

SLDS COVID-19 Policies and Procedures
Staff Handbook Addendum
2021-22 School Year

(Updated 9/27/2021)

Introduction to SLDS Pandemic Protective Care

St. Luke’s Day School (SLDS) joyfully resumed programing just over one year ago June 1, 2020 with our full-day, Luke’s Place, classes. Our class offerings continued to expand into the 20-21 school year, and we have learned many things over these months of protective practice! As we begin the 2021-22 school year, young children remain unvaccinated, and health recommendations and safeguards continue with layered strategies of COVID-19 protocols. The following is an overview of our current protective practice policies and procedures effective until further notice. These policies and procedures are subject to change as local officials, state authorities, and Texas HHS Child-care Licensing provide updated guidelines and/or we see necessary adjustments. We will notify families immediately regarding any changes.

The policies and procedures in this document are based on current guidance of the Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) Licensed Child-care division, the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the Houston Health Department. We will notify all staff and families immediately regarding any changes.

Program hours for the 21-22 school year are as follows:

- 7:30am-5:30pm Luke’s Place Full-day classes and children enrolled in TK After School
- 8:30am-2:30pm Kaleidoscope TK Part-day
- 9am-2:30pm SLDS Part-day classes

By reading and signing the acknowledgement as referred to at the end of this document, teachers/administrators confirm to having been informed and agree to follow all instructions included in this document for continued employment at SLDS. We will work together as staff with the SLDS families to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing early childhood environment for our SLDS children.

Critical Staff Responsibility to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

We understand that all staff have taken on critical responsibilities considering continued pandemic conditions in our greater community, state, nation, and world. We are so very proud of our SLDS team members who are working tirelessly to serve our children and families and help prevent the spread of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in our school by carefully following enhanced infection control protocols and adapting to other changes we have put in place to keep our SLDS community safe. All positions in our SLDS staff family are essential to provide care and services to the SLDS children and their families!

It is important to consider your personal responsibility to continue these infection control measures to Stop the Spread. Therefore, we are asking that in your time away from the school you continue to follow the current City of Houston/ Harris County/CDC COVID-19 guidance to prevent the spread of illness. Please take all the steps you can take to keep you, your loved ones, and our SLDS community safe! We thank you ahead for your hard work and dedication through these incredibly trying times—you remind us each day that SLDS is a very special place for playing and learning together!

Staff Care and Emotional/Social Support

Your well-being is important to us! We are going to do everything we can think of to make SLDS a wonderful place to work during the pandemic. Please reach out to your administrators or fellow staff members to share your joys and concerns; we are in this together!

Should you become anxious, more than you typically would expect, we are here for you. SLUMC has an amazing team of pastors and lay people who will pray for us every day and will gladly pray for you and your families individually, too. You do not have to be a member of the church to receive pastoral care. You are already a member of the SL family by working here at the church! We also share resources with the Nick Finnegan Counseling Center and can help you seek their services, if needed.

If you have a great idea that would lift our staff, simply suggest it! If it is within our COVID-19 guidelines and does not add expense to our school budget, we are happy to add playful experiences that lift morale and keep us all encouraged.

For Your Review: Current 2020-2021 FAMILY HANDBOOK ILLNESS POLICY

All guidelines are applicable unless noted to have changed with COVID-19 restrictions.

Staff are alert to the health of each child. Upon arrival and throughout the day, teachers observe children for behavior changes or signs of illness. Individual medical problems and accidents are recorded and reported to staff and families.

An ill child needs to be at home. The following symptoms are to be used to determine when a child should not be brought to school: ***(also see COVID-19 Addendum symptoms)***

- The child is unable to participate comfortably in all activities;
- The child has a greater need for care than teachers can provide while caring for other children;
- The child has one of the following:
 - An ear (tympanic) temperature of 100° or greater
 - Uncontrolled diarrhea
 - Two or more vomiting episodes
 - Excessive coughing
 - Rash with fever
 - Mouth sores with drooling
 - Behavior changes or other signs that the child may be severely ill.

If a child becomes ill during the day, we will care for that child until the parent or authorized adult can arrive. **All parents must have emergency plans established to care for ill children.** Children must be fever/symptom free without medication for 24 hours or one program day, whichever is longer, before returning to school. ***(Amended for COVID-19 conditions, see addendum specific information)***

Notices will be emailed from the Day School office concerning children who have been exposed to communicable diseases. Parents will notify the school at once if a child has a communicable disease or has been exposed to one (Communicable Disease list is available in the office).

Our school has cooperative arrangements with the Houston Health Department to audit children's immunization records, keep current on relevant health information, and as a resource should an outbreak of communicable disease occur. We are inspected by the health department annually.

Hand washing is our number one defense for preventing the spread of illness. Children and teachers wash hands upon arrival to school, after diapering or using the toilet, before meals and snacks, after playing in water that is shared by two or more people, after handling any visiting pets, after outdoor play, and other times as necessary. **(And as per COVID-19 recommendations)** The teachers assist the children as needed and work toward each child learning to do this independently. As a final step in hand washing and prevention of the spread of germs, we teach the children to turn off the water faucet with a paper towel. We appreciate your support of these practices at home.

SLDS Enhancements for COVID-19 Childcare Operation

Currently, as of September 20, COVID-19 Delta variant conditions are severe in Houston, Texas. If during any time COVID-19 Public Health emergency conditions change, St. Luke's Day School will comply with all state, county, or local stay-at-home and/or return to work orders. In the case of school closure, SLDS will re-open under government guidelines and will adopt additional health and safety procedures to limit, to the extent possible, the risk of COVID-19 exposure for all persons within our facility. Safety measures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Staff and parental agreement to comply with any and all state, county or local COVID-19 orders, as well as, any and all COVID-19 health and safety procedures implemented by SLDS.
- Staff and parental acknowledgement that while present on our campus all staff and children will be in contact with children, families, and other employees who are also at risk of community exposure, thus, no list of restrictions, guidelines, or practices will remove 100% of the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Immediate notification by staff and parents to SLDS administration
 - when aware of any person with whom the staff member, child, or parent has had contact and is presumed or has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - At this time, the CDC does not have restrictions on travel within the USA; please continue to check CDC protocols for international travel, and further updates, in conjunction with your family's travel plans.

Daily Arrival and Pre-Acceptance Procedures

HEALTH SCREENINGS - COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, our success in sustaining a safe environment at St. Luke's Day School depends on our commitment to one another. In order to keep our school community healthy, we ask families to commit to **daily health screenings** for their child, and to **keep children at home** if they are showing signs of illness.

Each morning, **prior to arriving at school**, please evaluate your child's health by taking their temperature, and assessing for illness using the symptom list below. If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms, keep them home and consult with your physician before returning to school.

Teaching staff will continually monitor each child's health throughout the day, and if any COVID-19 symptoms arise, will immediately call parents for pick up.

Daily Health Screening Questions

Has your child experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours?

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

PLEASE REPORT ALL COVID-19 EXPOSURES AND/OR DIRECT QUESTIONS TO MRS. FRAZIER cfrazier@stlukemethodist.org for contact tracing, quarantine protocols, and community care.

Within the past 14 days, has your child been in close physical contact (6 feet or closer for a cumulative total of 15 minutes) with:

- Anyone who is known to have laboratory-confirmed COVID-19?
- Anyone awaiting a COVID-19 test result?

Is anyone in your household isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19, or are worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?

Is anyone in your household currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?

We understand that many of these symptoms can also be related to non-COVID-19 issues. The above symptoms that appear during the school day will be carefully monitored to determine next steps. For instance, in case of fever, shortness of breath, chills, and/or loss of taste or smell, parents will be notified and expected to pick up the child within 30 minutes of notification. We expect students to stay home if direct exposure to COVID-19 is confirmed or if any of the above symptoms persist.

Limitations to Building Entrance

Students, teachers, administrators, approved SLDS and SLUMC staff, and DTK Housekeeping Services will be allowed to enter the secure access Children's Ministries area. Parents/designated caregivers of enrolled students will be allowed to enter during specific drop-off and pickup windows only, will not enter classrooms, and will not linger or gather inside the children's area. This procedure is to protect the health of everyone inside this area by limiting the risk of COVID-19 exposure.

To enter the premises, allowed adults (as above) must **wear a mask** and be free from the COVID-19 symptoms previously listed.

Return to School After Illness

COVID-19 Positive: A child who experiences a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 may return to school when at least 10 days have passed since onset of symptoms confirmed by physician and/or testing. **And**, at least 1 full day (24 hours) has passed since recovery – defined as fever and symptom free without the help of medication with improvement in respiratory signs like cough and shortness of breath.

Illness not COVID-19: If a child experiences symptoms on the COVID-19 list and your physician **does not** suspect or confirm COVID-19, as per the Harris County Health Department, “If no reason to suspect COVID-19, the child may return as per the school policy on returning after a typical illness.” Your child should be able to participate fully and be fever free without the help of medication for at least 1 full day (24 hours). ***In the event of multiple COVID-like symptoms, or fever persisting longer than 24 hours, we request a doctor’s note that the child is cleared to return to school.***

If a Child, Staff Member, or Close Family Member Test Positive for COVID-19: Proper community health authorities will be notified, and instructions followed. This may include classroom closures and/or self-quarantine periods.

Arrival and Departure Locations and Directions

Please refer to the Family Handbook COVID-19 21-22 Addendum for specific instructions for families and staff. Staff and families will be notified immediately of any changes or updates to the plan.

Tips and Hints:

- Please note that SLDS Part-day and Luke’s Place Full-day programs have different arrival and dismissal plans for the 21-22 school year.
- Administrators and LP teachers will be in place at 7:25am (LP) with walkie talkies turned to drop-off/pick-up channel, so that carline drop-off begins promptly at 7:30am;
- Teachers will be in place at classroom door (8:30am LP and 9am PD) to welcome children. Parents will not enter the classroom.
- PD pickup is 2:10-2:30pm. PD teachers: intercom the office before 2:35 if you have a child that has not been picked up. Parent will be called.
- LP pickup is carline only.
- ALL late drop off (after 9:15am) and early pickup (PD before 2:10pm; LP before 4:30pm) will take place in Activity Center lobby.
- When a brief conversation with the parent is necessary, make sure you are not standing in the line of traffic (driveway on Edloe side); move to the grassy side of the parking space (Edloe side) or arrange to call the parent if a longer conversation is needed. Please limit conversations on rainy days and when parent arrives just before or right at 5:30pm.

Classroom Placement and Distribution

Student classroom placements are conducted at the discretion of the school administration based on enrollment, classroom size, recommended student/teacher ratios, among other factors.

New for 21-22: Assigned two-class groupings. These designated classes will share Outdoor Classroom time, may share restrooms, and some Luke's Place classes will be combined at the end of the day. The designated two-class grouping is not rotated; same two classes every day

Multiple class gatherings remain on hold as we monitor COVID-19 conditions.

Outdoor Classroom zones have been revised; class rotation for variety of activities will continue on the Large Outdoor Classroom.

Classes may now visit the Children's Library; Classes sign-up one class at a time for scheduled visits with a 30-minute window in between.

Ancillaries

Ancillary activities, which are part of school programming, will continue for the 21-22 school year, carefully and safely planned for protective practice: Music (all age groups), Motor (2s and up), Science Lab (PreK and TK), and Early Literacy Lab (PreK and TK). Chapel Time (2s and up) remains on hold until group gathering is permitted.

Masks

All adults are required to wear a mask while inside the Children's Ministries secure area of the buildings. This includes school administrators and teachers, SLUMC and DTK staff, security guards, parents, and caregivers. If you do not have a mask, one will be offered to you before entry.

Over the past 14+ months, it has been our experience that our careful daily routines have been highly effective in containing the spread of COVID-19. Children enrolled in SLDS will not be required to wear masks unless it is mandated by TX HHS Child-care Licensing. Parents who wish for their child to wear a mask at school are welcome to send masks and we will support the child in doing so.

As of September 1, 2021: Currently, there is not an emergency ruling from Texas Child-care Licensing that informs licensed early childhood programs of young children's masking requirements. Therefore, we have made the decision to go forward **highly recommending** the Harris County Judicial mask order for 2- to 5-year old children while **not explicitly requiring** them to do so, as in the Governor's State of Texas order. Considering this, we will work carefully to respect each family's decision in conjunction with our commitment to Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

SLDS and DTK will follow the protocols for cleaning and disinfecting classroom areas, equipment/furnishings and toys as recommended by the CDC. All cleaning products meet the CDC requirements for COVID-19 childcare. Teachers are trained to follow strict cleaning, disinfecting, and good hygiene procedures throughout the day.

Each evening, all classrooms are deep cleaned, including fogging with an EPA approved disinfectant. Additionally, the HVAC systems for the entire St. Luke's campus have been upgraded with Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization technology.

CLASSROOM CLEANING AND DISINFECTING GUIDELINES

DTK will only enter your classroom for an emergency (child accident, plumbing emergency, etc.), and at the end of the day when teachers and children are gone.

DTK will pick up diapers between 11:10 and 12:10 each day. Please have bag of dirty diapers securely tied with a knot ready to hand to DTK when they knock on your door.

DTK will pick up trash at the end of each day.

It is the teaching team's responsibility to clean and disinfect classroom furnishings and toys frequently throughout the day. Please clean and/or disinfect the following items in the manner described in the NAEYC Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency table.

AFTER EVERY USE AND AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF EACH DAY

All Tables
All Chairs

AFTER EACH CHILD OR GROUP OF CHILDREN USES:

Toys
Games
Manipulatives
Anything mouthed
Nap mats
Diaper changing table and mat
Cribs and mattresses – daily (use only mild soap & water w/soft cloth on plexi glass)
Toilet seat and handle
Sinks and faucets
Bye-Bye Buggies – seat belts, push handle and anything touched

FREQUENTLY THROUGHOUT THE DAY:

Light switches
Door knobs
Trash can lid
Refrigerator
Soap dispenser
Paper towel dispenser
Tops and sides of manipulative shelves
Children's dramatic play furnishings
Tops and sides of children's cubbies

Additional Changes in Routines and Materials

- As per state guidelines, adults are to wear a mask* inside the Children's Ministries areas, and/or to practice social distancing by remaining 3-6ft from all other persons whenever possible; (exception, parents with their own child/ren; teachers outdoors with their designated class).
- Increased frequency of hand hygiene for staff and children may include alcohol-based hand sanitizer (if a shortage of nonalcohol based hand sanitizer arises) and in such case used only with appropriate safety precautions and storage.

- Staff and students bring lunch and snacks from home in a lunch box as usual; any snacks served at school will be in individual pre-packaged containers. We will not keep individual child cups at school as before. The school will provide disposable cups for water. If parents wish to send another kind of drink in the lunch box for lunchtime the cup will be sent home with all lunch containers to be cleaned daily and not used throughout the day.
- Children’s Chapel and Rotunda courtyard will have tables where staff may eat together with socially distanced seating. Staff may choose other locations outside to eat alone or again with socially distanced seating.
- Parents will provide each child multiple changes of clothing for the child to have available each day in case there is a need to change soiled clothing or wet clothing from outdoor play. Twos classes and up, are to send all clothing and sleep sheets each Monday in the child’s black SLDS school bag. These will remain at school all week and be sent home on Friday unless laundering is needed during the week. Infant/Toddlers will continue to use diaper bags.
- Teachers must bring multiple changes of tops (t-shirts, button-down shirts, etc.) to be able to remove clothing soiled by a child’s tears, saliva, or other bodily fluids and immediately change into a fresh top.
- Children may bring one comfort item; parents have been informed **not to** send any other toys, stuffed animals, etc.
- Parents have been asked to apply sunscreen and insect repellent before the child arrives to school. If children remain for the afternoon, with signed parental permission, teachers will reapply sunscreen and insect repellent, washing their hands between each application following CDC guidelines.
- In the event a child requires medication while at school, parents may hand the medication to an administrator at Drop Off, or directly to the classroom teacher who will deliver to an administrator. Medication should be in a zip lock bag labeled with the child’s name. A “Medication Dosage” form can be found on our website. Parents complete and sign the form noting specific time of day and dosage amount to be given and place the form in the zip lock bag along with the medication.

Children’s medications and dosing instructions will continue to be stored in the Resource Room. Should you have a child requiring medication during the school day, please retrieve the medication and Dosage Form from the Resource Room, and administer the medication in your classroom. Return the medication and Dosage Form promptly when finished. In the event of an allergic emergency, or any other urgent care need, please contact the office immediately using your intercom call button.

- **Since parents have limited access inside our buildings,** teachers will maintain communications with parents in a variety of ways, including sending notes back and forth. **Work emails, Shutterfly, and phone calls are the primary ways to communicate with parents.** Remember that emails should not contain sensitive information including concerns for a child’s behavior at school; in this case make a phone call to the parents or see your Program Coordinator for next steps.

While not recommended, we anticipate that our teachers may send text communications from time to time; if this arrives from the teacher’s personal phone number, we have asked parents

to continue the respectful practice of limiting communication this way. **Teachers may never send texts while supervising children and are not expected to respond after school hours or on weekends.** Please let us know if any parent is taking advantage of having your phone number and we will contact them for proper conduct.

We also recommend that parents send written notes to school for their children and the teachers as often as possible. Children love encouraging “lunch box” notes.

- Each family will receive an invite to their child’s 2021-22 classroom Shutterfly site. Teachers will post the daily “Today We” daily activity reports, lesson plans, calendar, and regular/on-going photos of the children’s activities at school. The class Room Parents are also considered “owners” of the site and may post announcements for the parents.
- Outdoor classroom activity will be encouraged; precautions will be taken to avoid over exposure to sun and Texas heat. Remember to dress in comfortable, breathable clothing for increased outdoor play. *As per our health and safety research and recommendations, **teachers may lower masks for outdoor activity and put them back in place for close contact situations as needed.**
- Sensory tables and dress up clothing will not be available for shared play until further notice; sensory items like Play-Doh, clay, and finger painting will be presented for individual play as able. With approval from the Staff Resources Coordinator, individual sensory activities are permitted and require continuous supervision, so that no items are shared.
- Until further notice, class parties are not open to parents.
- Children will only use restrooms located in their assigned classroom. First floor hallway restrooms are for adults only, however, are available for “emergency” use by children during drop-off and pickup windows, or if class is on Outdoor Classroom.

Time Keeping and PTO have been modified during pandemic protective care. Staff have been issued specific instructions.

Further Teacher and Staff Requirements (some previously listed)

- All SLDS employees, approved DTK housekeeping, security, and SLUMC staff will also complete personal daily health checks before entering the Children’s Ministries secure access area.
- If/when, at any time, SLUMC determines to require COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of employment, the SLDS staff will be notified of updated policies and procedures.
- Any staff member that displays symptoms will follow the protocols previously described for children and families;
- The staff understands and accepts that no list of restrictions, guidelines or practices will remove 100% of the risk of exposure to COVID-19 as the virus can be transmitted by persons who are asymptomatic and before some people show signs of infection; they accept this risk and are keenly aware of their crucial role to keep everyone in the facility safe and reduce the risk of exposure by following the strict policies and procedures as outlined herein.

All parents must acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with the provisions listed in the parent addendum. **SLDS teachers and administrators must also acknowledge that they have read, understand and agree to comply with the provisions listed in this staff addendum.**

Use the link provided to submit your acknowledgement.