever reducing medicines for 3 days.

COVID-19 cases have more specific symptoms including a fever of 100.4, excessive coughing, or difficulty breathing. The student will be sent home immediately. The teacher staying with that child in the "sick room" must remain safely distanced until someone arrives and the child will be asked to wear a mask. Please see the answer to the next question for more information.

What if there is a suspected/confirmed case of Covid-19?

Any suspected case (a person showing symptoms but has not yet been tested or is waiting for results) or a confirmed case (a person with or without symptoms who has received a positive result from a laboratory test) must follow the CDC guidelines. If there is a

suspected case of COVID-19 in our center we will immediately separate the person from the well people, report it to both our local department of health and the DCF Office of Licensing, alert our staff and students, and CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection will be followed. If there is a positive case, within any classroom all students and staff of that classroom are considered close contacts and must self-quarantine for 14 days for the date of the last exposure and/or follow the direction of mandated by the Closter Heath Department. Palisades will thoroughly clean in addition, disinfect in accordance with the CDC guidelines and provide virtual online learning during the time of self-quarantine.

Please refer to the following chart for more specifics for the CDC

Individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 AND • have tested positive (by PCR, rapid molecular or antigen testing) OR • have not been tested (i.e. monitoring for symptoms at home) should stay home and away from others until	At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared AND • They have had no fever for at least 72 hours (three full days without the use of medicine that reduces fever) AND • Other symptoms have improved (for example, symptoms of cough or shortness of breath have improved)
Individuals who have NO symptoms and have tested positive should stay home and away from others until:	10 days have passed from the collection date of their positive COVID-19 diagnostic test AND they have not developed symptoms.
Individuals who have symptoms and have tested negative should stay home and away from others until:	72 hours after their fever has ended without the use of fever reducing medications and other symptoms improve.
Individuals who are identified as a close contact* should:	• Self-quarantine and monitor for symptoms for 14 days from the last date of exposure with the person, even if contact tested negative.

Other classes within Palisades can continue to function. We will have daily and vigilant screening for illness that may occur. Social distancing and personal and environmental hygiene measures will continue to be strictly adhered to.

What if a case of Covid-19 is discovered within a family?

Any student with a confirmed case at home must stay home for 10 days after exposure based on the time it takes to develop the illness and all other staff/classmates shall self-check for daily symptoms.

When are tuition payments due?

Tuition fees are beginning in August to ensure that we have a clear idea of the number of students that will be enrolled so we can appropriately staff and prepare (please refer to your tuition contract as this may be either your first or second installment dependent upon if you pre-registered prior to March 2020 or not). In order to avoid late charges families have until the 10th of the month to pay their monthly tuition.

What is your refund policy?

At this time, Palisades will not be able to offer any refunds; we will still honor our withdrawal policy depicted in your signed tuition contract. Please understand that we have had to purchase a significant amount of additional supplies and materials, had to add in extra COVID cleaning procedures/contractors, and had to hire a larger team of staff members this year to ensure that all safety protocol is met per the CDC and DCF guidelines. Should the state of NJ mandate a forced closure, tuition will be used to continue with your child's extensive early childhood education through an on-line platform designed for Palisades. Monies will also be used to continue with the upkeep of our facility in order to be prepared when we are allowed to reopen and continue to cover additional costs that will incur regardless of shut-down that are fundamental towards allowing us to offer you our premier educational program. Palisades may need to adjust our school calendar dates if the governor mandates a closure, spring vacations may be taken away if necessary to make up for days missed. If your family incurs a financial hardship, please contact the business office to set up payment plans, Palisades' goal is to collaborate with you ensuring success and safety for your family.

How will you transition to virtual if necessary?

Palisades has upgraded our technology equipment to include laptops to be used in conjunction to our current iPads and PC's, we are researching the platforms to see what best fits into our educational philosophy, and we are adding more tech professional development workshops for our teachers.

***Palisades Country Day School will continue to evaluate and adjust policies and procedures as more information becomes available. Restrictions may be lightened and/or lifted if the executive orders from the Governor and the DCF Office of Licensing changes.**

We look forward to enjoying a very successful year of learning, fun, and growth with your child!