



2020-2021 School Reopening FAQ

Our goal in all our actions is to protect your children and provide a quality education to them under any circumstance. Should there be an issue not addressed in these FAQ's, please send us your questions. This document will be updated regularly, and new information will be added at the top with the date clearly noted.

August 3, 2020 Updates:

The first day of school for students will be **September 8, 2020** to allow for completion of our new building.

In an effort to provide an **outdoor learning space and an additional lunch seating option**, we have purchased twelve heavy duty vinyl picnic tables with detached benches.

Students using our **Extended Day Program** will respond to a checklist of health questions and have their temperature checked prior to entering the Parish Hall at 3:30 p.m. Students who show symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and/or who have a fever of 100.4°F or greater will be isolated, and must be picked up within 30 minutes.

July 22, 2020 Updates:

On Monday, the **CDC updated its isolation guidance for individuals testing positive for COVID-19**. The new guidance emphasizes using a symptom-based strategy, rather than a testing-based strategy. It also made some changes to the duration of time an individual needs to be fever free before ending isolation, reducing the time without fever from 72 hours to 24 hours.

The new recommended guidance for when an individual with COVID-19 can end isolation is when:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication AND
- Symptoms have improved



The test-based strategy, in which an individual who has tested positive for the virus can end isolation once they receive negative lab results, is now being de-emphasized. CDC has found that many people can have detectable levels of the virus for up to 12 weeks, though they have not been found to spread the virus to others for this duration of time.

How will schools ensure students, school personnel, and administrators have the necessary training and information related to safe hygiene practices, social distancing requirements, and stay at home/return to school guidelines? The Rappahannock Area Health District (RAHD) will be providing resources and training specific to faculty and staff, and families. St. Patrick Catholic School will take advantage of this great resource.

How and where will routine, non COVID-19 related health services be provided? We are maintaining our current school health clinic which is connected to our front office. Our clinic includes all necessary first aid equipment and a cot for students to receive health services not related to COVID-19. Our administrative assistant and principal are trained by the Diocesan Nurse in offering health related care to students. This clinic is separated from the isolation room.

What are the specific considerations required to manage the care of students and/or staff that become ill while at school? With the assistance of the RAHD, St. Patrick Catholic School has very specific plans in place for managing care for our students, faculty, and staff who become ill while at school. A detailed checklist will assist us in making the determination to use our school clinic or isolation room. Appropriate materials and equipment has been purchased to allow us to handle a variety of scenarios.

How are schools communicating health concerns to parents, school personnel and/or the community in order to reduce anxiety and concern? Through regular and ongoing communication, we will keep our families informed and armed with detailed information to help answer the many questions that you have. We will use the school website, Facebook, Phone Messenger, and our Constant Contact email system to keep families well informed and up to date.



What about athletics? We are awaiting further guidance from the Diocese and from our athletic conference association regarding our athletics program. While we would like to see our students be able to participate in sports this coming school year, we will follow the requirements given to keep our students safe.

What model of learning is St. Patrick Catholic School planning for the beginning of the school year which begins on August 26, 2020? We plan to open the school on September 8 for all day, every day instruction, based on the requirements of Phase 2 and 3. Students in Kindergarten through grades 3 will be allowed to attend school in Phase 2, and all students in K through 8th grade will be allowed to attend school in Phase 3. We will move to our remote learning model used during the Spring of 2020 maintaining all areas of learning in our curriculum should the situation dictate or be directed by the local health authorities.

What steps will be taken to ensure that surfaces are clean in classrooms. We are increasing our cleaning crew hours to be able to constantly clean and sanitize the classrooms and buildings to keep all areas and surfaces disinfected. In addition, sanitizer stations will be outside all classrooms and in the entryways of the school buildings. High quality non-toxic cleaning products designed to offer proper protection from the coronavirus will be used. Sanitizing and disinfecting of common areas including bathrooms will be managed at regular intervals before school, during the entire school day, and after school to ensure the highest level of cleanliness.

Will my child be required to wear a face covering at school? Students will be required to wear a face covering for Mass, School Rosary, Specials classes, and when in common areas of the school with large gatherings. Students are highly encouraged to wear face coverings in their classrooms, although social distancing and barriers of plexiglass will be in place to protect everyone.

I want my student back at school. However, I am worried about my student's health and the pandemic's status. What are my options? St. Patrick Catholic School is well positioned and prepared to safely open the school on September 8. The video presentation and written plan found on our website covers the strategies being used to keep our school community safe and healthy, and methods for maintaining a sense of security and trust. I encourage you to reach out to me with any specific questions regarding concerns for returning to school.



Will other school staff besides teachers be mandated to wear face coverings? All faculty, staff, and visitors will be required to wear a face mask or face shield while on school premises.

What if a second wave of COVID-19 comes during the cold/flu season. Will the school close again and will we all go back to distance learning? Our school smoothly transitioned to remote learning on March 19. We maintained instruction in all academic areas and continued to assess students for understanding and success. While some of the surrounding schools defaulted to teaching only the essential standards or simply review, our teachers continued with the curriculum and finished the trimester in complete. Our teachers are attending professional development this summer that is specific to enhancing remote learning instruction. Therefore, all of the faculty and staff at St. Patrick Catholic School are prepared to successfully and smoothly transition to remote learning should it become necessary.

Will the school still offer Extended Day? We will continue with our Extended Day Program, utilizing strict social distancing and physical barriers to keep our students, faculty, and staff safe.

Will school events be held? All scheduled school events will be held providing that all health and safety requirements can be met. The safety and health of our school community is our top priority.

If the school has to shift to remote learning, what do we do if I don't have a computer at home for my child? As we did in March, families in need of technology to support student remote learning will have the opportunity to borrow school equipment. We are grateful to be able to provide this for all who are in need.

Will students still have Music Class? Yes, our students at St. Patrick Catholic School will have access to all of our Specials classes. Chairs and equipment will be sanitized between classes. Students will be required to wear face coverings to Music Class, and social distancing will be in place. During Music class, students will participate in a wide variety of safe learning studies and activities such as Music History and learning to play the Ukulele. Once the new church opens, we plan to use the old church for Music class so that we can properly social distance at 10 feet for singing and recorder instruction.



What about Band? Band will not be offered for the first trimester due to strict social distancing requirements and concerns related to aerosolized droplets. We will reevaluate toward the end of the first trimester, hoping to reinstitute band class for the 2nd and third trimesters as long as necessary health and safety procedures are able to be put in place.

Will we still have weekly Mass and monthly Rosary? We will continue to practice our Catholic faith for the 2020-2021 school year, including attending weekly Mass and monthly Rosary. However, we do expect our Mass and Rosary schedule to be altered and perhaps changed to a rotating schedule to allow for proper social distancing in the church. We doubt that parishioners and visitors will be allowed to attend School Mass since there will be limited space for our students to be properly socially distanced from one another. Our Pastor, Father Ziegler, will provide more specifics regarding the reception of communion. Additional information will become available as we work through the details of our Weekly School Mass schedule.

Will students still be able to participate in Mass Choir? While we will maintain a School Mass Choir, only two students will be allowed in the choir loft each Mass. We will institute a rotating schedule to allow all interested choir members to cantor for School Masses. Choir practice will take place in the old church with proper social distancing of 10 feet.

What about the Christmas Program and Talent Show? We are currently considering options to continue our tradition of a school Christmas Program and Talent Show. Assuming social distancing requirements will still be in place, we expect these events to be virtual.

Will my child still have recess? Students will have recess daily after lunch. Social distancing will be required, and strict rules will be in place regarding the communal use of playground equipment. All recess equipment will be cleaned and disinfected following use and between recess shifts.

Is there an option for remote learning? The school will be safe for all students to return to school, all day, every day under Phases 2 and 3. In Phase 2, students in grades K-3 will learn in the school building, and students in grades 4-8 are required to remote learn. Phase 3 allows all students in grades K-8 to be in the school building. Strict cleaning, sanitizing, and social distancing measures will be in place to keep everyone safe and healthy. We stand by to provide your children a quality education that can be tailored to your specific needs and concerns about the school health and safety environment discussed in our reopening plan. We are open to exploring how we may meet or mitigate your specific concerns in a manner that continues to



provide a quality education to your children. If your family has a special concern or circumstance that prevents your children from attending school, we are glad to discuss the options available. All situations will be handled case by case.

How will shared classrooms remain safe and clean for all students? Some of our classes require students to travel to and from different classrooms. This includes our Specials classes and Middle School classes. We recognize the importance of making sure all surfaces and equipment are properly sanitized, and will therefore have strict procedures in place for making sure all students are safe when entering and exiting shared classrooms. We prefer to have students travel to classes so that they can take full advantage of the specialized learning materials found in each classroom. However, it may be necessary for a limited time to have teachers travel to homeroom classrooms in lieu of having students travel.

What about Middle School Lockers? Students in Middle School will be assigned a full size locker with a lock for use during the school year. Travel to and from lockers will be strictly monitored and scheduled to reduce the number of students within close proximity while at the locker areas.

What does the seating arrangement look like in the classrooms? All classrooms (with the exception of Music which only has chairs) will have either desks or tables for students to sit. Plexiglass barriers will divide students in every classroom, and social distancing up to 6 feet will be in place. All students will be required to wear face coverings while in Specials Classes, and Middle School students are highly encouraged to wear face coverings while in class since they will be sitting at tables instead of individual desks. As a reminder, all tables will have plexiglass dividers protecting all students on three sides.

Will students be sharing technology? Our technology lab will be open and students will receive weekly computer instruction. However, strict guidelines will be in place to ensure the safety and health of all students. Chairs, tables, and plexiglass areas will be cleaned and disinfected between student use. Laptops will be sanitized with UV light sanitizing wands between classes.

Will my child have a dedicated laptop/Chromebook/iPad at school or will students be sharing? Students will have access to their own dedicated technology equipment while in the homeroom classroom. Parents who would like to send their child to school with their own device (approved by the school and purchased by the parent) are welcome to do so.



What is the protocol if there is an exposure to or diagnosis of COVID-19 for a student, family, or faculty/staff member? The Rappahannock Area Health District (RAHD) has provided letters for use if a confirmed or suspect case of COVID-19 is identified in the school and there is an exposure risk among faculty, staff, and students. These letters will be used by St. Patrick Catholic School and include:

- Information for suspect cases of COVID-19 on where to seek testing, how to isolate, and when to return to school
- Information for families of students at risk of exposure to suspect or confirmed cases of COVID-19
- Information for school-wide dissemination in the event a student or staff is identified as a confirmed or suspect case of COVID-19

If a student or teacher has a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, all members of that classroom will be notified with a letter sent home with students. Students identified to have medium to high risk of exposure will be required to quarantine at home beginning the following day after exposure. The RAHD will contact families by phone to provide instructions for quarantining. These same procedures will apply if a student or faculty/staff member becomes symptomatic during the school day and COVID-19 is suspected.

If a symptomatic student tests negative for COVID-19, all students may return to school the following day. If the symptomatic student tests positive, all students who may have been exposed will be required to quarantine at home for 14 days. Parents will need to plan accordingly for childcare needs in the event your child needs to be home unexpectedly.

The families of all students in the school will be notified that a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been identified in the school. Some students who may be identified as a close contact by a health department investigation of the individual may be required to quarantine for 14 days. Families will be provided with information on how to monitor for symptoms and a reminder of the precautions to prevent the spread of disease.

In certain circumstances, such as a required quarantine or a large outbreak of cases, individual students or families affected or the entire school is necessary may return to an online learning environment for a period of time. Families should have contingency plans in place should the school need to close for several weeks.



What will school pickup and drop off procedures look like? Students will report directly to class in the morning in place of gathering in the Parish Hall until 8:00 a.m. In the afternoon, students will walk directly to the carpool lanes instead of gathering in the front hallway.

Where and how are daily temperature checks being taken? Daily temperature checks will be required before any student, faculty or staff member, or visitor is allowed to enter the school building. There is no exception. Additionally, all will be asked if they are experiencing any symptoms of illness which are on a checklist (provided by the RAHD). Temperature checks for students will be conducted during morning dropoff prior to students exiting the car. (If this is not feasible due to the size of the car or number of students in the vehicle, students will exit the vehicle and temperatures will be taken prior to the car leaving the parking lot.) Temperature check stations will be available and visible as vehicles enter the school parking lot. Students or visitors arriving after morning dropoff will have a temperature check upon arrival to the school building. Any students exhibiting a fever or other symptoms will not be allowed to enter the school building at dropoff. During the school day, students exhibiting a fever or other symptoms will be escorted to the isolation room, and parents will be notified to come pick the child up immediately. (CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.4°F or greater, feels warm to the touch, or gives a history of feeling feverish.)

Where will indoor PE class take place? PE class will remain a grade level class and will be conducted outdoor on our field unless we have inclement weather. On these occasions, we will conduct PE and health lessons in the homeroom classrooms, following strict social distancing.

Are the school building facilities shared with parishioners during school hours? We are making plans for very limited sharing of facilities during the school day to keep our students, faculty, staff, and visitors safe and healthy. When the building is shared, strict cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be in place.

Will all of the guidelines and procedures be enforced? All guidelines and procedures will be strictly enforced for everyone. It is expected that all school families and visitors comply. Non-compliance will not be tolerated, as it will be seen as disregard for the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and families. All guidelines, procedures, requirements, and instructions must be followed or you will be asked to leave the school. The safety and health of our students and school community is our top priority and there will be no compromise.