



## St. Christopher Catholic School Reopening

### Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

#### PREPARING FOR SCHOOL

##### **Q 1) What can I do to ensure my child is prepared for the day?**

*A self-check before your child leaves home will help ensure your child does not come to school unwell. Does your child have:*

1. a **fever** (temperature over 100.0F) without having taken any fever reducing medications?
2. a **loss of smell or taste?**
3. a **cough?**
4. **muscle aches?**
5. a **sore throat?**
6. **shortness of breath?**
7. **chills?**
8. a **headache?**

*Has your child experienced any gastrointestinal symptoms such as **nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite?***

##### **Q 2) My child has a runny nose and a sore throat due to seasonal allergies. Do I need to keep him or her home from school?**

The student's allergies should be discussed and documented with the student's medical professional.

##### **Q 3) My child is ill. When can he/she return to school?**

School policy provides guidance on normal illness. St. Christopher Catholic School will comply with the Department of Health (DOH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for the return to school of students and staff following a positive screen for COVID-19 symptoms, illness or a diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19. The return to school will also be coordinated with the local Department of Health (DOH).

#### ARRIVING AT SCHOOL

##### **Q 4) My child is dropped off at school. What will arrival look like?**

- Students should arrive between 7:15 and 7:40
- The school parking lot will be used for Pre-K and bus arrivals.

- Pre-K families should park in the center of the school lot and walk their children to the Pre-K doors.
- If older siblings are with Pre-K students, they will be allowed to enter through the Pre-K doors as well.
- The church parking lot will be used for families transporting students in personal vehicles.
- All vehicles will pull into the church “loop” where they will be met by a staff member.
- Upon driving up into the church loop, a staff member will greet you for a temperature check of the students in the vehicle.
- If a student’s temperature is 100.0 or above, ***none of the children*** in the vehicle will be able to attend school until ***all are fever free for 24 hours***.
- If the student’s temperature is below 100.0, students will exit the vehicle and enter the school through the **Religious Education Doors** under staff supervision.
- Students must be wearing their face covering when exiting the vehicle.
- Any parent leaving their vehicle to assist a student must be in a face covering.
- At this time, parents may not walk to the building with a student from the unloading portion of the loop.
- reParents may not gather or socialize around the school or parking lot during arrival as followed by church guidelines as well.

**Q 5) I will be bringing treats for my child’s class. What do I do?**

Any class snacks or birthday treats must be in a bag, clearly marked with the child’s name and homeroom number. All treats must be in a store-bought container or individually wrapped. Please hand the bag to the teacher checking temperatures. They will be taken into the school by staff.

**Q 6) My child arrives at school by bus. What will arrival look like?**

- Transportation protocols are up to the districts and separate rules may be put in place by each public school district.
- Students arriving by bus will be temperature checked by a staff member as they are leaving the bus at the main office entrance.
- If a student’s temperature is 100.0 or greater the student will be escorted to an area away from other students and the school nurse will be contacted.
- If the temperature is below 100.0, staff will direct the students to report directly to their homeroom.

**Q 7) My Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade child has been checked for a fever and is in the building. How do they get to their classroom?**

Students will proceed through the designated entrance doors, up the staircase proceeding directly to their homeroom. Staff will be present to guide students to stay to the right, social distancing from the students in front or behind them.

**Q 8) How will Pre-K students get to their classroom?**

Pre-K students will be greeted at the Pre-K entrance by staff who will take their temperature, hand sanitizer, and guide them to their classrooms while maintaining social distancing. A child with a fever of 100.0 and their siblings will not be admitted to the building and parents will be instructed to take them home and consult with their medical provider.

**Q 9) If my child arrives at school and you detect that he/she has a fever, what is the protocol?**

The school nurse will be informed and St. Christopher Catholic School will separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms and ensure that children are not left without adult supervision. The school nurse will be responsible for notifying the child's family.

## **CLEANING**

**Q 10) What will be cleaned and how frequently will the school be cleaned?**

The school maintenance staff and faculty will be trained in disinfection and sanitizing. High touch areas, door knobs, railings, etc., will be cleaned throughout the school daily.

**Q 11) How often will the bathrooms be cleaned?**

Bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day. They will be professionally cleaned nightly.

**Q 12) What measures is the school taking to ensure that students and staff remain socially distanced throughout the day?**

Students leaving their classrooms will be guided by staff to ensure no two cohorts are commingled in the hallways. Teachers will ensure their cohort leaves their classroom in a safe and socially distanced manner. Socially gathering in the hallways will not be allowed. Signage will be posted throughout the building to serve as frequent visual reminders as well.

## **KEEPING STUDENTS AND STAFF SAFE**

**Q 13) What is an acceptable face covering?**

All face coverings (whether disposable or reusable) must:

- Fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops and allow the child to remain hands-free
- Based on guidance from health authorities, neck gaiters, open-chin triangle bandanas and face coverings containing valves, mesh material or holes of any kind are not acceptable face coverings.
- Alternate face coverings, such as face shields are not considered adequate protection by NYS Health Department but may be used with a face covering or on an exception basis after consultation with school administration.

**Q 14) When do face coverings have to be worn?**

Face coverings must be worn at all times except when eating or during mask breaks as scheduled by school staff.

**Q 15) Wearing a face covering for long periods of time is hard. How will school faculty and staff support my child as they adjust to this new requirement?**

Parents can help children understand why they might need to wear a face covering and make them more comfortable and even fun to wear. As much as you can, give children time to practice wearing their face coverings before they need to wear one at school. Teach them how to put them on and take them off. Teachers will monitor and guide the student during the day.

**Q 16) How frequently will students/staff be permitted to take face covering breaks and how long will the break last?**

Guidance will be provided to the teachers. They will assess their classrooms to provide face covering breaks safely throughout the day.

**Q 17) If my child needs to take a face covering break “off schedule”, will he/she be permitted to remove his/her face covering for a short duration?**

Yes, guidance will be provided to the teachers. They will assess their classrooms to provide face covering breaks safely throughout the day.

**Q 18) What measures is the school taking to ensure that students and staff remain socially distanced throughout the day?**

- Classroom desks will be spaced 6 feet apart with partitions and will not be moved during the day.
- Anywhere with a line; outside the main office, Cafeteria, bathroom facilities, will have social distancing markers to remind students to socially distance.
- There will be no bi-directional traffic in the hallways or on the stairs during the school day. One staircase designated for up, the other down.
- Only one class/cohort at a time is to be present in the hallways, teachers will monitor.

**Q 19) Where social distancing is not practicable, what measures is the school taking to limit the spread of Covid-19?**

- Face coverings must be worn at all times except when eating or as scheduled by staff.

**Q 20) Will windows be kept open to increase ventilation (even as the weather gets colder)?**

Windows and interior classroom doors and hall doors will be left open to increase airflow in the building. School sweaters may be worn as necessary.

**Q 21) Will instructional time be shortened to accommodate a schedule that allows for more frequent cleaning and sanitizing?**

Schedules during the day will be adjusted as necessary to allow time for cleaning.

**Q 22) Will faculty members be encouraged to spend more time teaching outdoors? Will gym classes be held outdoors as long as the weather is nice?**

Outdoor areas will be used when feasible. The gym/parish center is large enough to meet the 9-12 foot social distancing requirements if students are not wearing masks when engaging in physical activity.

**Q 23) Who will be allowed into the building?**

- Parents, Vendors, Suppliers, Maintenance, etc.
- Only staff and maintenance staff will be allowed in the building.
- Access to the building by parents and volunteers will be controlled and limited.
- Anyone accessing the building will be subject to health screening.

## **INSIDE THE CLASSROOM**

**Q 24) What is a “cohort”?**

A “cohort” helps limit the potential exposure to the virus. This means students are divided into self-contained, preassigned groups of students with reasonable group size limits.

**Q 25) How many children will be in a cohort?**

Cohorts will consist of the students in a homeroom, with a maximum of 16 -20 students depending upon the grade level and NYS requirements. (“Cohort Homeroom”). Students will stay with their cohort homeroom members for the entire day. There are 2 homerooms for every grade with the exception of 7th grade which is one homeroom.

**Q 26) Will students switch classes during the day?**

- Teachers of grades 5 - 8 will rotate into classrooms containing a cohort.
- Where students must leave their classroom for AIS, they will remain with their cohort members and not intersperse with other cohorts.

**Q 27) Will students share supplies?**

No. Students will have their own supplies of instructional materials and basic school supplies. Sharing will not be permitted. Mechanical pencils are encouraged to minimize use of the sharpener.

**Q 28) What about library books?**

- Students will have a selection of books brought to them that they may borrow. The books will be delivered to the cohort classrooms.

- All books that have been returned will be quarantined for 3 days before returning to the shelves.

**Q 29) How will Specials classes be taught (Art, Music, Library/Media, P/E)?**

- Teachers will come to each cohort classroom.
- When leaving, each teacher will sanitize any necessary areas.
- If cohorts move to the special area classroom masks will be required and barriers will be provided.
- Time will be allotted for disinfecting and cleaning between cohorts.

**Q 30) What about music class?**

- Music classes will be held in the cohort homeroom. When leaving, each teacher will sanitize any necessary areas.
- If cohorts move to the special area classroom masks will be required and barriers will be provided.
- Time will be allotted for disinfecting and cleaning between cohorts.
- Activities requiring projecting the voice (e.g., singing) or playing a wind instrument, including the recorder, are permitted only when social distancing is 9 - 12 feet apart. Alternative locations such as the gym, cafeteria, and outside will be utilized to accommodate proper social distancing.
- Equipment and instruments may not be shared.

**Q 31) What about art class?**

- Art classes will be held in the cohort homeroom.
- When leaving, each teacher will sanitize any necessary areas.
- If cohorts move to the special area classroom masks will be required and barriers will be provided.
- Time will be allotted for disinfecting and cleaning between cohorts.
- Students will need to have their own supplies, as provided in the school supply list, as school art supplies and equipment will not typically be shared. In the event art equipment is shared, it will only be shared within cohorts and sanitized between uses.

**Q 32) Will students change for physical education in the gym locker room? If not, what should they wear to school on gym days?**

**Physical Education Uniform:** Students will not be required to wear their school uniform on the days they have gym class. The locker rooms will be closed as they are too small to accommodate proper social distancing.

Students are to wear a combination of the following *school P.E. uniform which can only be purchased through St. Christopher School*;

- **School issued athletic shorts, sweatpants or windbreaker pants**

- School issued dry wick shirt
- \*\* An order form will be sent home for parents/guardians to order apparel\*\***

**Q 33) How will gym class be held?**

- Social distancing will be maintained during the class.
- Face coverings will be worn.
- The class will avoid activities that bring students in very close proximity.
- Instruction will be modified to include, but not limited to, activities such as anaerobic exercise, yoga, stretching, sports videos, nutrition health and wellness, etc.
- Class will be held outside whenever possible.

**Q 34) What if we don't have a St. Chris gym attire?**

Athletic attire will be available for purchase, an order form will be sent home soon.

**Q 35) Will students be permitted to keep their water bottles on their desks during the day?**

- Yes, each student should bring 1 - 2 water bottles per day.
- A water bottle is allowed on the desk.
- Water fountains will not be operational.
- Water filling stations will be available.

**Q 36) Can my child have other things on their desk?**

Desk space will be limited and must be kept clean. Please remind your student not to bring unnecessary items for their desk

**Q 37) Where will my child eat lunch?**

Pre-K and Kindergarten students may have lunch in their classrooms. The lunch schedule is being expanded to safely accommodate our students at 50% capacity.

**Q 38) Will students bring home paperwork (i.e., paper homework, classroom books, notes from school)?**

Every effort will be made to limit the amount of paper moving between the school and the parents, including homework.

**Q 39) Will my child attend Mass?**

- Homerooms will be rotated according to a schedule to attend Tuesday Mass maintaining decreased capacity in the church.
- Homerooms not physically present in the church will view the Mass via live stream
- Face coverings will be worn.
- Students and the general public will be segregated during mass.
- Students will maintain social distancing in the church.

**RESTROOMS**

**Q 40) How will bathroom breaks be scheduled for grades 1 - 8?**

Students in grades 1 - 4 will have two scheduled bathroom breaks with their cohorts during the day, but will also be allowed to go if needed.

Students in grades 5 - 8 will be allowed to use the bathroom as needed

**Q 42) How many students will be permitted in the bathroom at one time?**

Bathrooms are being reconfigured to ensure social distancing, proper capacity, and sanitization.

## **AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM**

**Q 43) How will I pick up my child from the afterschool program?**

- Parents/guardians will come to the main office door for pick up.
- A staff member will bring the child to the door for release.
- Parents will not be allowed in the building.

**Q 44) Can my child bring in something to play with in afterschool?**

Play items can be used for individual play (or shared with siblings only), but not shared with other children. All items must be approved by staff and transported in a plastic bag.

## **SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS**

**Q 45) School is going to look a lot different this year. What actions are being taken to support the emotional and social health of students this year?**

We have a full-time counselor who will be available for students. Mr. Mason will provide training for our staff to identify when mental health interventions may be needed, ensuring all faculty, staff and students will be supported during this time. Mr. Mason will also conduct regular check-ins with school administration for updates on available resources and programming.

## **CONTAINMENT OF THE VIRUS**

Please view the Erie County Department of Health Isolation and Quarantine Flow Chart for specific instructions located at the following link. **Please copy and paste the link into your browser. This chart will provide specific information related to the questions below.**

<https://www2.erie.gov/health/sites/www2.erie.gov.health/files/uploads/pdfs/IsolationandQuarantineFlowChart.pdf>

**\*Please note: Due to HIPAA and Privacy Laws we are unable to identify a student or staff member who may tested positive for COVID-19. The Erie County Health Department will directly notify any individuals who may have come in contact with someone in our school. A daily general accounting or announcement will not be made in accordance with these laws.**

**Q 46) A student in my child's cohort tested positive for Covid-19. What happens now?**

- In the case of an individual testing positive, the school will support local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations.
- The school must cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts -if/when COVID-19 cases are discovered at school, the closing of areas or classrooms where individuals were infected or more broadly the entire school in consultation with the local health department may be required

**Q 47) My child tested positive for Covid-19. When can he/she return to school?**

- St. Christopher Catholic School will comply with the Department of Health (DOH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for the return to school of students and staff following a positive screen for COVID-19 symptoms, illness or a diagnosis of confirmed case of COVID-19.
- The return to school will also be coordinated with the local Department of Health (DOH).

**Q 48) If my child is quarantined for 14 days, how will he/she keep from falling behind during this time?**

St. Christopher Catholic School's reopening plan offers the opportunity for continued learning remotely, in the home, as needed or required. Arrangements will be made with school administration and the teacher.

**Q 49) One of my children or family members tested positive for Covid-19. Should my other children continue coming to school?**

- **Please refer to the DOH Flow Chart.**
- A daily questionnaire for students will be provided. Parents/guardians will need to assist or complete the form for younger students.

**Q 50) What factors will impact the decision to close the school?**

The school must cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts -if/when COVID-19 cases are encountered at school. The closing of areas or classrooms where individuals were infected, or more broadly the entire school requires consultation and direction from the Erie County Department Of Health.

**St. Christopher Catholic School administration, faculty, and staff appreciates your assistance and cooperation as we navigate these new policies and procedures**

together. Any questions or concerns not addressed on this document may be emailed to Mrs. Cuddihy in our school office, [schooloffice@saintchris.org](mailto:schooloffice@saintchris.org) and will either be added to this document or addressed individually. Thank you!