

Health and Safety Plan

Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School

2021-2022



**PREPARING
THE WAY**

Introduction

Statement from Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone

The following guidelines were developed to support the reopening of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Charleston for the 2021-2022 school year. These guidelines were established in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control, state, and local recommendations for opening schools. A broad stakeholder group helped develop these recommendations and solicited feedback from teachers, parents, principals, and pastors.

The areas of focus within this plan include:

Re-Opening

- Following applicable state and local orders
- Providing reasonable protections for those at higher risk for severe illness
- Screening for symptoms and history of exposure

Health & Safety

- *Vaccinations: All eligible staff and students are encouraged to receive the vaccination for COVID-19, in consultation with their personal physician.*
- Require healthy hygiene practices such as handwashing and the wearing of facemasks by employees and students, as needed.
- Maintain cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation.
- Implement social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups.
- Train all employees on health and safety protocols.

Ongoing Monitoring

- Develop and implement procedures to check for signs and symptoms of illness in students and employees daily.
- Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home. Have a plan for when students or employees come to school sick or become sick.
- Monitor developments and regularly communicate with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
- Monitor student and employee absences.
- Be ready to consult with local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area.

Academic Practices & Recommendations

- In developing schedules, priority must be given to ensuring the health, safety, and wellness of students and staff. This requires aligning all scheduling decisions with the latest recommendation and guidance from public health officials about best practices for preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- The lowest minimum social distancing for classrooms is 9 square feet per person. Masks are not required if students maintain 3 feet of social distancing. Anyone not vaccinated is encouraged to wear a mask.
- Teaching methodologies such as group work, labs, centers, etc., should continue, but a minimum of 3 feet of social distancing must be maintained if there is not the wearing of masks.
- Desks and other touched surfaces must be cleaned regularly.
- The sharing of materials is discouraged.
- School leaders will maintain/update a Distance Learning Plan that can be implemented if the school needs to close and switch to virtual learning. All Distance Learning Plans must contain procedures for how to track and document student engagement and attendance.
- School Leaders will train students in the use of whatever platform will be implemented to deliver virtual instruction.
- Equip classrooms with the equipment necessary to livestream instruction daily to students that are participating from home due to isolation or quarantine.
- Volunteers and visitors are permitted. Masks recommended.

Re-Opening Guidelines

Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School’s reopening plan and guidelines are consistent with applicable state and local orders. Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School is prepared to protect children, staff, and teachers at higher risk for severe illness. Protections are in place for both children and adults.

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| <p>High Risk Groups</p> | <p>People 65 years or older</p> <p>People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well-controlled, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma • Serious heart conditions • Immunocompromised. Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immunodeficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications • Severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher) • Diabetes • Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis • Liver disease |
| <p>Accommodations, considerations for staff & students</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly recommends the wearing of masks • Strongly recommend vaccination in consultation with medical professional |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff requests for accommodations will be reviewed with Human Resources • Care plans will be updated and accessible |
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Our school is prepared to screen students and employees for symptoms and history of exposure to coronavirus:

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| Health Checks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and staff are encouraged to stay home if they are sick. Parents are encouraged to keep sick children at home. • Teachers will monitor their students for possible illness upon arrival to class. • Any health check (e.g., temperature screening and/or symptoms checking) of staff and students will be done safely, respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws or regulations. <i>Confidentiality will be maintained.</i> |
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| Watch for Symptoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor students and staff for symptoms. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure: <p>Fever or chills</p> <p>Cough</p> <p>Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing</p> <p>Fatigue, muscle, or body aches</p> <p>Headache</p> <p>New loss of taste or smell</p> <p>Sore throat</p> <p>Congestion or runny nose</p> <p>Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea</p> |
| Screening for History of Exposure | <p>Prior to returning to school, we will screen students/staff for a history of exposure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have staff or students tested positive for COVID-19? • Released from isolation and quarantine (10-14 days)? • Note from healthcare provider to return? • Have staff or students had a known exposure to COVID- 19? |

Guidelines are posted and communicated for staying home when ill:

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| <p>Requirement to Stay Home When Sick</p> | <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will require families and staff to sign a Statement of Understanding regarding safety protocols.</p> <p>A communication plan has been developed for staff and families to stay home if ill.</p> <p>Anyone who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tested positive for COVID-19 or shows symptoms; or 2. Came into close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 must stay home. |
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Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School has established a procedure in case someone comes to school with symptoms or develops symptoms:

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| <p>Isolating if Ill</p> | <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will have a room to isolate and monitor children or staff that are showing symptoms of illness during the day.</p> |
| <p>Not Allowing Entry to Someone Symptomatic</p> | <p>If a student or faculty member is identified as being symptomatic during the school day, administration has the authority to deny that person entry into the school building.</p> |

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| <p>Isolation and Quarantine Measures</p> | <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will require that both staff and students not return until they have met specific criteria to return:</p> <p>Isolation: for those diagnosed by test of physician with COVID-19</p> <p>An employee or student must isolate until they have met the isolation requirements established by the CDC/DHEC and have a note from a health care provider that they are allowed to return to normal activity.</p> <p>Quarantine: for those exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 (CDC/DHEC requirements in place)</p> <p>Please see: DHEC Covid19 Contact Guidance</p> <p>https://scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-contact-guidance</p> |
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Health & Safety Guidelines and Recommendations

Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will require healthy hygiene practices, such as handwashing, and require employees and students to wear face masks when required social distancing cannot be practiced.

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| <p>Handwashing and Sanitizing</p> | <p>Each classroom will provide times and opportunities for students and staff to wash their hands often (<i>with soap and water for at least 20 seconds</i>), especially after being in a public place, blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing.</p> <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will maintain adequate soap and hand sanitizer throughout the school.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty will remind students frequently to not touch eyes, noses, and mouths with unwashed hands. • Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School staff will teach and reinforce washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, rules of engagement, and social distancing. • There will be a hand sanitizing station in the entrance of each building for students to sanitize their hands immediately upon entry. |
| <p>Supplies to Support and Encourage Handwashing</p> | <p>Soap and paper towels (or dryer) will be available in all restrooms and at all sinks.</p> <p>Tissues will be made available and accessible in classrooms.</p> <p>Trash cans will be emptied daily, or more frequently, if needed.</p> <p>Hand Sanitizer will be available in multiple spaces: classrooms, hallways, doorways, outside offices, entrances to buildings.</p> |
| <p>Face Coverings</p> | <p>The lowest minimum social distancing for classrooms is 9 square feet per person. Masks are not required if students maintain 3 feet of social distancing. All staff and students who are vaccinated and unvaccinated are strongly encouraged to wear a mask when indoors.</p> |

***There may be times during the school year when masks may be required, such as during large group gatherings or when there is an elevated spread of COVID-19 in the school or local community. This will be at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the pastor, advisory council, and the Catholic Schools Office. Masks will be readily available.

Staff and students throughout the day must continue to keep about 3 feet between themselves and others. A face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.

If parents want their children to wear masks throughout the day, teachers should encourage compliance.
 Face coverings should be washed daily at home.

Cleaning, Disinfecting, & Ventilation

Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will increase cleaning, disinfecting, and ventilation efforts.

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| Cleaning & Disinfecting if Someone is Ill | <p>All guidance for cleaning and disinfection comes from the CDC.</p> <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will ensure the school has appropriate cleaning products.</p> |
| Ensure Appropriate Ventilation | <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will make sure there is proper ventilation in all classrooms and student/staff areas.</p> <p>The HVAC is regularly maintained, and HVAC filters regularly replaced.</p> <p>Classrooms, windows/ doors may be opened for additional ventilation.</p> |

Social Distancing

Saint Mary Help of Christians will implement social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups. Individuals should stay at least 3 feet from others.

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| Classrooms | <p>The lowest minimum social distancing for classrooms is 9 square feet per person. Masks are not required if students maintain 3 feet of social distancing.</p> <p>Additional measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign cubbies or lockers to each child for individual use and storage of items (<i>no co-mingling or sharing</i>). |
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| Hallways | <p>Social distancing guidelines will be maintained, and students and staff will mask in hallways when social distancing/timeframe recommendation cannot be maintained.</p> <p>Additional measure:</p> <p>Clear delineation of hallways between 2-way traffic with no congregating.</p> |
| Avoid Sharing Materials & Objects | Sharing must be avoided. Staff will disinfect frequently if items must be shared. |
| Lunchroom | <p>Use of the cafeteria and/or other spaces is allowed with social distancing requirements implemented. Regular cleaning and sanitizing must be followed each lunch period.</p> <p>It is recommended to use single-serve containers for lunches to prevent cross contamination.</p> |
| Recess | Maintain 3 feet social distance. The use of outdoor spaces is encouraged when feasible. Utilize designated areas and times with no overlap, and no shared personal equipment. |
| Arrival & Dismissal | Arrival and dismissal will take place outdoors with all previously mentioned protocols in place. (except for early morning care) |
| Field Trips | Field trips are permitted but COVID-19 protocols must be created for each trip. Parents should be informed of these protocols prior to the trip. All Diocesan policies regarding field trips must be followed. |
| Emergency Drills | <p>All emergency drills will take place as required.</p> <p>Faculty and students will follow social distancing guidelines.</p> |
| Liturgies | <p>School liturgies should follow diocesan guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will participate in school Mass with all students following social distancing guidelines. |
| Parent Meetings | <p>Parent meetings are permitted with appropriate social distancing and masks are highly recommended.</p> <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will consider virtual parent progress conferences and meetings, as needed.</p> <p>Severe discipline issues should still follow social distancing protocol.</p> |
| Fundraisers and Events | <p>Gatherings can/should be limited to the guidelines set forth for group gatherings from the DHEC and/or the Diocese of Charleston regarding size allowed and measures required to ensure social distancing and cleanliness.</p> <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will reconfigure and plan for other types of celebrations for grade level activities.</p> |
| Front Office | <p>Volunteers and visitors are permitted. Masks recommended.</p> <p>Protection for front office workers is essential.</p> <p>Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will establish a protocol for sanitizing after each visitor to the office.</p> |
| Extended Care | Maintain consistency with daily protocols followed throughout the school day. Ensure that social distancing requirements are met and followed. |

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| Snacks | <p>Snacks are recommended to be served in single-serve containers to prevent cross contamination. Guidelines for cleaning and sanitizing must be followed each activity period, switching of groups, and at the end of the day.</p> <p>The use of outdoor spaces is encouraged when feasible. Consider utilizing designated areas and times with no overlap, and no equipment being shared.</p> <p>Devise a strategy for student arrival at extended care programs to prevent congregating and to follow social distancing recommendations.</p> |
| Extracurricular Activities | Extracurricular clubs and activities are permitted following regular school hour protocols. |
| Community Service | Schools may participate in or require any community service that takes place outside the school following regular school hour protocols. |
| Religious Education & Church Groups | All religious education and church groups using the school facility must follow school health guidelines. All areas used must be cleaned after use, following the school's required cleaning protocols. |
| Outside Groups | Outside groups are permitted to use school buildings if they follow regular school hour protocols. |

Health & Safety Protocols



All staff and employees will be trained for appropriate health protocols.

We will require anyone who is sick to stay home.

Our staff will regularly monitor developments of cases and exposures and updates to policies and procedures.

We will continue to monitor student and employee absences and develop flexible leave policies and practices. Our school is prepared to consult with local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area.

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| Communication | Communication to key stakeholders regarding COVID-19 will come from an administrator |
| Sharing School Protocols | <p>For Staff: Share planning and conduct training prior to opening; review during in-service week; evaluate on a regular basis and make improvements.</p> <p>For Parents: Notify through letters, newsletters, emails, Zoom meetings; encourage parent discussions with child(ren) prior to the start of school on what changes to expect.</p> <p>For Students: Share the opening week of school. Model, practice, and reinforce protocols, proper handwashing and hygiene.</p> |

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| Procedure for Monitoring Health | Protocols have been established for checking for symptoms and signs of illness. Confidentiality will be maintained. |
| Staying Home | Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School encourages anyone who is sick to stay home. |
| Continual Screening | Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will screen employees and students who get sick during the day. Privacy will be maintained. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature checks during the day for those who become ill. |
| Symptoms | Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will monitor the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature 100.4 or greater • 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, vomiting, or diarrhea |

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| Isolate | Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will designate a location to isolate a person who has become ill. Appropriate supplies have been acquired: masks, gloves, etc. |
| Exposure to COVID-19 | Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees and families regarding cases, exposures and any updates to policies or procedures. In the case of an exposure of staff or students to COVID-19, the principal must be contacted. The principal will then contact the health department and Catholic Schools Office to determine necessary actions. The needs of the student will be considered- both learning and emotional. HR will assist with staff. |
| Monitor Absences | Staff and student attendance will be monitored through FACTS SIS and Attendance on Demand. |
| Leave Policies & Practices | Contact HR for leave policy guidance. |
| Monitor Cases | Saint Mary Help of Christians Catholic School will consult with the local health authorities if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area. |

Academic Guidelines

The lowest minimum social distancing for classrooms is 9 square feet per person. Masks are not required if students maintain 3 feet of social distancing.

In developing schedules, priority will be given to the health, safety and wellness of students and staff. All scheduling decisions will follow the latest recommendations and guidance from public health officials for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

- To the greatest extent possible, we will seek to minimize student transitions during the day.
 - Group work, labs, centers, etc., should continue and must maintain 3 feet of social distancing.
 - When small group work occurs, teachers will set up the room prior to student arrival to ensure proper distancing.
 - Each classroom will be equipped with supplies to clean furniture and equipment, plus hand sanitizer.
 - The sharing of materials will be discouraged. When the sharing of materials is necessary, they will be disinfected between use.
 - Students will receive individual supply packs for special areas (art and music) and whenever else appropriate and feasible.
 - Students will be assessed upon their return to school in math and ELA/reading.
 - MAP assessments will be administered during the fall, winter, and spring.
Should virtual learning need to take place, students will be trained within the first two weeks of the school year. Teachers, at the appropriate grade levels, will maintain a Google Classroom where lessons and communication can be found.
 - Classrooms will be equipped with daily live stream capabilities should a teacher/student needs to isolate/quarantine. Individuals providing a service authorized by school administration, are permitted to visit schools, but must follow all school health guidelines.
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