

OUR LADY OF HOPE REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Catholic Schools Onward

Best Practices – Covid 19 Handbook

The following policies and procedures from the Office of Catholic Education, the Center for Disease Control, and Federal, State, and City guidelines have been adapted to meet the needs of our school community. The daily routines and “Best Practices” that will be implemented in our school are explained in this handbook. The details will be adjusted as needed by the recommendations of the above groups. Our mission is to provide for the safety and welfare of our students, faculty and staff.

August, 2020

“We live by Hope; not by Fear”

This document will provide our school family with the vital information which outlines our plan to return to school with in-person instruction (5 days per week) starting on September 9, 2020. Communication and flexibility will be the key to making this year a success for our students and providing a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment for our faculty and full staff. As this situation that we find ourselves in is very fluid; changing every day, I am committed to keeping parents, teachers, staff, and school benefactors informed as to changes that are needed to be made.

BEST PRACTICES – GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES

Partnership – Parents/Guardians and School

Parents/ Guardians will need to monitor your child's health every day before coming to school; if the child is running a temperature the child should not be sent to school. We will be issuing a check in from the parent to the school indicating that the child was not presenting any symptoms of being ill upon leaving the house. This procedure will also be in place for our faculty and staff as well.

Cohorts

The children will be kept together as a homeroom throughout the course of the day. In the event of departmental classes and the special classes (Art, Music, Computer, Physical Education, and Spanish) the teachers will rotate into the classroom. This is to keep the cohort intact for the entire day.

Lunch and recess will also have the children remain in their cohort. If a case of Covid-19 were to develop within a cohort, then that group of students and teacher would move to a virtual at-home learning setting until the necessary quarantine period was completed. The rest of the school would continue to operate within the direct class instruction model. The siblings of a child who was identified as being Covid positive would also be required to quarantine at home for 2 to 5 days; if symptoms should present they would need to be tested and medically cleared in order to return to school.

Procedure for Confirmed Positive Cases of Covid 19

If a student or staff person has been diagnosed with a confirmed case of Covid-19, the following steps would occur:

- *Notify local health officials and follow their directed protocol
- *The entire cohort (homeroom) related to the confirmed case of COVID 19, plus any siblings of the affected student will remain home until cleared to return to school by a health professional.
- *Communicate to staff and families that there was a confirmed case – names and identities

would not be used.

*Close off the classroom for 24 hours and clean and sanitize the areas that may have been infected by the identified case.

*During the initial 2-5 day period evaluate any other cases related to the case originally identified and make any necessary decisions needed.

Parents/Guardians must have an emergency pick up plan with a current working phone number where the parent can be reached immediately. This information must be updated through the Main Office; not through the classroom teacher.

Social/Physical Distancing

Social distancing in all the daily operations of the school will take place per CDC guidelines. Keeping a distance will lessen the chance of spreading any possibility of the disease. Hallway travel, as well as classroom instruction, have been arranged to maximize social distancing.

*All furniture has been removed from the classrooms (other than students' desks, teacher's desks, and technology cart) to ensure for spacing of desks 6 feet apart.

*Students will travel through the halls in single file line spaced appropriately apart.

*Lunch and recess will follow current CDC guidelines.

*Each student's desk will have a desk shield; which has a clear window in front to allow for viewing instruction and providing an extra layer of protection.

Strategic Use of Face Masks

As was indicated by Dr. Farley, Philadelphia Depart of Health, all students age 7 and over must wear a mask in school during the instructional day. Understanding that this is difficult especially in the warmer weather, we will provide periodic breaks when the children can remove their face masks for a short period of time while sitting at their desks behind their desk shield.

*On the school bus and when entering and leaving school.

*Traveling through the hallways

*Children with medical issues will be accommodated (breathing difficulties, etc.) A doctor's note will be needed and kept on file in the school office for this accommodation.

*Students attending pull outs (Title I, CORA, Speech, and Counseling) must use their masks in route and practice social distancing when the student arrives at the room.

*Students will be provided with a zip lock bag to store their masks when not wearing them. Masks should be cleaned each evening when returning home.

Cleaning

There will be increased cleaning of high touch areas throughout the school day: doorknobs, handrails, sinks, etc.

- *Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized each day once the students have been dismissed.
- *We have purchased non-toxic sanitizing solutions which will be used to clean these areas throughout the day and at the end of each school day.

Monitoring Health

Daily health checks of the students, faculty, and staff will be monitored regularly throughout the course of the day.

- *Temperature checks and health check will take place if a child does not appear to be themselves or is complaining about not feeling well.
- *Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring the health of their child/children each day and reporting to the school that they are symptom free.
- *The principal/school nurse will see any child who feels ill, provide a temperature check and proceed with the proper protocol.

Virtual Learning

Parents/guardians, who are not comfortable in sending their child back to school in September, have the ability to opt for virtual learning versus in person learning. This virtual learning will call for the student to log into the classroom directly while live teaching is happening in the classroom. They will interact with the teacher and the instruction directly. This will take place through Google Meet or Zoom. The following conditions are required if opting for the Virtual Instruction:

- *If the virtual instruction option is selected, the parent/guardian must commit to this option for the trimester. Each trimester the option can be renewed or the parent/guardian can opt out and select in person instruction.
- *Students must log into each lesson on time in order to be counted as present and not marked as late.
- *The student must be dressed in their school uniform and must have their camera turned on for the duration of the lesson unless instructed otherwise by the teacher.
- *The student should be seated at a desk or table for the instructional time and should not have a distracting background behind them.
- *As a school community, we will be formulating procedures for the submitting of daily work and the completion of tests and projects. This information will be distributed at the start of the school year.

Daily Attendance

The marking of daily attendance will be as followed:

- *Attending in person
- *Attending virtually

*Absent if they do neither

(The documenting of an absence will be determined by the Principal and the classroom teacher based on documentation available at the time of absence.)

DAILY LOGISTICS AND MODIFIED ROUTINES

Entering the building

*Upon entering the building, social distancing and hand sanitizing will be implemented. Classroom teachers will incorporate these practices along with classroom management routines as the new school year begins.

*Parents and guardians are mandated to do a health screening before your child leaves the home and report to school that this has been done. If a child is running a fever, they should remain home.

*Hand sanitizing and washing of hands will be modeled and enforced in school.

*If a child is riding the school bus, the students will depart from the bus one at a time and enter school in a single file line, following social distancing cues. *Masks must be worn when entering the building and traveling to their classroom in the halls and stairwells.

***LATENESS**

(1) A student who is late is to enter the school through Jackson Street doors and report directly to the school office. They will be required to sanitize their hands and proceed to their classroom. A late slip will be issued and placed in their teacher's mailbox. We strongly encourage children to be on time for school as it will present a distraction to the school day.

(2) Please refer to our Parent/Student handbook regarding the policy for excessive lateness and absence.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

*The school doors will be open at 7:45; students will enter the building and report directly to their classrooms. Parents are expected to drop their child at the door; where the principal or teacher will greet them and guide them into school. The doors will be closed at 8:00 at which time children will be marked late. (1) Pre-Kindergarten students are to use Jackson Street doors for arrival; doors closest to 13th Street. Teacher or teacher aid will be on duty to bring the child to their classroom. Pre-Kindergarten students will be considered late after 8:30

*Morning Prayer will begin the school day and will start at 8:05 with classes beginning at 8:10.

*CARES arrival is a 7:00 and students are to arrive through the Tree Street Entrance. A teacher will be on duty, parent is to ring the bell and the teacher will take the child at the door. Parents are not to enter the building. The students will be escorted to their classrooms at 7:45. Any student arriving after 7:45 must enter school through the Jackson Street doors.

BUSES

The School District of Philadelphia and the Department of Transportation determine the schedule for the buses for our students.

*Due to COVID 19 situation, there will be a mandate on wearing masks while on the bus for ALL students.

*Students will sit one to a seat in every other row; siblings can sit with each other.

*Upon arriving at school, students are to enter the school building through the Jackson Street doors.*The School district has issued a pilot program for this year; parents have received a letter regarding this program. The application and all communication must be directed to the School District of Philadelphia.

*More information will be provided as we receive their updates.

CLASSROOM SET-UP

*Classroom furniture, learning centers, and materials will be strategically placed in order to provide for the optimum learning environment while still adhering to the requirements of social distancing.

*Non-essential furniture has been moved and stored during this time period and will be returned to the room when the restrictions have been lifted. The white low shelving book cases have been moved into the hallways to provide the teachers with access to their learning materials, classroom libraries, and learning manipulatives.

*Student desks will all be facing in the same direction appropriate distancing provided.

*Students will not be able to share materials; therefore it is necessary that they have all of their own supplies. At this time, we cannot allow for the sharing and borrowing of materials and supplies.

*Personal items will be separated and kept isolated throughout the school day.

*Cleaning in between uses is essential throughout the course of the day's activities.

*Washing of hands will be required in between activities and when deemed necessary.

*High touch surfaces will be wiped down on a regular and consistent basis.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

The inclusion of faith and our strong Catholic identity in all we do will continue to permeate our school environment and all that we do through the course of our day.

*Morning prayer and our school pledge will continue over our PA system each morning and

afternoon to start our day.

*Weekly class masses will continue on a rotating basis and will begin in October; to allow for our new procedures and routines to be solidly in place. Participation in the masses by the students may be limited. We will continue to follow the guidelines of the health department and the Archdiocese relating to public worship.

*Further directives will be forthcoming regarding our monthly liturgies and prayer services.

*The prayer of Pope Francis during the COVID pandemic will be displayed in each classroom and prayed daily as a school community.

LUNCH/RECESS

*Provides a needed brain break and helps to facilitate the learning process.

*Currently, the children will be eating lunch in their classrooms as recommended by the CDC guidelines. The classrooms will be monitored during the lunch period to allow for the teachers to have time for their lunch.

*Students will be required to sanitize their hands before and after recess and lunch.

*We will be implementing the Nutritional Development Program for our lunch program this year; more information will follow.

*Outside recess will be available; weather permitting. Classrooms will be section off in the yard to keep the cohort in tack.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS)

*Google Meet or Zoom will be used by teachers for virtual learning. The specific platform for each grade will be communicated to you by the grade level teachers in future communication.

*Regular communication with parents/guardians regarding submission of work and completion of assignments will be provided.

SUPPORT OF SCHOOL STAFF AND PARENTS

*Understanding that this is a new normal for everyone, we must make a concerted effort to be patient, kind, and understanding with one another.

*Communication of questions, concerns, or issues should be directed through email, phone conference or zoom conference. Use of social media should be avoided when there are questions or challenges that may arrive; this is not the forum to discuss personal issues or concerns.

*Concerns, challenges, and issues will be evaluated on a daily and/or weekly basis as the need arises.

STUDENT AWARENESS

*Children look to us for direction and guidance and often feed off of the energy that we exude. In light of this fact, I ask that we be as positive and encouraging about our approach to this year as humanly possible. Their approach to school this year will be directly related to our approach.

*Anxiety levels are high in many of our children; I want to remind you that counseling is available as the need arises.

*Let us prepare our children by reminding them of the proper wearing of face masks, need for washing hands and using hand sanitizer, and most importantly of following the directives of their teachers and school staff; that have their safety and welfare as a priority in your absence.

*Keep the students educated and informed in a manner that does not heighten fear and anxiety.

BUILDING PRINCIPLES

*Limit admission of visitors to the school building once the students have arrived.

*Documentation, temperature check, and visitor log will take place daily for all visitors to our school.

*Frequent cleaning throughout the school day. Stairwell doors will be kept open during the school day to prevent the use of high touch. Doors leading up to the school from Jackson and Tree Street entrances will remain closed and locked for safety and security. Light switches and high touch surfaces throughout the school building will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis.

*Proper signage will be available reminding all of us about social distancing, washing hands, etc.

*Students will need to have personal supplies as sharing of materials is not possible.

*Classroom doors, opening of windows, and window shades should will be handled by teacher in order to reduce touching.

*No outside food (other than student's individual lunch) can be brought into the building for sharing.

*Students should have their own individual water bottle; as use of water fountains is prohibited by CDC.

*Proper ventilation is essential in every classroom. Classroom windows will be open for fresh air as often as possible.

*As of now, field trips are not permitted.

LUNCH PRACTICES

*Students will wash their hands before and after lunch.

*Students will remain with their cohort as they eat lunch; separate from other cohorts.

*Besides providing students with the opportunity for lunch, it will also provide them with a brain break and an opportunity to socialize.

*Food and snacks cannot be shared.

*Meals and utensils will be served directly to the student.

*Currently, lunch periods will remain the same:

First Lunch: Pre Kindergarten to Grade 1 (11:00 to 11:30)

Second Lunch: Grades 2 through 4 (11:30 to 12:00)

Third Lunch: Grades 5 through 8 (12:00 to 12:30)

*Nutritional Development Lunch Program will be utilized this year to allow for the individualized boxed lunch. More information will be provided to you as I receive it from the Archdiocese.

ST. RAPHAEL ROOM

*This room will be utilized to isolate individuals from others until they are picked up by a parent/guardian. It will be supervised by school personnel.

*It will serve as a staging area while the student waits for his/her parent to arrive for pick up.

*This room will be equipped with masks, gloves, and sanitizer.

*The room will be sanitized after each use.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

*PE classes will utilize games and activities that limit physical contact; but still allow for physical and social contact

*Specifics of gym classes are still being finalized and will be shared before the start of school.

*Health and nutrition lessons will continue to be a part of these classes.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

*Currently, we may need to curtail or modify after school activities in order to follow CDC guidelines.

*CYO events and sports have been postponed until further notice.

CARES

*We are the protectors and providers for students during the hours they are entrusted to us.

*Cohort model will be followed in CARES with an adult monitoring the group.

*CARES will take place in the auditorium with the grade levels social distanced from one another and assigned to a particular area of the gym/auditorium. Pre-Kindergarten will be in CARES Room off of the Tree Street entrance.

*Outside visitors are not to enter the area where the CARES program is being held. They are to remain in the Tree Street lobby and the child or children will be brought to them. This is for the protection of each child and adhering to the CDC guidelines.

*Pre-packaged snack and drink will be provided through Nutritional development.

*No snack sharing

*CARES line will be called last over the PA at dismissal time.

*Staff members will be following the same rules as they would in their classroom.

*All operational guidelines in the school will be practiced during CARES session.

*School Auditorium will be sanitized after each use upon the end of CARES.

*The CARES program will comply with any emergency actions and decisions that occur during the school day.

*Before CARES 7:00 to 7:45 After CARES 2:30 to 5:30

DISMISSAL

- *Students will be dismissed in three groups: Bus line, Walking line, Car line.
- *Dismissal will begin at 2:15 and students will be called from their class room. You will be asked to designate your dismissal protocol and that will need to remain in place in order to make the dismissal process safe and orderly.
- *If utilizing car pick up, you are asked to pull up in front of school and remain outside your car at door and your child or children will come to you. You will need to pull out once you have your child to make room for another car.
- *If possible, you are encouraged to wait on one of the designated corners (parking is available in the church lot) and have your child walk to the corner in line.
- *We cannot have people standing outside of school in large congregations.
- *Walking lines are: Twelfth and Jackson, Thirteenth and Snyder, and Thirteenth and Wolf.
- * More specific instructions will follow with the dismissal form.
- *Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten pick up will be through Tree Street with staggered pick up times; siblings will be able to be picked up through Tree Street with their younger siblings in Pre K and Kindergarten.

RESTROOMS

- *Hand sanitizer and washing one's hands will be enforced and encouraged by classroom teachers and school staff. While in the restrooms social distancing will be enforced; with a limited number of students using the restroom at a time. Dividers will be installed between the sinks and classes will be monitored.
- *Restrooms will be cleaned after use by each cohort.

MAINTENANCE STAFF

- *Increased cleaning of our facilities will take place during the course of the day. Door knobs, hand rails, counters, surfaces, light switches will be sanitized regularly.
- *We will be hyper vigilant to ensure that the building remains cleaned and sanitized to prevent the spread of germs.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS/PARENT MEETINGS

- *Parent-teacher meetings will be virtual. You will be notified about specifics as soon as we have them finalized. Updates will be provided through MSP; please notify the school office if you have changed your email or cell phone.
- *Teachers will be reaching out to you by the end of August regarding specifics relating to the start of school.
- *School calendars and Back to School Letter will be going out from me to our families by August 21, 2020

As I stated at the beginning of this document, we will need to be flexible and patient as we navigate this new normal and establish an environment that will serve our students and staff with a safe and secure learning and teaching environment. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as I prepared this document for your review. Together, we will navigate these new procedures because we are people of faith and hope.

Ms. Cody

Principal

Our Lady of Hope Regional Catholic School