



Re-Opening Plan for Holy Spirit Catholic School 2021-22 School Year



August 4, 2021

Mission Statement

The mission of Holy Spirit Catholic School is to serve God by providing a challenging academic education within the Catholic Tradition.

HOLY SPIRIT

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

August 4, 2021

Greetings Parents/Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you well. This letter is to inform you of the procedures set in place for the 2021-22 school year. After receiving guidance from the CDC, the Diocese of Green Bay, and the Northeast Region Health Departments: Appleton, Brown, Calumet, De Pere, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menasha, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Shawano- Menominee, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, I feel this plan will allow for as 'normal' of a school year as possible while still implementing multiple layers of prevention strategies. The guidelines or plans I share today may change as needed throughout the year.

According to the CDC, although children can be infected with SARS-CoV-2, can get sick from COVID-19, and can spread the virus to others, less than 10% of COVID-19 cases in the United States have been among children and adolescents aged 5–17 years ([COVID Data Tracker](#)).

Compared with adults, children and adolescents who have COVID-19 are more commonly asymptomatic (never develop symptoms) or have mild, non-specific symptoms. Children are less likely to develop severe illness or die from COVID-19. Children generally have a lower risk of cumulative exposures and a lower likelihood of being tested compared with adults.

Younger children (<10 years of age) are even less likely to be infected than adolescents. This possibility is supported by contact tracing studies; test positivity data from children, adolescents, and adults; and population screening studies using seroprevalence data. The entire report can be accessed [HERE](#).

- Children between 1-18 years of age have lower rates of hospitalization, severe hospitalization and deaths than do other age groups
 - Severe/critical illness and death are rare and occur most commonly in children with underlying health conditions
- SARS-CoV-2 appears to act differently in children and adolescents than other common respiratory viruses, such as influenza
- Children and adolescents play a major role in amplifying influenza outbreaks, to date, this does not appear to be the case with SARS-CoV-2
- Evidence indicates that children and adolescents can become infected and are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from SARS-CoV-2
- COVID-19 polices are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, risk
 - Implementation of several coordinated interventions can greatly reduce that risk

[Source: American Academy of Pediatrics – COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools](#)

As we begin a new school year and transition into year two of an in-person pandemic school year, I'm proud to say we did not have a single transmission of the COVID-19 virus that we could contract trace back to happening inside our school building during the 2020-21 school year. Our mitigations and multiple layers of prevention strategies worked. Thank you to the parents for your help. With the vaccine being available to people ages 12+, we are moving into having as "normal" of a school year as possible while still implementing multiple layers of prevention.

Prevention Strategies

- **Promoting vaccination** – As of [July 29](#), 49.47% of the Outagamie County residents have completed their vaccine series and 2.51% have started their vaccine series. Also, about 61.3% of vaccine-eligible residents have at least begun their vaccine series.
 - Currently people ages 12+ are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. We encourage anyone who is eligible to receive a [COVID-19 vaccine](#) receive one.

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- **Physical Distancing** – Per the CDC, to begin the year K-grade 8 students will be in the classroom with at least 3 feet of physical distance between students in the classroom. Preschool 3 and 4K will not be expected to have a physically distant classroom. As we know preschool learning is more social emotional, sharing, communicating with friends, handling your emotions, etc. Remaining physically distant from friends is not best practice for meeting their educational needs.
- **Screening testing to promptly identify cases**
 - Holy Spirit will continue to follow the [Health Screening checklist for children](#) that we used last school year.
 - If your child has multiple symptoms, please contact the school. We will work with you and your health care provider to determine if the need for a COVID-19 test is necessary.
 - If a child is symptomatic and is being tested for COVID-19, siblings will be allowed to come to school, while we wait for those test results. If the test is positive, siblings will be sent home and close contacts will be notified.
 - Rapid antigen or PCR tests will be accepted this school year.
- **Ventilation** – We have reviewed to make sure adequate air supply is occurring in the classrooms and will continue to check, clean, and replace air filters as appropriate.
- **Handwashing and respiratory etiquette** – We will continue to promote handwashing or hand sanitizing throughout the day. We also will promote or reinforce respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes in your elbow or tissue) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19.
- **Staying home when sick and getting tested** – Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- **Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine** – If any student or staff member does test positive for COVID-19, that person will be expected to follow the [isolation timeline](#) recommended by the CDC. Holy Spirit will be contacting any close contacts in that case.
- **Cleaning and disinfection** – We will continue to clean and disinfect the school, similar to how we did last school year.

Masks

Because we will have these multiple layers of prevention in place, at this point we feel comfortable starting the school year with masks optional for students and staff members, both vaccinated and unvaccinated. Whether a student or staff member chooses to wear or not wear a mask, we ask that everyone remain respectful of that person's decision. Some students or staff members may continue to wear a mask to protect others as well as themselves. Some might elect to not wear a mask. At this point that is okay. Masks will be required if our school has over 10% of the student body with a positive COVID-19 test. Masks will continue to be required until the school achieves an infection rate of less than 5%.

Beginning of the Day

- The arrival procedure will be the same as the 2020-21 school year. Preschool 3, 4K and Kindergarten will wait behind school with their teachers. Grades 1 through 5 and middle school will enter school as soon as they arrive: 1-5 through either the main back door or the east side childcare door, and the middle school through the front door.
- Before entering school, staff members will not be doing a non-contact temperature check, but students will sanitize their hands. They will then go directly up to their classroom where their teachers will be. Students may begin entering school at 7:40 am, with the normal 7:55 bell ringing to enter school. The school day will officially start at 8:00 am (when students should be in their classrooms). Parents/Guardians, we encourage you to drop off your child at 7:40 am, if you are able, to limit bottle necking and slowing down entrance procedures.
- At 7:45 am, the 4K classes will enter the school, at 7:50 am the Kindergarten class will enter school and at 7:55 am the Preschool 3 classes will enter the school. *To help limit exposure, Preschool 3, 4K and K parents will not be allowed to enter school to drop off their child.*

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- If their child(ren) is old enough to wait or enter by themselves, parents should limit getting out of their vehicle to wait with their child(ren).

Water bottles

- We are asking students to bring their own personal water bottles to school with them daily, so that students do not need to use the drinking fountain. Please make sure your children's names are clearly visible on their water bottles.

Specials

- When practical, specialist teachers will be traveling to the classrooms again this year, or having their special outside, rather than the students walking the halls to their specials. Students will be staying in their classroom with their grade level to limit exposure.

Bathrooms

- We will be limiting the number of students in bathrooms at a time.

Exiting school

- Students/classes will be exiting school through various doors to help minimize traffic.

Visitors

- In order to keep exposure at a minimum, we will be limiting visitors and volunteers in the building at this point. *This includes childcare, Preschool 3 and 4K parents walking their child(ren) into the building.*

School Masses

- At this point, we are going to continue to live-stream the school masses on Wednesdays and have the students watch from their classrooms. The only class that will be in the church will be the class that is preparing the mass. We will continue to distribute Holy Communion to the students watching in school during mass.

Sick

- Students who are sick should stay home from school. Please call or email Mrs. Thein about your child's absence, including the symptoms of the illness so that we can keep a record (phone number and email are in footer of this letter). This is the recommendation of the Outagamie County Health Department. If your child is sick, please keep them home. We will be lenient on truancy and excessive absences.

Lunch

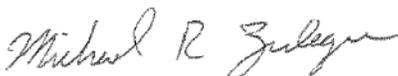
- To help limit exposure we will be having three different lunch periods (K-2, 3-5, and Middle School). Extended care and Kindergarten will eat lunch in their classrooms. Hot lunches and milks will be delivered to their classrooms. Grades 1-8 will eat lunch in the cafeteria, while having a physical distance of 3 feet between students.

We all play an important role in successfully opening up school in the fall. You can help us by:

- Reminding your child(ren) that when you cough and when you sneeze to do it in your elbow please.
- Reminding your child(ren) to avoid touching their face, eyes, nose, and mouth when in public.
- Working on teaching your child(ren) to blow their nose by themselves.

Although I may not have answered all your questions, I hope this letter eased some of your anxiety about reopening Holy Spirit Catholic School in the fall. This plan is not set in stone, and there is no proven model. We will be flexible and make sure we are doing everything we can to provide a safe, God-centered learning environment for your children.

God bless,



Mike Zuleger, principal