



# St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School

## St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School 2021-2022 COVID Safety Plan

### Highlights



St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School has developed an extensive safety plan that is based on guidance from several relevant agencies, is updated on a continual basis, and will be updated in the future as our understanding of SARS-CoV-2, variants, and COVID-19 evolve. Updates may include tightening of policies. We recognize that no single non-pharmaceutical intervention is a panacea, and our plan leverages multiple layers of defense to stem the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and protect our community.



All adult volunteers engaged in school activities on and off campus must be fully vaccinated and show proof of vaccination. This requirement extends, for example, to parents wishing to volunteer in computer or art classes. The office will keep a paper record of vaccinated adults, so proof of vaccination only needs to be shown once. More details on this requirement are in the ["Limiting Visitors to Campus"](#) section below.



Our school regularly hosts events that build community, dovetail with the academic curriculum, and are just fun. We will be very careful in bringing back events, and will develop options for different ways to participate in such events. Further details on specific events will be communicated at a future date; our current thinking on a few events at the start of the year can be found [in the first Appendix](#).



Adults will be required to wear face masks while on campus. Students will be required to wear masks at all times except when outdoors for lunch, snacks, PE, or recess.



Healthy hygiene practices, including hand washing, will be taught, reinforced through additional handwashing built into the daily schedule, and enabled by the presence of a sink and hand sanitizer in every academic classroom and water stations available around campus.

## Training and Steps to Continually Improve Plan



All personnel will be aware of and trained in the safety requirements and actions spelled out in this plan. Staff will be asked to model and practice appropriate Covid protocols throughout the day. Weekly, the administration, faculty, and staff evaluate all areas of the school for compliance with our plan and correct any deficiencies identified and/or opportunities to improve.

The school monitors relevant guidance and scientific literature to understand ways we may improve our plan. Additionally, school leadership has and will continue dialog with other local private schools to share best practices in development and execution of our safety plans.

## Promoting Healthy Hygiene Practices

Included in teachers' orientation of rules and protocols at the beginning of the year, proper health and hygiene measures will be taught and reviewed with students. Every academic classroom is already equipped with a sink. Built into the daily schedule, students will be required to stop for regular hand washing breaks in addition to routine hand washing following the use of the restroom, before and after eating, upon arrival, etc.



Every classroom is equipped with hand sanitizer for student and staff use as well as disinfectant wipes for regular wiping of the desks, chairs, and other surfaces. Even though surfaces are not the main source of spread of SARS-CoV-2, we have found a positive benefit to enhanced cleaning in reducing overall communicable diseases and will continue with these practices.

## Face Coverings



We insist that students and staff wear masks to school. Students will be required to wear their masks all day except when outdoors for lunch, snacks, PE, or recess; any student who wants to wear a mask at these times will be allowed to. While we ask individuals to use their own reusable cloth mask, we have on hand an ample supply of face shields and disposable earloop 3-ply masks for adults and children in the event an individual forgets, misplaces, or damages a mask and needs a disposable mask for their visit.

## Cohorts and Limit Sharing



The students of each grade will act as a small cohort and will have limited interaction with students in other cohorts until it is deemed safe to do so. Recess and outside play times will be staggered accordingly. Physical

Education and recess will continue to be outdoors and with appropriate limits on shared equipment, per the [January 14th update to CDPH guidelines](#).

Even within a cohort, each child's belongings will be kept separated in individually labeled cubbies and in their own desks. Already, our families have ordered individual school supplies for each student, so we are able to ensure that students do not need to share items essential to their education (e.g., pencils).

## Ensuring Teacher and Staff Safety

Our teachers and staff cannot effectively serve our students and community if they do not feel safe. The Head of School has had individual conversations with each member of the faculty and staff to understand their concerns and solicit their input into how we can best teach our students safely. Incidentally, our teachers are our most motivated advocates of in-person instruction, because they realize how much more our students learn on campus versus remote.



In addition to the other measures described here, 100% of our staff has been vaccinated.

## Intensifying Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation



In the summer of 2020, the HVAC system was upgraded and now includes six I-Wave purifying devices to further reduce pathogens, allergens, particles, and smoke. Unless it is extremely hot or cold outside, doors and windows will remain open for greater natural air circulation.

For the time being, drinking fountains will be only used for refilling water bottles, and each student is encouraged to bring his/her own reusable water bottle to school. The office has a limited supply of disposable water bottles in the event a student loses his/her water bottle.



## Implementing Distancing Inside and Outside the Classroom

### At-Home Procedures

We require students and staff to stay home if they are feeling ill or have a temperature. While we note that the [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#) state that a fever for COVID-19 purposes is any temperature at 100.4°F or higher, VCPH has asked St. Patrick's to specify that a fever is 99.5°F or higher, regardless of the method of taking the temperature. We are following VCPH guidance.

## Arrival Procedures

All of our students arrive at school in personal vehicles; none take a bus. For students in Grades K-2, parents walk their kids to their respective classrooms in the mornings. Parents will not be allowed in classrooms but can get their hugs and say goodbye just outside the classroom doors. Parents walking their students to classrooms will be required to wear a mask upon exiting their vehicles and throughout the drop-off procedure. For older students, parents can drop students off in the designated area in the upper parking lot as per our pre-COVID-19 procedures. All students will be required to wear a mask upon exiting their vehicles.

We will consider re-implementing the arrival procedures from the 2020-2021 school year if conditions warrant.

## Classroom Procedures

Student desks will be arranged such that each student is as far apart from others as possible. Additionally, as mentioned above, every classroom is equipped with a sink, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes. Built into the daily schedule, students will be required to stop for regular hand washing breaks in addition to the washing of hands following the use of the restroom and in preparation for eating snacks and lunch. Hand sanitizer will be available for student and staff use. Disinfectant wipes will be used for regular wiping of desks, chairs, and other surfaces.

## Non-Classroom Procedures

**Enrichment Classes:** Students will participate in enrichment classes that allow for social distancing either in smaller groups and/or by reconfigured furniture.

- Students will be able to participate in art, music, and computer classes and will be divided into smaller groups as necessary. Materials and equipment will be sanitized between classes or will be separated out in individual supply boxes.
- The music program will be modified to comply with CDC and state requirements.
- The school will ensure adequate supplies for each student to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible.



**Food:** Students will eat outside during nice weather but will be spaced apart appropriately. Students from different cohorts will be assigned separate lunch areas and/or times. Students will bring their own snacks and lunches from home in lunch boxes, or parents can order lunches from our established local vendor, *Bright Belly*, who has created disposal, individual, and eco-friendly lunch containers for each student. Students will not be permitted to share food or drinks.



**Movement Outside Classrooms:** Student movement through the halls or through doors will be monitored closely to make sure social distance is maintained.

## Departure Procedures

At 3:00 students in grades 3-6 will be brought to the courtyard to be released to their parents, and students in grades K-2 will be released from their classrooms. Parents, wearing masks, will be able to pick up their children without entering any buildings.

For those families that need daycare, there will be daycare rooms available with a limited number of children in each room. After socially distanced homework time, students will play outside, weather permitting.

St. Patrick's ordinarily offers after school clubs, for example LEGO Robotics, golf, woodworking, chess, puppetry, etc. At this time, after school clubs will not take place and will not be added to the school programs until conditions permit.



## Limiting Visitors to Campus

As described above, parents will be able to drop off students curbside without coming into classrooms. If parents need to come to the school office during the day, we will require them to stand back from the front desk and from other people. Additionally, only two guests at a time will be allowed in the school office, and additional parents will wait outside (appropriately distanced and wearing masks) until there are fewer people in the office. All adults (and students) will be required to wear masks upon exiting their vehicles while on campus.

As mentioned above, all adult volunteers (e.g., parents volunteering in art or computer classes) must be fully vaccinated and must show proof of vaccination *before* volunteering on campus. Fully vaccinated means at least two weeks after the second dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or at least two weeks after the first dose of the J&J vaccine. Proof of vaccination must be submitted to the office at least two school days prior to the event or assignment. Proof of vaccination must be submitted as a photocopy of both sides of one's white CDC vaccination card. The school will maintain paper records of vaccinated adults in order to guard against the possibility of this information being electronically leaked; these records will be confidentially available to appropriate school staff in accordance with FERPA.

Even for parents who may not volunteer, we encourage you to please share your proof of vaccination with the office, and we will keep that information confidential. At some future point, we would love to be able to share an aggregate figure along the lines of, "X% of our parents are fully vaccinated."

There are several school events that we had to pause for the 2020-2021 school year that we would like to bring back in some form, and we will develop options for different ways to participate in such events. While our current thinking on some of these events is illustratively shown in the Appendix, further details on specific events will be communicated at a future date.

Several parents have asked what our policy will be on vaccinating students. At this time, there are no published clinical data on the use of these vaccines in children under age 12, and none of these vaccines have been granted an FDA emergency use authorization (EUA) in the under-12 population, so we cannot yet develop an informed policy in this regard. Given the timing of these studies and FDA review, we will not *require* vaccination of students for this school year.

## Plan for When a Staff Member, Child, or Visitor Becomes Sick

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic comes against the backdrop of regular flu seasons, we realize some individuals may develop COVID-19-like or flu-like symptoms but may not have COVID-19.

Additionally, not every case of COVID-19 has the same symptom presentation, and many of those symptoms overlap with other non-influenza conditions. Some of these symptoms do not even indicate illness. For example, a child may eat a peanut butter sandwich that irritates their throat, and that irritation may be compounded by wearing a mask; the cough that is likely to result does not indicate COVID-19. Families and staff will have to use their best judgment and knowledge of their children throughout.



### If Someone Becomes Sick at School



We will ask our staff to monitor students throughout the day for signs of illness. Likewise, as part of our daily attendance procedure, we will continue to follow up on the cause of any absences and notify VCPH as appropriate. If a student becomes ill during the school day and demonstrates COVID-like symptoms, he/she will be isolated in a separate location (quarantine room) while he/she waits for the parent to pick him/her up. If a staff member becomes ill, they will be able to go home immediately; in the event that staff member is a teacher, their full-time teacher's aide will finish instruction for the day. Each classroom has a full-time teacher and full-time teacher's aide, allowing for safe continuity of education without mixing cohorts in the event one of those adults begins to feel ill.

**As a reminder, we have a standing illness policy--in addition to COVID policies: individuals with a fever must remain home for at least 24 hours after their symptoms have resolved without the use of antipyretic medications.**

## If Someone has COVID-19-like Symptoms

In accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#), any student or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 infection will be sent home and may return to school once they have met the [CDPH criteria for return](#):

- “At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; AND
- “Other symptoms have improved; AND
- “They have a negative test for SARS-CoV-2, OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma) OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus), OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.”



## If Someone Contracts COVID-19



If an individual receives a positive test result, we ask them to share that test result with the school immediately, and we will guard their privacy in accordance with FERPA and other laws and regulations. We ask that parents report this information to the school first so that we may take proper action and notify all parties accordingly.

**If it is reported to us that a student or a staff member has contracted COVID-19, the school will notify Ventura County Public Health (VCPH) and work closely with the agency to determine the best course of action.** We will in turn notify the families in that child’s or teacher’s class that someone in their class cohort has contracted COVID-19; this notification will be done in [accordance with FERPA](#) (for students) and other applicable law. All students and staff members affiliated with the exposed individual will be required to stay at home for a period of time as advised by VCPH (currently at least 10 days). The school office is adequately staffed to track which individuals are in each classroom / cohort to aid in contact tracing.

The Head of School (Nancy Whitson) will be the primary point of contact for communication with VCPH and/or other health agencies as needed. The Business Manager (Isabela Millar) will be the secondary point of contact for communication with VCPH and/or other health agencies as needed. Both can be reached by phone at 805-497-1416.

While we will follow the lead of VCPH, we note that [current CDC guidelines on ending home isolation](#) state that any individual who has contracted COVID-19 or thinks they have contracted COVID-19 and has had symptoms can return after:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared; **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever and no antipyretic medications; **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.

Again, while we will follow the lead of VCPH, we note that [those same CDC guidelines](#) currently state that any individual who has contracted COVID-19 but has had no symptoms can return after 10 days have passed since their test.

Again, while we will follow the lead of VCPH, we note that [January 14, 2021 CDPH guidance](#) provides a benchmark that school closure may be appropriate if “an [outbreak](#) has occurred in 25% or more” of the classroom cohorts. (The [same guidance](#) defines an outbreak as “3 or more confirmed or probable cases of staff or students occurring within a 14-day period who are epidemiologically linked in the school.”) If such a measure were warranted, the school would immediately pivot to our remote instruction platform, which was developed and improved over the 2020-2021 school year.



If we have reason to believe that someone with COVID-19 has been on campus, the infected area of campus will be closed off for twenty-four hours and then thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before students and staff re-enter the space.

# Appendix - Events

Over the course of a typical school year, St Patrick's hosts several events that build community, reinforce academic and service-learning curriculum, and are fun. We had to cancel most of these events for the 2020-2021 school year, and are hoping to bring back some events with appropriate limitations to ensure safety. The examples below are intended to illustrate our current thinking on how this might be accomplished.

## **First Day of School**

On the first day of school, families enjoy walking their kids to class, taking pictures, and socializing. Our current plan for this school year will require masks of everyone throughout, and we ask that parents please limit their time in the classroom.

## **Back to School Picnic**

The first weekend after school starts, we host an optional outdoor picnic at a local park. For the cake walk, we will limit the number of children simultaneously selecting their cake, and the cake selection area will be ventilated to the greatest extent possible.

## **Back to School Night**

Back to school night is a parents-only event and is optional. All parents attending in person must be fully vaccinated and have shown proof of vaccination to the school office before that evening. We recognize that there may be several reasons a parent may not be able to attend in person, including being vaccinated but uncomfortable attending in person, unable to find a babysitter, feeling ill, etc. For parents who are unable to attend, we will make reasonable accommodations for a remote session with the respective teachers. Parents are always able to set up individual parent-teacher conversations as needed to clarify questions with their students' teachers.

# Appendix - Relevant Guidance

This safety plan is informed by several resources.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission-k-12-schools.html>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx>
- Ventura County Public Health (VCPH)  
<https://www.venturacountyrecovers.org/school-information/>  
[https://vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/COVID-19\\_and\\_Schools\\_FAQ\\_06-15-2021.pdf](https://vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/COVID-19_and_Schools_FAQ_06-15-2021.pdf)  
[https://vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/Mask\\_Exemptions\\_for\\_Students\\_1-26-21.pdf](https://vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/Mask_Exemptions_for_Students_1-26-21.pdf)
- American Association of Pediatrics (AAP)  
<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- National Academies of Science (NAS)  
<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25858/reopening-k-12-schools-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-prioritizing>
- Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH)  
<https://schools.forhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/06/Harvard-Healthy-Buildings-Program-Schools-For-Health-Reopening-Covid19-June2020.pdf>
- World Health Organization (WHO)  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/considerations-for-school-related-public-health-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>
- U.S. Department of Education, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) & COVID-19 FAQs  
[https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource\\_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf)