

# Lincoln Nursery School

at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum



## **How has Lincoln Nursery School adapted its approach due to COVID-19?**

Lincoln Nursery School's commitment to learning through play and inquiry, listening and dialog, and meaning and connection hasn't changed due to COVID-19! LNS has, however, adopted policies to ensure the health and safety of the community and comply with state guidelines.

### **Studio Safety:**

Each LNS studio makes every effort to be outside as much as possible. LNS luckily operates in an environment that's uniquely suited for the COVID-19 age. An outdoor learning environment is directly connected to each classroom. In addition, our learning spaces extend into the deCordova Sculpture Park and into the woods, ponds, and fields of neighboring conservation land. Children spend much of their day outdoors, no matter the weather.

In addition, LNS studios are open and spacious and the environments have been adapted to create ample space for children to enjoy exploratory play. Materials (blocks, etc.) shared by children of a studio are cleaned/sanitized at the end of each day. Individual materials are pulled out of use and cleaned/disinfected if they are mouthed/soiled. Each child is provided with their own "toolbox" containing supplies for individual use, such as play doh, crayons, etc. At snack and mealtimes, children are spaced 6 feet apart from one another. As much as possible, children enjoy a snack and lunch outdoors.

Additionally, this year LNS has reduced class sizes to 12 students per studio (down from 16) with two teachers. Although LNS has enough space to safely accommodate more students, teachers feel at the current time, this number allows them the appropriate amount of time to focus on the health and safety measures.

### **Masks:**

At arrival and pick up, all adults and children over two are required to wear masks in the parking lot, while checking in at the gate, and at all times while on the school campus, even when physical distancing is maintained. Teachers wear masks for the entirety of the school day. We've found the children have adapted very well to wearing masks.

### **Daily Monitoring:**

In order to ensure the health and safety of our students and teachers, LNS requires that parents complete a daily health screening prior to arrival at school, including a temperature check. Before entering the school, parents must attest that the daily health screening has been completed and no COVID-19 symptoms have been observed.

### **Co-op and Parent Helpers:**

Parents are involved in all aspects of the school, including serving either on the board of directors or a committee, and participating in community events. Prior to COVID-19, an important part of the LNS experience was that each classroom had a teaching team of three - two co-teachers and a parent helper. Parents were asked to help in the classroom about seven times a year.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only teachers and students may enter the school gates, therefore parent helping has been suspended for the time being. However, LNS still values parents as an important part of the community and educational experience. To safely connect with parents, LNS has recently begun using Storypark, an application that allows teachers to share pictures and videos and communicate frequently. Parents still contribute to LNS through a parent job or role on a committee. Parent jobs have been adapted to suit the unique circumstances of this year. LNS continues to host welcoming and social events for families to connect and strengthen the community. These events may be socially distanced in-person events or virtual events, always keeping the safety of the community in mind.

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## **Enrollment:**

To start the enrollment process, prospective families must complete the new student application on the LNS website. As part of the enrollment process, parents are required to visit the school and have a discussion with the Director. Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions on visitors during the school day, these meetings will take place at the Open House on Saturday, November 7 or on Friday afternoons following the completion of the school week. This year, prospective children will not be visiting the school prior to enrollment.

## **Open House and Prospective Family Visits:**

Every year, LNS looks forward to welcoming prospective new families to visit and tour the school. Although the COVID-19 protocols require these visits to operate differently than in prior years, prospective families will still get to know the school and members of the community to see if LNS is a good fit for their family and child.

LNS is offering a socially distanced Open House on November 7. Advanced sign up is required via the LNS website. To ensure the health and safety of all visitors, LNS asks that you do not bring your children to the Open House. To keep the groups small, LNS also asks that only one parent attend. Masks are required, temperature checks will be performed, and visitors will complete a health attestation, prior to entering the school.

If you cannot attend the Open House but would still like a tour of the school, LNS invites you to visit the school on a Friday afternoon following the completion of the school week. To sign up for a Friday afternoon tour, please visit the enrollment section of the LNS website.

## **Extended Day:**

There are four extended day options: Early Arrival (8-9 a.m.), Extended Playground (12-12:30 p.m.), Lunch Bunch (12-1 p.m.), and Stay and Play (12-3 p.m.). These programs are offered on various days of the week (please see the Programs page of the LNS website), which parents may sign up for daily or on a contract basis. Ordinarily, Extended Day Programs offer children of mixed ages the opportunity to gather in a comfortable setting, eat lunches brought from home, and to play longer with friends. All LNS children are eligible to participate in any of the programs.

However, current COVID-19 guidelines require children and teachers stay with the same cohort for the entirety of the day. Therefore, Early Arrival and Extended Playground are available to all children in their specific studios, but Lunch Bunch and Stay & Play are only available to families who choose to enroll in the Extended Day Program for the whole year. All children who enroll in the program are placed in the same studio.