



## COVID-19 ADDENDUM TO SEA SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This document has been created to inform you of COVID-19 specific amendments to our policies and procedures outlined in the Sea School Family Handbook. In accordance with the State of Connecticut requirements\* for child care programs, Mystic Aquarium has established the following guidelines to ensure preschooler and instructor safety:

*\*Subject to change at any time per order of Office of Early Childhood*

### **Classroom Size and Ages We Serve**

Sea School is licensed to serve children ages 3 to 5 with 10-14\* children per class.

### **Withdrawals, Taking Time Off & Cancellation Policy**

Tuition is based on enrollment not attendance. During COVID-19 all refunds and/or withdrawals will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Director.

### **Drop-Off Routine**

- **Drop off will take place between 8:50am-9:10am.** Caregivers, children and staff must wear masks/facial covering and practice social distancing during drop off. Exceptions will be made for anyone with documentation that wearing a face covering would be contrary to their health or safety because of a medical condition.
- Each morning all staff and children will be screened for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress, and to confirm temperature below 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Staff or children who have a temperature greater than 100 degrees will not be permitted into the program.
- Teachers will meet you at the Milne Center. A teacher will sign children in, take temperatures with a contact-free thermometer and complete a questionnaire.
- After your child is screened and signed in, a teacher will be inside the Lobby to receive them and proceed with morning transition.

### **Pick-Up Routine**

- **Afternoon pick-up between 12:55pm-1:10pm** will be at the Milne Center. Please have an ID ready. Parking is directly in front of building.
- If a child develops any symptoms during the day, they will be moved immediately to a dedicated, isolated area to await pick up.
- Caregivers must wear masks/facial covering and practice social distancing when they are outside of their cars.
- One teacher will wait with children in the lobby while another signs individuals out and deliver to your loving arms!



### What to Bring to Sea School

During COVID-19, please pack as light as possible. They will need their own water bottle and lunch with ice pack if perishable inside a bag/backpack that they can carry without assistance. Comfort items are welcome as long as they are contained within the child’s bag/backpack, pockets or attached in some way. Meaning, yes if they need their lovey, blanket, hot wheel, or special item—it needs to be contained.

In the classroom, each child will have a cubby and drawer designated only for them and separate from others. During Orientation, please bring spare clothes, shoes, and slippers or house shoes (for children to wear in the classroom) in a bag/tote that can withhold exposure to sanitation sprays. If you miss orientation, you can bring these items the first day you attend. These items will be left in the classroom and you will need to replace them seasonally or as needed.

### The Sea School Learning Environment

Most of our curriculum, philosophy, and learning environment will remain the same with the usual evolving and creative approaches. Due to extensive protocols and procedures to minimize the spread of COVID-19, we will have to make certain safety measures a priority. We intend to make social distancing, mask/face coverings, and other protocols as fun and simple as possible for the children. This is our life now, so we are fully committed to offering coping strategies and as much social-emotional support as needed to make the children feel safe and enable them to thrive even in the most trying circumstances.

Children are incredibly resilient. Many of them are handling the changes we are going through better than a lot of adults. We have great confidence that we can help your children and your family through this and any other adversity that comes our way.

### Four-Hour Program Example Schedule (times include transitions): 9:00am – 1:00pm

9:00–10am	Welcome, Greeting Time, Tour of Indoor Exhibits before open to public
10-11:15am	Large and Small Group Activities, Music and Movement, Outdoor Learning Centers (with a minimum of 60 minutes outdoor/gross motor physical activity)
11:15am-12pm	Meal, Nutrition/Health Group Discussion, Read Aloud/Literacy
12pm–1:00pm	Table Activities/Art, Indoor Learning Centers, Journals, Handwriting Without Tears, Gather belongings and Meet Caregivers in Lobby



### **Family Involvement**

Our program provides ample opportunities for families to have a home-to-school connection and encourages the entire family to participate. However, at this time we need to reduce and/or eliminate in-person visits to remain within capacity and to adhere to protocols. We are encouraging virtual family involvement and foresee being able to send extra photos and videos home so that you stay connected and informed.

### **Toileting**

The toileting policy will remain the same, with additional sanitation and cleaning protocols. Stalls, handles, seats, and sinks will be sanitized before and after individual use. Children will not use public bathrooms when the Aquarium is open.

Children this age will have accidents. Teachers always use gloves when assisting children with bathroom needs. Per state regulations, we are not and have never been authorized to wipe children. We handle this by helping them take care of their needs to the best of their abilities. We encourage you to send flushable wipes for your child to store in their cubby.

Please read the policy in the Family Handbook for more details that are not affected by COVID-19.

### **Birthday and Holiday Celebrations**

At this time, we cannot share food. We will continue celebrating children, heritage, and traditions with non-food related materials.

### **Physicals and Immunizations**

At this time, physicals and documentation of immunizations may be difficult or impossible to get from your child's physician. The most up-to-date records will be accepted and for those without access to records a HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION ATTESTATION will be provided. The purpose of the attestation form is to allow for enrollment without the above referenced documentation. This documentation will be required for continued enrollment beyond the duration of the declared state of emergency.

### **Sea School Health Policy**

To provide a healthy environment for all, please keep your child home if there are any signs of illness. Children may not participate in Sea School if they exhibit any of the following conditions:

- Fever (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit), vomiting or diarrhea
  - a. Sending your child to school under fever reducing medication is prohibited
- Conjunctivitis unless medicated for 24 hours
- Any contagious illnesses
- Suspicious rashes, or lesions with bleeding or oozing



## COVID-19 ADDENDUM TO SEA SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- Lice or other infestation
- Conditions preventing them from active participation
  - a. (lethargy, sleepiness, shortness of breath, constant coughing, runny nose)
- Has been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person within the past 14 days.

### **Additionally:**

- Staff will wear face coverings at all times while working. Children are required to wear face coverings during transition to and from the classroom and outdoor space. Mask breaks indoors must maximize physical distance between individuals, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible. Mask may be removed when eating and drinking. Masks may be removed for outdoor activities when we are on the Green (Outdoor Natural Playground). Exceptions will be made for anyone with documentation that wearing a face covering would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition. We will handle non-compliance by children with gentle reminders and other least restrictive means of supporting compliance.
- Staff will teach and enforce good hand and respiratory hygiene and social distancing.
- Increased vigilance will be given to our already thorough cleaning and disinfecting procedures.

*COVID-19 was added to the List of Reportable Diseases in February 2020. Mystic Aquarium staff will report cases of COVID-19 immediately to Ledge Light Health District with the case/student by telephone on the day of recognition or strong suspicion of the disease. The COVID-19 report form is available on the DPH website at*

*<https://dphsubmissions.ct.gov/Covid/IntiateCovidReport>*

*Families who are attending Sea School Preschool who have either left the state or are coming from outside the state must reference the travel advisory authorized by the State of Connecticut. You are required to view the information and updates on this advisory which is found at <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Covid-19-knowledge-Base/Travel-In-or-Out-of-CT>. This will remain in effect until the State of Connecticut changes the advisory. Please reference this travel advisory for any updates. CDC travel guidance is also available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>.*