

RETURN-TO-SCHOOL PLAN

IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

St. Ann Classical School



School Reopening Taskforce

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Thank you to the taskforce members for their input in the creation of this document. Their time and talent are greatly appreciated.

INTRODUCTION

We have created this plan to aid in navigating the reestablishment of St. Ann School where employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to the school. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and the State of New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) *The Road Back*. Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by the CDC, WHO, and applicable federal, state, and local agencies as well as the Schools Office of the Diocese of Metuchen.

SOURCES

Center for Disease Control: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html#anchor_1589931942037

New Jersey Department of Education:
<https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to ensure the continued well-being of our employees and students the following guiding principles have been put in place:

1. EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY MEASURES
2. HEALTH GUIDELINES

PHASES AND TIMELINES

Information and direction about the phases and timeline will be sent to all employees and parents before implementation. Please see below for a summary of the phases and timelines.

Phase	Timing	Items
Planning	July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplies, equipment • Prepare detailed work schedule for phases • Prepare building and transportation for reopen with thorough cleaning
Phase 1	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement social distancing protocol and open facilities with limited access/use
Phase 2	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand use of school based on recommendations and data from CDC, NJDOH, New Jersey Governor, and applicable state and local agencies
Phase 3	September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open school • Expand full operation based on recommendations and data from CDC, NJDOH, New Jersey Governor, and applicable local and state agencies • Determine what restrictions/guidelines stay in place

HEALTH PROTOCOL AND SCREENINGS (EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT)

Each school in the Diocese of Metuchen has been directed to adopt a policy for screening students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and/or history of exposure to COVID-19. We ask that the screening process begin at home each day with parents checking the temperature of their child(ren) as well as noting if any of the indicators of the virus are present. Parents will be required to sign a waiver stating that they agree to these daily procedures. This waiver need only be signed once but is binding for the entire academic year.

Once arriving at school, additional screening will take place by members of the school staff. Using no touch thermometers, all students as well as all staff members will have their temperatures taken upon arrival at school each day. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

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Upon arrival at the school, the check-in staff will visually observe each individual student for any potential COVID-19 symptoms. COVID-19 symptoms may include any of the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19

NOTE: All screening information will be kept confidential by the school and school nurse.

Employees:

School staff are required to wear face shields unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health. Face masks may be worn as an additional level of protection but are not required.

- If an employee becomes ill at work or if another person is exhibiting symptoms of COVID19 at work, they will be asked to leave work and go home or to the nearest health center.
- Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave should contact HR. You will be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19, St. Ann School, the Office of Schools of the Diocese of Metuchen, and the local health department must be contacted. The health department will determine the next steps.

Students:

- Parents are strongly encouraged to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Whenever a child has a fever they may not be sent to school.
- Students are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings and are required to do so when social distancing cannot be maintained, unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. St. Ann School will be providing each student with their own personal face shield.
- Student health checks must be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
- All screening policies will make accommodations for students with disabilities.

Protocol for Symptomatic Staff and Students

The following procedures will be followed at St. Ann School when any student or staff members exhibits possible Covid -19 symptoms:

- Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. The former Art Room off the gym and near the nurse's office will be set up as an isolation room for use in these cases.
- Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Symptoms will be continuously monitored.
- We will follow current State of New Jersey Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting - <https://www.nj.gov/health/>
- If the school becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in the school tests positive for COVID-19, school officials will immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
- We will see to it that an adequate amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) is always available, accessible, and provided for use.

If an employee or student becomes ill on campus, he/she will immediately report to the **nurse's isolation room** and a case form will be completed.

Once the employee or student arrives at the isolation room, they will immediately be provided with a mask and gloves. Particularly with students, the staff attendant will calmly explain to the child that the use of the mask and gloves is to help protect other employees and students and prevent the spread of the potential virus.

- The nurse must call the local health authority and seek advice regarding transportation and location.
- The nurse and others attending the suspected infected person, should also wear a protective mask and gloves while working with the suspected infected person. If a mask is not tolerated by the child, staff should use a face covering and follow social distancing guidelines (6 ft. away).
- The nurse will direct the ill employee to leave work or call the parent of the student to be picked up and go home.
- The nurse and Head of School must identify persons who may have come in contact with the suspected infected person. *Unless required by the local health authority, the name of the employee will not be provided.*
- The Head of School will advise any and all employees that may have been in contact with a person who is suspected of having the virus and instruct them to carry out self-screening every morning, and based on the results, contact the school nurse.
- The isolation area and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student.

In cases where public health officials must be contacted, the following information will be provided:

- The identity of the person with COVID-19 or probable COVID-19 (i.e. staff, child in care, household contact).
- The date the person with COVID-19 or probable COVID-19 was last in the building
- The date the person developed symptoms.
- Types of interactions the person may have had with other persons in the building or in other locations.
- How long their interactions were with other persons in the building.
- If other persons in the school have developed any symptoms; and
- Any other information to assist with the determination of next steps.

Re-admittance Procedures After Recovery From COVID:

If a case of Covid -19 is confirmed, decisions on how to proceed are under the direction of public health officials. These officials will also give guidance on how staff members or students are readmitted to the school after recovering from the virus. In addition to the procedures that may be required by public health departments, St. Ann School will require a written notice from the physician of the student/staff member. The school nurse will then review all documentation. After this review the nurse will present her recommendations to the Head of School who, after consultation with the two faculty members of the Reopening Task Force, will then make the final decision for readmittance to the school.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. St. Ann School employees, students, and parents should practice staying approximately 6 feet away from others and eliminating all physical contact with others.

- Using current social distancing guidance, all classrooms have been reset to allow for the required 6 feet of social distancing. The formula used to create the seating arrangements was to provide a 3-foot radius around each student desk (from the center), resulting in a 6-foot total distance between any two students. With this seating arrangement a maximum of twelve students can be accommodated in any of our classrooms. (See the section "Classroom and Common Spaces" for further details.)
- Traffic Flow – Taped lines on the floor will mark the walking direction throughout the halls in order to maintain the social distancing requirement of 6 feet
- When weather allows, windows will be opened to allow for greater air circulation. Indoor environments with recirculated air are the riskiest of environments for COVID-19 spread.
- Since inside communal gatherings are to be avoided all non-essential/informal meetings and school visits will be suspended. Guidelines have indicated that the only persons to be permitted in the school building are students and staff. Events like Back to School Night will be virtual for this year.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

In order to minimize exposure to COVID-19, PPE may be needed to prevent certain exposures. PPE can include:

Masks: Face coverings are an important part of employee protection, as well as personal hygiene, social distancing, and frequent cleaning efforts.

School staff are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health. Students are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings and are required to do so when social distancing cannot be maintained, unless doing so would inhibit the student's health.

Both students and staff will be provided face shields for their personal use. Face masks may be worn in addition for an additional layer of protection but are not required. St. Ann School will keep a sufficient amount of PPE on hand throughout the coming school year.

Gloves: Touching one's face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection. Wearing gloves does not diminish the need for regular and frequent hand washing. Students will be reminded to wash their hands properly as it is the number-one defense against any virus. In addition, hand sanitizers will be located at various places throughout the building. Students will be frequently reminded of proper procedures which will include:

- Frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. We will also use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Instructions to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth
- Reminding students as needed to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow when they cough or sneeze

Please note that social distancing should still be practiced even with the use of gloves and masks.

CLASSROOM AND COMMON SPACES

All teachers and students will be asked not to visit another classroom outside of their homeroom. Teachers will disinfect their own personal workspace (teacher desk, phone, etc.) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. Specific directives about the use of classrooms and common spaces follow:

Classrooms:

- A 6-foot separation of desks and children will be maintained in all classrooms. Desks will be set up facing the same direction (rather than facing each other).
- **In order to minimize social contacts students will not change classes or gather in common areas. Teachers will change classrooms, with students staying in the same classroom.** For all grade levels: Students will be directed under the supervision of the teacher to clean their personal space (including desks, chrome books, etc.). This includes students using approved cleaning products to wipe down desks when arriving in the classroom at the beginning of each day and leaving the classroom at dismissal time.
- Lockers will not be used by students in the upper grades
- There will be minimal mixing of groups and cohorts.
- Outdoor classrooms will be permitted where possible and when seasonally appropriate.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom, in accordance with CDC guidelines.

School Entrances, hallways, and common spaces:

- New procedures will be developed for students entering and exiting the building. Hallways and entryways will be marked with tape so students will be able to keep the appropriate social distance of 6-feet.
- In order to minimize interaction of students between drop-off and entrance to school facilities once a student has passed through the screening checkpoint they will proceed directly to the homeroom .
- Specific procedures for arrival and pick-up will be forthcoming in a separate document. It is possible that arrival times and pick-up times may need to be staggered according to a specific schedule.
- In order to minimize large group gatherings, students will eat lunch in the classroom instead of the cafeteria.
- Signage will be posted around the school building to provide hygiene advice and reminders.

FACILITIES CLEANING

The safety of our employees and students are our first priority. Upon reopening, our school will have been completely cleaned and disinfected and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the deep clean of the office and school before employees and students return, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection. We will require employees to maintain this safety standard by continuously cleaning and disinfecting based on the frequency stated below. Deep cleaning is triggered when an active employee or student is identified as positive for COVID 19 based on testing.

GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES

Category	Area	Frequency
Workspaces	Classrooms, Offices	At the end of each use/day
Appliances	Refrigerators, Microwaves, Coffee Machines	Daily
Electronic Equipment	Copier machines, Shared computer monitors, TV's, Telephones, keyboards	At the end of each use/day and/or between use
General Used Objects	Handles, light switches, sinks, restrooms	Several times a day
Common Areas	Cafeteria, Library, Conference rooms, Gyms, Common Areas	At the end of each use/day; between groups

Hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) will be available:

- In each classroom for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer (two per classroom).
- At entrances and exits of buildings.
- Near all lavatories.
- Students will be instructed to wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.

- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if washing with soap and water is not possible.

Special considerations for the primary grades, when possible:

- Avoid close group learning activities like reading circles.
- Designate times on the schedule to take students out of the classroom to wash hands with soap and water, including, at a minimum:
 - at the start of the day when children enter the classroom
 - before snacks and lunch
 - after using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet
 - after sneezing, wiping, and blowing noses
 - after snacks and lunch, particularly if hands are sticky, greasy, or soiled
 - when students come in from outdoor play or recess

BUS DRIVERS/BUS PROTOCOLS

Schools will follow the protocols outlined by the local district providing busing.

Bus drivers must not report to work if they suspect they are sick or if they have symptoms such as fever or difficulty breathing, or have been in contact with other people who have any confirmed respiratory illness or disease the last 7 days.

RESTROOM USAGE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

The school will establish maximum capacity for the facility that allows for social distancing. The school will post the maximum capacity sign on the door. There will be limited shared use of restrooms.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

Only staff members and students will be permitted in the building during the school day. (*Staff* is understood to include the faculty, school administrative and clerical staff, the clergy of the Congregation of the Oratory, and the staff of St. Ann parish.) Until further notice there will be no visitors allowed on campus or in the school building including parent volunteers. Fewer people entering the school building allows for greater implementation of safety measures. In the event a parent needs to drop off something for a child (e.g. student forgets lunch) the parent will place the item in the drop box at the school entrance, then ring the bell to alert the secretary. Once the secretary is visible the parent should then depart at which point the secretary will retrieve the item.

CAFETERIA AND MEAL PERIODS

The school will continue to provide students with the opportunity to purchase lunch through our food service provider Enrico's. Students will remain in their homerooms for lunch and meals will be brought to the classrooms. Desks will be cleaned after each use according to guidelines.

SNACKS AND FOOD DELIVERY

Bringing refreshments to share during school is prohibited in order to limit the risk of contamination. Snack time is permitted, but students should bring their own snack items and drinks to school. Outside of the approved food service, we ask that there be no food delivered to the school.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

In order to stay updated on the most current information we ask that everyone in the school community do the following:

1. Teachers, students, and parents should check their email often.
2. Visit the school website
3. Follow our social media platforms
4. Regularly check PowerSchool Student Information System
5. Check to see that your information for the Honeywell Alert System is current

ACADEMICS AND HOME-BASED LEARNING

There are three considerations (Traditional, Hybrid, and Remote) for returning to school, depending upon state and local health guidelines. Presently, the State of New Jersey is returning to a traditional face to face classroom instruction in September 2020. Should the need arise St. Ann School is prepared to provide other models of instruction. If it becomes necessary, we will initiate our virtual learning plan that was distributed during the recent school closure. Based on our experience of distance learning the plan will be revised and published in the school handbook.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Catholic schools have a two-fold charge: to provide an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity. Catholic values will be infused intentionally across all grade levels and all subject matter. Participation in liturgy and prayer will continue to be encouraged for both traditional face to face and remote settings. Weekly Friday morning Mass will be continued as well as monthly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, all with proper social distancing. The integration of faith into the area of academic inquiry is a hallmark of a classical school and will continue to be a guiding principle of instruction whether in school or during remote learning.

GRADING AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

To receive credit for the courses for this school year students are expected to complete the assignments. The grading policy is located in the school handbook.

REMOTE LEARNING

In the event that the school has to close in 2020-2021, we will follow the guidelines in our virtual learning plan for receiving and returning student work. A schedule for online classes will be developed and communicated to the parents.

CONCLUSION

As we embark on a new academic year we do so during a time of uncertainty, a time different from any other we have known. As we live with this implementation plan it is certain that adjustments and adaptations will need to be made. We will all need a good dose of patience and flexibility as we move through this year. The directives set forth in this document are chiefly concerned with keeping our children physically healthy and safe. Yet their social, emotional, and spiritual well-being must also be a priority. St Ann Classical School is committed to providing our children with a safe and secure environment where they may continue to grow, as Jesus did at his home in Nazareth, in wisdom and grace. In times of uncertainty we Christians continue to proclaim Jesus as Lord and Savior. *The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.* (Psalm 46:7)