

# Notification, Quarantine, and Isolation

## Collected Questions and Answers

1. How do we know if there is a positive case at St. Therese?

Whenever there is a case within our school, every parent/guardian will receive a letter notifying them that someone who has been in our building was positively diagnosed with Covid-19. The letter will include information on symptoms and monitoring your child.

2. What is the difference between a notification, quarantine, and isolation?

The school is obligated to send a notification to inform parents/guardians that someone who was inside the building has tested positive for Covid.

Quarantine means not only has someone tested positive for Covid, but also that there was a possibility of exposure to specific students or groups of students during a time when students met specific criteria for masking, distancing, and time.

Isolation happens when someone has received a positive Covid test and needs to remain at home until the end of the contagious period.

3. Who determines the timelines?

St. Therese Catholic School is obligated to follow the timelines for quarantine and isolation provided by the Allegan County Health Department.

4. Who determines who is and isn't a close contact?

The Allegan County Health Department has guidelines for who is to be considered a close contact and what actions are to be taken. At any time, if we as a school have questions, we reach out to the Allegan County Health Department for guidance.

They are the ones who have the final say about who is and who isn't a close contact.

5. Our children are masked all day, how can they be a close contact?

While students wear masks in the classroom and in public areas of the school, students do not wear masks all day. In addition to two out-door mask breaks each day, students do not wear masks during lunch and lunch recess.

6. What is the school doing to limit the chance of exposure during lunch?

From the beginning of the school year, we have structured lunch procedures to minimize the risk of exposure during lunch. We have scheduled lunches on a

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staggered schedule to try and maintain the integrity of each classroom cohort. Tables are marked with x's to designate seating areas and try to keep students a minimum of 3 feet apart.

7. Can lunch procedures be tightened up to further reduce the risk of exposure and/or the need to quarantine?

We have discussed further structuring lunch. Our next steps would be to further distance students, assign seats, and not allow students to get up to throw away their trash until everyone is done eating and are again wearing masks.

We believe that the social and emotional learning at school is as important as the academic learning. Lunch is one of those times when students are able to talk with friends and enjoy just being together. As much as we have tried to keep students socially distanced during lunch, they are kids and it is not a perfect set up. We have tried to strike a balance between risk and the importance of socializing at school.

8. Why do all members of a class have to be reported as close contacts?

The most simple answer is they don't.

We have had situations where a student has tested positive but was not present during times when masks are not worn. Then we notify parents/guardians that a positive case has been reported but none of our students fit the criteria for a close contact. We have also had situations where an adult in the building has tested positive but because both students and staff were wearing masks and social distancing was observed, a notification of a positive case was sent out, but, again, none of our students fit the criteria for a close contact and did not need to quarantine.

9. Then why don't you just move those students who are most at risk to remote learning and keep everyone else in the classroom?

Remote learning is more than just sending home packets of work and checking in via Zoom. The expectation for the teacher is that during remote learning, they will actively teach the lessons via Zoom. We are a small school, our teachers already wear many hats, have responsibilities daily beyond their own classroom. Unlike their public school counterparts, our teachers do not have consistent preparation periods where they are not directly responsible for students.

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10. What if my family is quarantined and my child is home for an extended period of time?

Making sure each child receives the learning and support they need is who we are as a school. If your child is going to be home for an extended period of time, your child's teacher will work with you to provide work and support. This is not a one size fits all situation. Some children have been home and too ill to complete school work. Others are quarantined because of a family member and never get sick themselves. This is when we work together to make a plan that fits your child, your family and the teacher.

11. Will we be notified exactly who has tested positive?

All health information is strictly confidential. We ask for respect for one another's privacy.