



# St. Patrick School

## COVID 19 Response Fall 2020-21

*"Trust in Him – at all times" Psalm 62:8*

### OVERVIEW

St. Patrick School forms students who possess strong religious values, academic integrity, individual responsibility, and clear sense of citizenship. In addition to reading, religion, and math, children learn social and emotional skills, get exercise, make friends, and a long list of other benefits while attending school. Our focus will always be on meeting the spiritual, academic and emotional needs of our students.

Our goal is to have our students physically present in the school as close to normal as possible. We have some additional precautions to limit the potential for exposure from those who might have contracted the COVID-19. With a bit of pre-teaching, the additional precautions will not hamper a spirit of joy and confidence.

We are putting our trust in you to support these precautions and work with school staff to ensure school is a safe place where students WANT to be! Through your partnership with the school in the formation of your child, your words of encouragement and positivity regarding the beginning of the year are going to help make this year a true success!

Updated Friday, July 24, 2020

## **GENERAL MEASURES**

St. Patrick School will continue to communicate with local and state authorities to determine current disease levels and control measures in our community. In addition, we will continue to collaborate with other local educational agencies in our region as well as the Nebraska Department of Education.

Our policies and procedures will be reviewed every two weeks and adjustments made as deemed necessary, either to lessen precautions or to increase them, based on guidance from the CDC and our local health department, or in response to an outbreak of the virus in the school.

## **PROMOTE HEALTHY HYGIENE**

Teachers will take the time to teach and reinforce hand-washing procedures, avoidance of contact with eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes, and proper use of clear face shields and cloth face coverings.

### **Healthy Hygiene Practices**

- Model and practice proper and frequent hand washing.
- Wash hands before and after eating, after coughing or sneezing, after being outside, and before and after using the restroom.
- Wash hands for twenty seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application, use paper towels to dry hands thoroughly.
- Avoid contact with eyes, nose, and mouth, cover coughs and sneezes.
- Use tissue to wipe nose, cough/sneeze inside tissue or elbow.
- Use hand sanitizer when hand washing is not available. Sanitizer must be rubbed into hands until completely dry.
- Develop routines to wash hands frequently and at staggered intervals.

## **DECREASE CONTAMINATION AND INCREASE DISENFECTION**

Cleaning and sanitizing will be increased throughout the school, both in classrooms as well as general use areas.

Handwashing / Sanitizing will be increased and encouraged each time a student moves within the building (going into the office or a specials classroom, before recess, before and after lunch, etc...)

Visitors and guests will be limited at first. Parents and visitors will be temporarily discouraged from visiting during lunch or classroom celebrations.

Drinking fountains will not be used; we will encourage the use of reusable water bottles as needed.

### **FACE COVERING USAGE**

Although there are conflicting reports on the effectiveness of cloth facemask usage, it is still one of the most highly recommended means of protection from the spread of the COVID-19. We recognize that it would be extremely uncomfortable for anyone, especially children, to wear cloth facemasks at all times.

In accordance with the Lincoln-Lancaster County DHM, all staff, students, and visitors will be asked to wear cloth face coverings at all times with exceptions for:

- Individuals ages four and younger
- When exercising (PE)
- When eating (lunch / snack)
- Individuals with a medical condition that prevents mask wearing

Each student will be issued at least two adjustable cloth facemasks to wear to and from school and while in the classroom and other common areas.

Parents may provide additional cloth facemasks for their children, or purchase additional cloth facemasks from the office.

- Cloth facemasks are to be made up of at least two layers of material.
- Please choose any color or design that your child would like!
- Cloth facemask designs are to be in accordance with the expectations of a Catholic School and are not to have any violent /disturbing images or inappropriate references.
- Disposable facemasks will be available for those who need a mask.

When students and staff are using masks, quarantine of an entire classroom/school may not be necessary in the event of an initial positive COVID-19 case. If additional cases are identified in that classroom, it may result in quarantine. This decision is determined by the risk of transmission within the classroom itself.

## **PROTECTIVE MEASURES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

### *Arrival*

- We may be taking student temperatures as they enter the building.
- An area will be available separate from the classrooms with areas sectioned off for students who do come to school with an elevated temperature.
- Students will be asked to wear facemasks until getting to their homeroom.

### *Mass*

- Students will continue to attend mass. We will engage in physical distancing, and wear a face covering.

### *Classrooms*

- Desks will be spaced as the room allows. All children will face the front of the room when seated in their desk.
- Limited sharing of objects and equipment, such as toys, games and art supplies to the extent practicable.

### *Lunch*

- All classes will eat in the gym, as normal, for lunch.
- Students will sanitize their hands, as usual, before lunch.
- Students may be asked to wear a face covering through the lunch line and until they are seated at their table.
- Students may be staggered across from each other at tables to allow the chance to talk and interact while they eat, but still provide for physical distance.
- As usual, we will deep clean between lunch groups.

### *Mid-Day Temperature Check*

- Students may receive mid-day temperature checks.

### *Recess*

- Students will play with their grade-level classmates during recess.
- Outdoor equipment will not be shared between grades.

### *Specials*

- Students will attend specials classes with their specialty teacher, who will generally wear a face covering when instructing students.
- Students will wear face coverings on their way to specials and as directed by the specialty teachers depending on the activity.
- Shared specialty classroom items will be sanitized between each group of students using the room.

### *Dismissal*

- All students and staff may wear a facemask at dismissal when physical distancing is not possible.

### *Extended Care*

- Students may be required to wear face coverings and will be physically distanced when possible.

### *Clubs*

- Students may be required to wear face coverings and will be physically distanced when possible.

## **CHECK FOR SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

All staff and student families should practice at-home screening for symptoms before arrival to school.

Any students or staff exhibiting the following symptoms may be required to wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility, as soon as practicable.

- Fever
- Cough

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Staff and students who are sick will stay at home. Any staff or students who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 will stay at home until tested and received a negative result. Close contact is defined as close conversation with a person who has been positively tested for COVID-19, and is symptomatic, for at least 5-10 minutes without any face coverings.

We may screen all staff and students entering the facility as necessary. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Conduct visual wellness checks of all students and take students' temperature with a no-touch thermometer.
- Ask all individuals about COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.
- Document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and classroom families immediately of any positive case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality, as required under FERPA and state law related to privacy of educational records.

### **ATTENDANCE EXCLUSION AND RETURN CRITERIA**

(Recommendation from the Lincoln Diocesan Education Office)

Given the nature of the pandemic, schools will make additional medical inquiries of students than they otherwise would. If a parent/guardian notifies the school that a student is ill, the school may ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 and provide instruction based on the

current state and local health directives for the student's school attendance; the student's attendance will be coded accordingly.

### *Return to School After Exclusion*

Once a student is excluded from the school environment, he/she may return if he/she satisfies the following recommendations from the CDC. Currently, these guidelines are:

**UNTESTED:** Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three conditions are met:

1. Fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fever; and
2. Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
3. Ten (10) calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

OR

Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

**TESTED:** Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 and are found to be positive may return to school if the following three conditions are met:

1. Fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fever; and
2. Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
3. Ten (10) calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 and are found to be negative may return to school if the following two conditions are met:

1. Fever free (without the use medicine that reduces fevers); and
2. Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved).

**TESTED WITH NO SYMPTOMS:** Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID- 19 may return to school when the following three conditions are met:

1. Fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fever; and
2. Any symptoms that develop have improved (for example, cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
3. Ten (10) calendar days have passed since positive test was done.

Remote learning plan may be implemented while excluded for an extended period of time.

#### *Siblings or Other Students in the Household*

If a student is excluded from school due to COVID-19 symptoms or has had a positive COVID-19 test, his or her siblings or other students living in the same household will also be excluded from school and required to self-quarantine.

#### *Self-Quarantine*

Anyone in close, prolonged contact with a COVID-19 individual will be required to quarantine for 14 days by the health department.

#### *School Response to Exclusion from School or Self-Quarantine*



As soon as the school becomes aware that a student or staff has COVID-19, the person will be isolated, as previously stated, and will be sent home. Custodial staff will be informed so that all desks, cubbies, lockers, workspaces, etc. are thoroughly disinfected. If the school is not open when notification occurs, the custodial staff will wait 24 hours or as long as possible prior to disinfecting and instead will block off the area so that others do not have contact. However, if a 24-hour wait time is not possible or school is in session, the cleaning will occur immediately.

Reference – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.htm>

*Policies will not penalize students and families for missing class.*

*Updated Friday, July 24, 2020*

Please be assured that this is a working document.

Updates and revisions will be made and communicated, as we get closer to starting school in August.