



## The Brick Church School Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year

August 14, 2020

Dear Brick Family,

From the moment our doors closed in March, we have yearned to reopen them and to have children laughing and learning inside our classrooms again. It has been a long road, but we remain committed to safely reopening Brick for in-person learning this fall. In consultation with the Fall Reopening Task Force, our staff and teachers have put forth tremendous effort to prepare for the children's arrival. At each step of the way, we have been guided by the following principles:

- Maintaining the health, safety, and emotional well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and families
- Adhering to the guidelines set by government agencies
- Staying true to our mission and program
- Providing clear and ongoing communication to our community

The result of our work to date is the plan presented here. Of course, a plan is only as good as those who see it through. The success of our efforts to return to Brick will require every member of our community to work together. Each of us must be ready and willing to create a culture of cooperation and responsibility and to make a daily commitment to protect the health of all who are learning, teaching, and working at our school. We are confident that our Brick community will do so.

We look forward to seeing everyone, virtually or in person, this fall and to **rekindling the magic of Brick** together!

Warmest regards,

Amy Warden



**Opening Days.** Our fall semester will commence as planned with Garden Visits beginning on September 1<sup>st</sup>. This year, Garden Visits will take the place of our usual Home Visits. These 1:1 introductions are an important opportunity for the children and parents to meet their homeroom teachers before school starts. The visits will last 20 minutes and take place at Brick in either the Garden or Rooftop Playground. Student orientation begins on September 14<sup>th</sup>.



**Arrival & Dismissal.** To accommodate physical distancing guidelines, students will arrive and depart at staggered times by classroom using two entrances: 62 East 92nd Street and 1140 Park Avenue. If you have more than one child at Brick, they may arrive at the same time and entrance (after the orientation phase has passed).

Class	Arrival & Dismissal	Entry & Exit
2 North	8:45-11:45 (ED* to 2:15)	1140 Park Avenue
2 South	8:30-11:30 (ED* to 2:00)	1140 Park Avenue
2 West AM	9:00-12:00	1140 Park Avenue
2 West PM	1:00-4:00 (3:30 on Fridays)	1140 Park Avenue
3 North AM	8:30-11:30	62 East 92nd Street
3 North PM	1:00-4:00 (3:30 on Fridays)	62 East 92nd Street
3 South	9:00-12:00 (ED* to 2:30)	1140 Park Avenue
4 North	8:45-11:45 (ED* to 2:15)	1140 Park Avenue
4 South	8:30-11:30 (ED* to 2:00)	1140 Park Avenue
5 North	9:00-12:00	62 East 92nd Street
5 South	8:45-11:45	62 East 92nd Street
MWF Twos	9:15-11:45	1140 Park Avenue
TTh Twos	9:15-11:45	1140 Park Avenue
TWTh Twos	1:15-3:45	1140 Park Avenue

*\*ED refers to Extended Day*

Once cleared to enter (see the Health & Safety protocols on Page 3), students will join their class in the Garden Room or Chapel, depending on the entrance used. When the teachers have a majority of their students, they will walk them to the classroom together. We ask that you please arrive as closely as possible to your scheduled time.



**Self-Contained Classrooms.** To accommodate physical distancing requirements, classrooms will be limited to 15 or fewer students. We have also added one new classroom, 3 South. To the extent possible, students' exposure will be limited to their homeroom teachers and the other students in their class. Isolating classrooms will help us limit potential exposure among students and contact trace effectively if necessary. Students will have daily access to either the Garden or Rooftop Playground with their class. Otherwise, they will remain in their designated classroom space. Specialists for Art, Music, Movement, and Spanish will Zoom into the classroom for the fall semester. Given the limited movement throughout the building during the day, small breaks will be built into the schedule to keep the children active.



**Backpacks.** For the health and safety of the children, we will discourage students from bringing materials to and from home including backpacks. As an exception, students in Extended Day should bring a bag lunch in a disposable bag. The children's art projects and other work will be sent home periodically in a plastic bag.



**Lunch & Snacks.** Snacks will be provided by the school in a pre-proportioned manner. Students in Extended Day should bring lunch (NO NUTS) packed in a disposable bag that can be kept in each child's cubby until it is time to eat. Food cannot be shared. The school will provide disposable cups and water. During snack and lunch, children will be seated a safe distance apart. Before and after eating, tables will be disinfected.



**Classroom Supplies.** Brick will provide each child with individualized materials, including art, writing, and music materials, to minimize the need to share items. There will still be opportunities to collaborate in the classroom. Classrooms will have cleaning supplies to disinfect shared materials between use.



**Chapel.** Chapel services will be held virtually so that students can attend from their classrooms. Parents will be invited to join from their home or office.



**Curriculum.** Our commitment to maintaining the health, safety, and emotional well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and families informs not only our policies and routines but also our curriculum and programming. Educators and health care professionals across the globe have underscored the importance of adapting learning experiences to respond to the impact of our community's collective trauma. This approach encourages strong, caring relationships with adults, the building of deep and meaningful connections with peers, and centers on inquiry and joy in learning in order to help children navigate the complexity of their new realities. Informed by the research, in consultation with experts in the field of early childhood education and mental health, and with the guidance of members of the Brick teaching staff, we have adopted a new focus in our fall curriculum to support the students as they transition back to school. This study will focus on exploring the community, its members, and the way communities work together to take care of each other. The three essential questions guiding the study are: "Who am I?", "Who are you?", and "Who are we?" These questions will be explored through sharing and writing stories, collecting data about each other, through art experiences, and allowing for meaningful ways to engage in skill building across all learning domains. And, of course, this exploration draws upon the important relationship between home and school.



**Quarantine Rule.** Families returning to New York City from a high risk virus area are required to follow the NY State protocols for self-quarantining (currently 14 days) before entering Brick. Also, if any individual in your home travels to a high risk virus area, they are required to self-quarantine apart from the child for 14 days. If the individual chooses not to or cannot self-quarantine, then the child may not return to school until the 14 days have passed. More information including a list of states that meet the criteria for required quarantine can be found here: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>.



**Daily Health Screening.** The latest guidance encourages students to be checked for symptoms before leaving home and at school. Checking symptoms at home will ensure that a sick child does not leave home and expose others. Brick will be using Remini-Schools & ECC, an app for pre-screening. Students, faculty, and staff will be required to complete a short daily health survey, including a temperature check, before coming to school. If you answer YES to any question, (e.g. “Is anyone in your household feeling sick today?”), your child will not be permitted to come to school. Students will not be allowed to enter the building without a completed health check.

Your child’s temperature will be taken again when they arrive at school. There will be temperature kiosks and handheld, contactless thermometers at each entrance. If your child has a fever of 100.0 F or higher, they will not be allowed to enter the building. Children who stay for Extended Day will have a second temperature check at lunch.



**Handwashing & Sanitizing.** We are installing hand sanitizing dispensers at all entrances, classrooms, and bathrooms. Everyone will be required to sanitize their hands before entering the building. Students will also sanitize and/or wash their hands with warm soap and water regularly throughout the day, including when they first arrive in the classroom, before and after eating, and after bathroom breaks.



**Sick Policy.** If your child or anyone in your home is sick with or has been exposed to someone who is sick with ANY of the following COVID-19 symptoms – fever (a temp of 100.0 F or higher), cough, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, extreme fatigue, body aches, shortness of breath, rash, runny nose, or lack of taste or smell – please contact the School Nurse and keep your child home from school. If your child or anyone in your home has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been notified by the DOH that they were in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, please notify the School Nurse as soon as possible.



**Face Coverings.** We will require everyone two years or older to wear a face covering while in the building unless eating, drinking, or resting. Children will also get brief mask breaks while outside on the playground. Acceptable face coverings for students include child-sized surgical masks and reusable three-ply cloth masks. (Gaiters, bandanas, and masks with valves have been proven less effective and are therefore not allowed.)

All student face coverings must also include a lanyard to prevent it from falling to the ground. Brick will provide one lanyard to each student. If wearing a face covering causes discomfort or distress in your child, we will work with them to become comfortable with it in a slow and nurturing way.



**Dress Code.** Children should wear comfortable clothes, a mask, and shoes with rubber soles to school each day. We ask that each child have two extra masks and two full changes of clothes (including socks) at school with everything clearly labeled.



**Physical Distancing.** To facilitate physical distancing, we are designating up and down stairwells, restricting elevator use, and placing signs and markings throughout the building to encourage individuals to observe spacing. Markers will also be placed outside the building to encourage a safe distance between families at dropoff and pickup. During the day, children will be allowed to play and interact with other students in their classroom but will be seated a safe distance apart during snack, lunch, and rest.



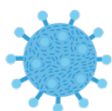
**School Nurse & Health Office.** We are hiring a full-time School Nurse, and the Women's Choir Room near the Youth Floor has been repurposed into a Health Office, which will serve as an isolation space for anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19. Each classroom will still be equipped with a first-aid kit to limit student trips to see the School Nurse. The School Nurse will be equipped with gloves, gowns, N-95 face masks, and face shields.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, they will be isolated in the Health Office immediately and must be picked up from school within one hour. In order to facilitate this process, it is critical that families confirm that all contact information is up to date in the **GoPad** app and that a minimum of two emergency contacts are provided.



**Cleaning, Sanitizing & Ventilation.** Cleaning staff will be equipped with electrostatic disinfection sprayers to thoroughly clean and sanitize the school every evening. Additional rounds will be scheduled throughout the day to disinfect common use items and common spaces. Classrooms that are shared between morning and afternoon sections will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between the two.

To improve air quality, we are upgrading our HVAC ductwork to incorporate MERV-13 filters, and each classroom and common space will have a stand-alone HEPA air purifier. All air handling equipment has been completely disinfected and set to maximum outside air settings to reduce the recirculation of air. Windows throughout the building will remain open as much as possible to maximize fresh air flow throughout.



**Containment of COVID-19.** We will continue to follow the guidance of officials and experts on how to handle possible and confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our community. COVID-19 testing will be required of all faculty and staff before returning to school and intermittently throughout the school year. Individuals who answer YES to any question in the daily health screening must stay home and notify the School Nurse as soon as possible.

If a child develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, they will be isolated in the Health Office, and the rest of the class will relocate to one of our designated “clean” spaces – the Living Room, Dining Room, or Watson Hall. The cleaning staff will disinfect the classroom and common spaces according to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection guidance set by the DOH and CDC. The School Nurse will notify the local DOH, and contact tracing will be used to notify all necessary individuals of potential exposure.

A COVID-19 symptomatic\* individual will not be allowed to return to school until they have tested negative for COVID-19 and have been evaluated by a physician who documents that the symptoms are related to another specific diagnosis (e.g. flu, strep throat, etc.) or a pre-existing condition. If the family chooses not to have the child evaluated by a physician and tested for COVID-19, the child must quarantine for 14 days. In all cases, they must stay home until they have been fever free for more than 72 hours without medication, and other symptoms are improving. Siblings will not be allowed to return to school until they meet all of the same requirements.

\*Symptomatic is defined as any ONE of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste and smell or any TWO of the following symptoms: fever, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, runny nose.

A COVID-19 positive individual must stay home until:

- they have tested negative for COVID-19, if required by the physician,
- they have a physician’s note clearing them to return to school,
- they have been fever free for more than 72 hours without medication,
- other symptoms are improving, AND
- it has been 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

Siblings will not be allowed to return to school until they meet all of the same requirements. Each positive COVID-19 case will be considered individually. If contact tracing necessitates the closure of a classroom, the class will shift to remote learning.

To offer peace of mind, we will communicate appropriately with everyone in our community, balancing privacy and transparency.



**Brick at Home (Full Virtual Learning).** An important part of our work this summer has been preparing for the possibility that the school or a classroom will need to transition to 100% remote learning at various points throughout the year. At the start of the school year, we will give all students a “Brick at Home Bag” of curricular materials. If we need to shift to online instruction, a second bag of materials will be sent home. It will take one full school day to pivot from in-person learning to Brick at Home.

Students in our 3-to 5-year-old classes will be engaged in synchronous learning activities for 2 to 2.5 hours each day with appropriate breaks. A *sample* virtual day might include the following activities:

- Morning or Afternoon Meeting
- Small Group Work (divided by curricular activity)
- Teacher-facilitated, project-based learning
- Movement Break
- Story
- Snack
- Special (e.g. Music, Art, Movement, or Virtual Field Trip)
- Closing Circle

Students enrolled in Extended Day will be engaged in synchronous learning activities for an additional 1 to 1.5 hours every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday such as:

- Circle Time
- Small Group Work (divided by curricular activity)
- Teacher-facilitated, project-based learning
- Interest Groups (e.g. blocks, dramatic play, art)
- Movement Break
- Read-Aloud for a Purpose/Music
- Goodbye Song

Students in the Twos Program will be offered 30 to 60 minutes of synchronous activity on the days that they are enrolled. Their virtual learning curriculum will be centered around the family. Each child will engage with their teacher 1:1 or in small groups daily. They will also continue to receive live Music classes, Read-Alouds, and asynchronous learning materials.



**Virtual Learning When Brick is Open (VLBO).** If a child is quarantining or is out sick for an extended period of time, they will be able to take advantage of VLBO. When well enough to do so, these children can Zoom into their classroom for Morning or Afternoon Meeting, Read-Alouds, Snacks, and Specials. They will also receive daily 1:1 check-ins from a Brick Specialist or the Remote Learning Coordinator. If the entire school or classroom needs to transition to remote learning, then all students will shift to the Brick at Home program as outlined above.



**Remote Learning Support.** Brick has hired a Remote Learning Coordinator to help make remote learning, and potential transitions in and out of remote learning, as seamless as possible. In addition, parents and caregivers will receive ongoing parent education on how to support their child's learning from home.



**Technology & Training.** We are making several enhancements to the technology in our classrooms including the installation of cameras to help facilitate remote learning and live-streaming. This fall, professional development for our teachers will focus on best practices in virtual learning for preschoolers and ways to support children in their social/emotional needs as they experience school in a new way this fall (whether virtual or in person). Teachers are preparing their lessons to be taught both in person and remotely so that we can easily transition between the two if needed.





**Communications.** We promise to keep the school community informed and updated throughout the year as we reopen with care. This Reopening Plan has been posted on the school website. We will notify you of any important updates by email. Any closure announcements will be sent by email from the Director, posted on the school website, and texted from the **GoPad** app.



**Visitor Policy.** Entry to our building will be restricted to students, faculty, and staff only, except in case of emergency. As an exception, parents/caregivers will be allowed to walk children to their classrooms during September's orientation period according to a strict transition schedule. All adults must clear the daily health screening and be masked during their time in the building. They will be encouraged to leave as soon as their child is settled in the classroom. We look forward to welcoming parents back inside the building on a regular basis as soon as it is safe to do so!

Visitors of the The Brick Presbyterian Church, with whom we share our facilities, will be required to follow all of the health and safety protocols outlined above with respect to masks, hand sanitizing, and physically distancing. The Church will not be holding any large gatherings Monday - Friday. In-person Sunday services with limited attendance following established health and safety protocols are proposed to begin in October.



**Virtual Gatherings.** Because entry to our buildings will be restricted to students, faculty, and staff, we will hold parent-teacher conferences, all facets of our admissions process, parent committee meetings, and large gatherings virtually including the fall School Open House and weekly Chapel services.



**We're in This Together!** We will rely upon the effort of the entire community to keep school open and everyone safe and well. We expect families to agree to proper hygiene techniques at home, follow social distancing guidelines and face covering protocols, and reinforce the importance of staying home if not feeling well. Together, we can do this!