

Revised: 1st December 2020

Policy Statement:

Brason Academy Montessori School (BAMS) is open with updated health and safety policies to address COVID-19 risks and will continue to provide safe and quality Montessori program, under Provincial and Ministry direction.

Brason Montessori works closely with public health authority from the region of Waterloo and the Ministry of Education to ensure that we have all the updated, factual information concerning COVID -19

As of 8th September 2020, following the new Ministry guidelines, Brason Montessori will return to full licensed capacity.

Operating Details:

All licensing requirements will be met to satisfy the Ministry of Education and program advisor. All requirements as outlined by Region of Waterloo Public Health and the Ministry of Health will be followed by all staff. Staff are expected to follow all new policies related to the operation of the Montessori during COVID-19, and all other required policies and procedures as used during normal business operation.

All Staff at Brason Montessori has read and reviewed the Pandemic Care policies and underwent training for the same.

Cohorting

Maximum cohort size for each room is equal to the licensed capacity of the room. Brason Montessori will be operating at full capacity from 8 September 2020. Each cohort/classroom must stay together throughout the day. Mixing with other cohorts is not permitted.

Brason Montessori will maintain ratios set out under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA). Reduced ratios are permitted as set out under the CCEYA provided that cohorts are not mixed with other cohorts.

Enrollment

Families that attended Brason Montessori pre-COVID-19 closure were surveyed to determine their current care needs and given the opportunity to enrol their child for the re-opening stage 3 from September 8th.

Returning families will be given priority around their spaces before any children on the waitlist will be started. Brason Montessori will hold spaces for children who are unsure about their return and are prepared to pay monthly fee from September 2020 onwards.

Pandemic Care Policy

Masks and Eye Protection

All adults at Brason Montessori are required to wear medical masks and eye protection (i.e. face shield) while inside the centre.

All parents/caregivers are required to use a face covering during drop-off/pick up. (For exemptions to this requirement, please see Screening Procedures policy)

School age children (>4 years) are encouraged to wear a mask inside the school and should bring their own mask should they choose to wear one.

The supervisor is allowed to put reasonable exceptions into policy for such requirements indoors (e.g. when physical distancing can be maintained, see PPE Policy for exceptions)

The use of mask is not required when outdoors, for staff, if physical distancing can be maintained.

Supervisors should limit their movement between rooms, only entering classrooms when absolutely necessary.

Staff should only work at one location.

Supply staff will be assigned to a specific classroom and should avoid mixing between cohorts.

Teachers will be assigned to a specific cohort and should avoid as much as possible, covering off colleagues assigned to different cohorts.

If a teacher must cover a colleague in a different cohort/room (e.g. during breaks) they must do so in a manner that maintains physical distancing if possible, and a non-medical face mask and a face covering should be worn.

See Personal Protective Equipment policy.

Physical Distancing

When setting up the play space, physical distancing of at least 2 meters must be maintained between cohorts and should be encouraged, where possible, between children within the same cohort.

The ministry recognizes that physical distancing between children is difficult. The teachers at Brason Montessori are encouraged to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children while encouraging individual activities with physical distancing, where possible.

Suggestions include;

- ♣ spreading children out into different areas, particularly at meal and dressing time

Pandemic Care Policy

- ♣ incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children. This can be done by promoting some children to work on the floor with floor mats and some on the table.
- ♣ using visual cues to promote physical distancing (markings on the floor)
- ♣ planning activities that do not involve shared materials – individual use of or labelled containers for sensory material.
- ♣ When using towels/sponges for practical life activities, these should be assigned to individual child and laundered after each use.

- ♣ When possible, moving activities outside to allow for more space

In children's bathrooms, only every other sink should be used. Only one cohort can use the washroom at a given time. All toilets stalls can be used by a cohort. If more than one cohort uses the same washroom, thorough disinfection must be performed between cohorts.

Infection Prevention

- All staff, children and caregivers will be screened prior to entering Brason Montessori and mid day (optional) (See Screening Operating Procedure). Any person who fails the screen will not be permitted into the centre.

- No visitors or delivery personnel will be permitted into the centre during the pandemic. New families may not tour the centre. All drop offs and pick-ups will be done outside the centre. Parents are not permitted inside the centre unless deemed necessary by the supervisor.

- Children will spend additional time outdoors weather permitting.

- When sensory material is used, it will be labelled for use by individual child, and will be disposed/ laundered after use by the individual child (see infection control policy)

- Teachers will regularly engage in proper hand hygiene protocol, which includes but is not limited to prior to entering and before leaving a room. **Hand washing with soap and water is the preferred method**, hand sanitizer (minimum 60% alcohol) is also acceptable. (See Infection Control Standard Operating Procedure).

- Cleaning in the form of disinfecting will take place at least twice daily, on high traffic touch spots. General thorough cleaning of the rooms will take place at least once daily. All cleaning products used will meet Public Health guidelines. (See Infection Control Standard Operating Procedure).

- Children will bring their own sunscreen and it will not be shared. Staff will provide assistance to apply sunscreen to any child requiring help. Staff will exercise proper hand hygiene when applying sunscreen to children (washing hands before and after each application).

- Every effort will be made for physical distancing between staff to staff, child to child and for all other people in the centre.

Pandemic Care Policy

- Cooks and support staff will avoid entering program rooms. Cooks does not need to wear face shield in the kitchen, if 6 feet physical distance is maintained but will don a mask when outside the kitchen, including in the hallway.
- Every reasonable effort will be made to limit the number of staff that enter a room, as such staff schedules may be altered to minimize the number of different individuals entering a program room for break coverage, lunch coverage, and beginning and end of day.
- Where a child becomes symptomatic mid program, the supervisor will report all symptoms of COVID-19 for children, parents and staff to public health using their online form- <https://forms.regionofwaterloo.ca/External/COVID-Response-external/Childcare-Reporting-Symptomatic-Staff-or-Children>

Communication with families

Brason Montessori will keep an open communication with the Brason community including all families and staff during the time of the pandemic. Monthly newsletters and emails will be sent out to update and inform families of any changes in the policies, reinforcing any of the procedures if necessary, any concerns with the implementation of the policies, and the state of the cases i.e any outbreaks in any of the program rooms.

All families will be communicated about their child's daily life at the Montessori , during the pandemic, through a web based app.

All updated Pandemic care policies will be available to all the families on the website. If capacity restrictions are mandated, then Brason will update its Waitlist policy and update all the families of the same. The priority/waitlist changes will be such that it follows an equitable approach.

In the case of the closure of any program room due to an outbreak, all families affected by it will be informed by email, making sure that confidentiality is maintained, with recommendations and consultations from the Public Health Authorities. If a program room is closed due to a positive case of COVID 19 and all children are asked to isolate by Public Health, then at that time Brason Montessori will review if the fees for those two weeks are to refunded or not.

If one child is asked to isolate by public health or due to COVID like symptoms, then this will be treated as any other sick day and no fees will be refunded.

In case of the closure of the whole centre, all essential visitors will be informed via email like cleaners, mat man, pest control etc. In this case, Brason Montessori will review if the fees for the time that the centre is closed are to refunded or not.