



St. John Catholic School Reopening Plans 2021-2022

As we prepare for the 2021-2022 school year, we will once again ask for your cooperation and patience as we navigate another year in the shadow of a global pandemic. While transmission of the virus on our campus was negligible last school year because of our adherence to federal and state guidelines, with the new variants, we are cognizant of the potential for more widespread cases in our community. Work has been ongoing this summer to update our policies and practices to reflect current COVID-19 guidance from [Washington State Department of Health, Public Health – Seattle & King County, Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction](#) and the [Office for Catholic Schools](#). Our ultimate goal is to provide in-person instruction for the full 2021-2022 school year. Until vaccination is more widespread and transmission rates are decreased, the drive to provide full-time, in-person instruction and the health and safety of our community will guide us in our decision-making process.

Reopening Goals

St. John School is an inclusive Catholic community, committed to inspiring moral development, academic excellence, and the courage to act for the common good.

Our reopening goals are informed by our mission and by policies that will best mitigate COVID-19 transmission.

In this unified spirit, we strive to:

- Ensure a **safe, healthy, and robust learning environment** for our students, faculty and staff.
- Offer, to the greatest extent possible, our **full educational program**. Though some aspects of our program and staffing have been adjusted to maintain a safe and healthy environment, students will continue to receive strong and responsive support from faculty and staff.
- Support students' **social-emotional development and well-being**.

- Prioritize **in-person learning** with the end goal of providing in-person instruction for the full academic year.

In order to navigate reopening during a pandemic and to achieve our goals during these challenging times, we commit to being:

- Patient and generous with each other and ourselves
- Collaborative in our pursuit of students' well-being and continuing education
- Open-minded, flexible and creative as circumstances change
- Responsible for and respectful of our community by adhering to federal, state, county and school health and safety directives.

Decision-Making Process

Knowing that there is a staggering amount of information, we are taking guidance from [Center for Disease Control](#), [Washington State Department of Health](#), and the [Office for Catholic Schools](#). Specifically, we are following directives outlined in Public Health – Seattle & King County's [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit, Guidance for K-12 public and private school and district staff](#).

Our decision making is based on the information we have available today and is subject to change in keeping with the latest health guidelines. Updates will be communicated to the community throughout the school year.

We are Christ-Centered People

Inspired by our mission, we are Christ-centered people who have the courage to act for the common good. We understand and accept our role as caretakers of our community. We act intentionally and compassionately as we seek to keep each other safe. It is imperative, then, that we continue to enlist many of the mitigation strategies and protocols from last school year and follow updated guidance:

Universal Masking

Face coverings/masks remain one of the most effective tools to prevent transmission of COVID-19. All staff and students must continue to wear face coverings/masks, regardless of vaccination status. Department of Health strongly recommends masks for all individuals when outdoors in crowded spaces as the risk of COVID-19 infection increases with the duration and closeness of contact between individuals. Because of the close proximity of our student population during recess, the school will require masks to be worn during outdoor play.

Proof of Vaccination

Vaccination is the most effective prevention strategy available for allowing schools to remain in the full-time, in-person instruction model. Furthermore, vaccinations, in

combination with face coverings and masks, are the most effective method in the prevention of getting and transmitting COVID-19. Per Governor Inslee's order (August 18, 2021) a COVID-19 vaccine requirement has been extended to all employees in public, private, and charter K-12 schools, as well as childcare and early learning providers. This order applies to our parent volunteer and coaches. COVID-19 vaccines are available to all people aged 12 and older.

Catholic Schools are required to track vaccinations for staff, volunteers, and students. If you plan to volunteer at school or coach this year, please be prepared to share confirmation of vaccination. To verify vaccination, acceptable documentation includes:

- CDC vaccination card, which includes name of person vaccinated, type of vaccine provided, and date(s) administered, or a photo of the vaccination card
- Documentation of vaccination from a health care provider with the information listed above
- State immunization information system record with the information listed above
- Verbal attestation for vaccination is not acceptable
- The school will not keep a copy of vaccination documentation.

Physical Distancing

School guidance calls for maintaining physical distance of three feet or more between students in classroom settings to the degree possible and reasonable that allow for full-time, in-person learning for all students. St. John School will continue to maximize opportunities to increase physical space between students during all scheduled activities and limit interactions in large group settings.

Daily Attestation

Staying home when sick with COVID-19 is essential to keeping infections out of our school and prevent spread to others. Students and school employees who have symptoms of infectious illness should stay home.

The school will no longer be checking student temperatures daily or collecting data via the Health Screen. It is your family's responsibility to assess your child's health/temperature each morning. Use the [CDC Self-Checker tool](#), and if symptoms are present, you must keep the student home and [notify the school office](#). Please, always, err on the side of caution. Keep children home when they are not feeling well and test if they are showing any of the Covid symptoms.

When a child has completed quarantine, if necessary, and/or is symptom-free for 24 hours they may return to school. If your child is experiencing seasonal allergies, please provide administration with documentation from your pediatrician. Otherwise, the school may be moved to send your child home.

We are a Community of Active Learners

As we continue on this new reality of in-person learning, we acknowledge that our resolve will once again be tested. We can, again, look to our mission for guidance. We are a community of active learners, and we are committed to academic excellence even during a global pandemic. The following applies to all students:

- In-person instruction starts Tuesday, September 7, 2021 with traditional school day hours
 - Kindergarten through grade 5, 8:15am-3pm
 - Grades 6-8, 8:15am-3:05pm
 - Kindergarten students will dismiss at noon, September 7 through 10
 - PreSchool, 8:15-11:15am and 12:15pm-3:15pm.
 - The tardy bell rings at 8:20am
 - Note: do not drop students off early as there is no supervision on the playground
- Extended Daycare is open for grades PreK-5, hours 7am-6pm
- All grades to return to two homeroom classes
- With the exception of library, students will have access to all specialist classes (music, physical education, art, Spanish). To the degree possible, some specialist classes will be taught outdoors
- Student Support Team (Mrs. Ocampo, Mrs. Olsen, Ms. Shaw, and Mrs. McCarthy) will continue providing services to students
- Hot Lunch service will be available to students. Classes will continue to use a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces to appropriately distance when masks are removed for lunch.
 - Snack break will be made available to students, when appropriate distancing can be maintained in the classroom or outside
- Recess will be socially distanced and staggered by departments and will be outside regardless of weather
- Middle school students will not be able to access lockers for personal storage
- Re-entry during the day: if a student leaves campus for appointments during the school day, they are welcomed to return to school
- Due to a large concentration of our student population that remains unvaccinated, the school is exercising caution in hosting large on-campus gatherings.

We are Empowered Disciples

We are empowered disciples who commit to providing an environment where we can all safely and fully nurture our mind, spirit and body. In order to encourage our students to grow in their education and faith, we must ensure that their physical space is one in which they feel safe. We understand, then, that the school, itself, will look and feel different as St. John School has added significant measures to maintain a safe and healthy campus, such as:

- Creative use of available space on campus to maintain social distance to the degree possible and reasonable that allow for full-time, in-person learning for all students
- Portable classrooms (east campus) will be utilized for some specialists' classes

- Increased signage to remind students of healthy habits: masks, social distance and frequent handwashing
- Increased sanitation and disinfecting procedures in and around the campus, based on [Washington State Department of Health K-12 COVID-19 Requirements for Summer 2021 and the 2021-2022 School Year's](#) cleaning and disinfecting guidelines, such as utilization of electrostatic sprayers for efficient and effective disinfection
- Utilization of portable sinks to allow for more frequent, socially distanced hygiene
- Improved and increased ventilation.

Together We Can Act with Justice, Love with Mercy, Walk Humbly with God Last year's theme.

The St. John community thrives because of the connection and communication that occur among our members. We will always communicate with our families so that we all have a clear understanding of the processes and procedures that will help us remain open for in-person instruction. Communication will be through NewsViews and targeted emails.

This year will continue to test our resiliency. But our community has shown that we have the patience, ingenuity, and resolve needed for collective problem-solving. Grace will, again, be required and granted as we confront another school year in a global pandemic. Our mission will once again guide us through these uncertain times, and our community will rise to the occasion, like it always does.

FAQ's

How is St. John preparing for the reopening of school for Fall 2021?

Knowing that there is a staggering amount of information, we are taking guidance from federal ([Center for Disease Control](#)), state ([Washington State Department of Health](#)), and local ([Archdiocese, Office for Catholic Schools](#)) agencies. Specifically and currently we are following directives outlined in Public Health – Seattle & King County's [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit, Guidance for K-12 public and private school and district staff.](#)

Our decision making is based on the information we have available today and is subject to change in keeping with the latest health guidelines. Updates will be communicated to the community throughout the school year.

Per guidelines, what is the ideal or maximum number of students per classroom?

Schools: there is no specific recommended group size as long as physical distancing and other health and safety measures are met. The school will continue to follow guidance that calls for maintaining physical distance of three feet or more between students in classroom settings to the degree possible and reasonable that allow for full-time, in-person learning for all students.

Childcare licensing currently recommends up to 22 people per group, including children, youth, and adults.

With all students back on campus starting September 7, what can the St. John community do to keep in-person instruction on-going?

With this opportunity to reopen for the full school year comes the heightened need for us to continue to follow preventative measures that have enabled us to remain open for in-person instruction: proper mask-wearing, maintaining social distancing, and following CDC and state guidelines for allowable activities. With the new variants, please take the time to review your current family practices to ensure they align with school policies. Ask yourself if you are doing your part to keep our community safe so that we can have in-person instruction for the full school year.

- Keep children home when they are not feeling well. When a child is symptom-free for 24 hours they may return to school. If your child is experiencing seasonal allergies, please provide administration with documentation from your pediatrician. Otherwise, the school may be moved to send your child home.
- With all students on campus, proper mask-wearing is critical. Please refer to the [Washington State Department of Health](#) and [CDC](#) guidelines to ensure your child comes to campus meeting the requirements. If your child does not have an appropriate mask, you will be contacted to provide one. Below are mask-wearing recommendations from WA DOH and CDC.

General Guidance and Helpful Tips for Proper Mask-Wearing

- Masks should be made of two or more layers of tightly-woven fabric and can be worn over a medical procedure mask to improve fit.
- Masks with exhalation valves, single-layer bandanas, or gaiters will not be permitted. These masks do not comply with WA DOH and CDC recommendations, and given that our students and staff will be closer together under the 3-foot distance rules, we must uphold a strict standard for masks.
- Pack spares! Students sometimes want/need to change their masks after lunch or PE. Plan for two masks and, at least, one backup.
- More guidance on mask-wearing in school settings can be found at CDC's "[Your Guide to Masks](#)."

Mask Fit Checks Parents Can Do

- Can you see your child's nose or chin when they are wearing their mask?
- Does your child's mask move or expose their nose when they talk?
- Observe your child while they wear a mask. Are they adjusting it frequently?
- Observe how your child is wearing their mask after doing an activity. Are they still wearing it correctly?
- Additional information on reviewing and improving mask fit can be found on the [CDC's mask guidance page](#).

Mask Fit Checks Students Can Do

- Ask your child if they can feel their breath tickling their cheeks or eyes when they breathe. If they can, the mask is not fitting well. This is an easy self-check tool that empowers students and helps them understand proper mask-wearing when parents are not present.
- Adjust mask fit – tie knots around ear loops, purchase adjusters or ear-savers to increase comfort and tighten fit.
- Throw out old, worn or loose-fitting masks.

Reminders for Activities Outside the Classroom

Though vaccination has helped us move forward during the pandemic, it is important to still remain vigilant in safety practices. The CDC warns that extracurricular activities can drive the spread of new, more transmissible virus variants. Refer to the current COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions under Seattle & King County's [Safe Reopening](#) plan for information and recommendation regarding social activities. Even if you are vaccinated, it is important to protect others; St. John has a large student population who are not yet vaccinated. The CDC's latest guidance for fully vaccinated people can be found [here](#).

Will my student continue to receive support from Support Specialists with the in-person instruction model?

There will be academic support from reading and math specialists. Accommodations for those students with support plans will be provided and updated by the SST.

Will there be an option for remote instruction for the 2021-22 school year?

At this time, St. John School is committed to offering full-time, in-person learning to all students/families for the 2021-2022 school year. Remote instruction will be offered only in the case of required class quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure or in the event the school must move to remote or hybrid learning. Please do not request remote instruction to accommodate student/family travel or other family circumstances.

How will St. John support student's emotional well-being?

We are fortunate to have Ms. Shaw as our full-time school counselor. In addition to providing many [resources](#) in helping students navigate the emotional roller coaster of living through a pandemic, Ms. Shaw will be providing a social and emotional learning class for all middle school students (SEL) and is available to work with families in supporting students' mental health and well-being. She is available by [email](#), phone, or video chat.

Will Extended Daycare be available with a return to in-person instruction?

Extended Daycare is open for grades PreK-5 hours 7:00am-6:00pm for students who have registered.

Can my family travel during the holidays?

St. John School will adhere to CDC recommendations on travel in and out of state, including following current guidance on indoor/outdoor mask wearing while traveling.

In State and Out of State Car Travel: Car travel will not require a quarantine for vaccinated or unvaccinated students. Refer to the CDC “[Safer Travel Tips for Families with Unvaccinated Children](#)” for guidance.

Commercial Air, Train or Long-Distance Bus Travel: Students who travel by commercial air, train, or long distance bus will follow the current CDC/King County recommendations and requirements as outlined below.

- Regardless of vaccination status, **all travelers** should carefully monitor symptoms during and after arrival home for 14 days. If symptoms occur, the symptomatic individual should be tested immediately.
- Students who are **not fully vaccinated** (2 weeks past final vaccination shot) will be required to complete one of the quarantine options below upon arrival home:
 - **Option One: 7-day quarantine (testing required):** Complete a 7-day quarantine beginning the first full day after arrival home. COVID-19 test should be taken 3-5 days after arrival home. As soon as possible, send completed results to admin@st-johnschool.org for confirmation of the student’s return date to school.
 - **Option Two: 10-day quarantine (no testing required):** Unvaccinated students complete a 10-day quarantine beginning the first full day after arrival home.
 - **Steps to follow if your student requires a quarantine period out of school:**
 - Prior to traveling, notify <https://st-johnschool.org/attendance/> of your travel dates and which quarantine option will be taken.
 - Notify your student’s homeroom/subject teachers as to the planned absence. Per Family Handbook do not request work to be provided before travel dates.

Can my family attend large gatherings?

The CDC continues to recommend avoiding large gatherings and events. At this time, the CDC does not have numbers to define small and large gatherings. As with all decisions, St. John recommends that you promote and choose healthy behaviors that reduce spread, refer to the CDC’s “[Small and Large Gatherings](#)” for more information. Key points to consider:

- Avoid large events and gatherings when possible
- Consider the level of risk when deciding to attend or host an event
- Be prepared if someone gets sick.

Will the school host community wide events this year?

Due to a large concentration of our student population that remains unvaccinated, the school is exercising caution in hosting large on-campus gatherings. Currently for the fall, our school Jog-a-thon will take place the week of September 20; CYO Fall Sports are operating; we will not host the Back-to-School BBQ, and our School Endowment dinner will be re-imagined. Details to follow.

Other St. John community events will be planned according to current WA DOH and CDC guidelines.

Will I be able to volunteer this year?

If you plan to volunteer this year, we will need to document confirmation of vaccination. While there may be a limitation on the number of volunteer roles traditionally made available to parents in the school buildings, we do ask you to look for opportunities to support the mission outside of the classroom (recess and lunch volunteers, coaches, auction, Jog-a-thon, etc.).

My student doesn't feel well, and we don't think it's COVID-19; can they still come to school?

No. During this time we are asking any student who does not feel well to stay home. This is extremely important for the health and safety of our entire community.

According to the [CDC](#), people with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose – unrelated to a pre-existing condition (such as seasonal allergies)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19. Public Health – Seattle & King County's [“COVID-19 Daily Symptoms Checker for Staff, Parents/Guardians, and Students” tool](#) or CDC's [Coronavirus Self-Checker tool](#) may be helpful if families are concerned about their student's illness and the possibility of their symptoms being related to the virus.

What happens if someone develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at school?

According to Washington State Department of Health's "[K-12 COVID-19 Requirements for Summer 2021 and the 2021-2022 School Year](#)," any student, teacher, or staff who reports [COVID-19-like symptoms](#) must be immediately [isolated](#) from others and sent home and referred to diagnostic testing as soon as feasible. While waiting to leave school, the individual with symptoms must be isolated in a designated isolation space. They must wear a cloth face covering or mask.

What happens if someone visited school while contagious with COVID-19.

If someone visited the school while contagious with COVID-19, it is possible that students, staff, and/or guests may have been exposed. A person is contagious with COVID-19 starting two days before they have symptoms (or if asymptomatic, two days before they test positive for SARS-CoV-2) and through the end of their isolation period. Close contacts of a person with COVID-19 should be identified to determine if they must quarantine. For more information, visit Washington State Department of Health's "[K-12 COVID-19 Requirements for Summer 2021 and the 2021-2022 School Year](#)."

What to do if someone is a close contact of someone with COVID-19.

Generally, a close contact is someone who was within six feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period during the period of time when the person with COVID-19 was infectious. The infectious period of someone with COVID-19 starts two days before the onset of symptoms or is estimated as two days before the positive test collection date if someone with COVID-19 is asymptomatic. This definition applies regardless of whether the case or contact was wearing a mask. If identified as a close contact, a person may need to quarantine.

In a K-12 indoor classroom, the close contact definition excludes students who were at least three feet away from an infected student when (a) both students were wearing face coverings/masks and (b) other prevention strategies were in place. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

The definition of a close contact may vary in some situations (e.g. less time spent in close proximity to an unmasked person who is coughing, direct cough/sneeze spray, or other contact that is more intense like sharing drinks, eating utensils etc.). The ultimate determination of close contact is made by the local health jurisdiction during its investigation; it may delegate this determination if appropriate.

What is the protocol if a student, faculty or staff member tests positive for COVID-19?

If a person tests positive for COVID-19, the Office for Catholic Schools, along with the local health jurisdiction will advise, and the infected person must self-isolate and adhere to Washington State Department of Health protocols, "[What to do if you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19](#)." Appropriate communication steps will be taken based on guidance from governing bodies.

When can a person return to school after testing positive for COVID-19?

If a person tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 by a molecular or antigen test, they can return to school when the following criteria are met:

- 10 days since symptom onset, or since positive test specimen collection date if no symptoms are present (up to 20 days for those who are severely ill or severely immunocompromised), AND
- 24 hours after fever resolves without use of fever-reducing medications, AND
- Symptoms have improved.

This isolation guidance applies regardless of vaccination status.

When can a person return to school after testing negative for COVID-19?

If a person with COVID-19 symptoms tests negative for SARS-CoV-2 with a molecular test, they may return to school following existing school illness management policies so long as they are not a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and subject to quarantine.

If a person with COVID-19 symptoms tests negative for SARS-CoV-2 with an antigen test, per CDC antigen testing guidance, a confirmatory lab-based molecular test is recommended. An alternative to confirmatory NAAT testing is serial antigen testing performed every 3–7 days for 14 days.

If a person with COVID-19 symptoms does not get tested for SARS-CoV-2 or see a healthcare provider and given an alternative diagnosis, they should follow the same isolation guidance as persons who test positive for SARS-CoV-2. This is irrespective of vaccination status.

Will the school notify Public Health – Seattle & King County if my student is sent home for not feeling well, having a fever or any other symptoms related to COVID-19?

St. John School must adhere to [state](#) and [local](#) directives regarding reporting positive cases of COVID-19 in our community. All possible efforts will be made to maintain the anonymity of any individual who is affected directly or indirectly.

What happens to the class if a student or teacher from that classroom tests positive for COVID-19?

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, it is possible that many of the student’s classmates and teachers in the classroom will be considered close contacts and need to be quarantined. They should monitor their health and contact a healthcare provider if COVID-19 symptoms arise. If a person tests positive for COVID-19, the local health jurisdiction will advise, and the infected person must self-isolate and adhere to DOH guidelines. Refer to [“What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with confirmed COVID- 19.”](#)

When does a person have to quarantine?

Quarantine is when someone who has been exposed to COVID-19 stays home and away from others for the recommended period of time in case they were infected and are contagious.

People who may be exempt from quarantine:

- Close contacts who are fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms do not need to quarantine but should be tested 3-5 days following a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and wear a mask in all public indoor spaces for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. Per OCS and DOH, the school will not accept rapid testing results. They should isolate and follow appropriate guidance if they test positive. If they develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, and tested for SARS-CoV-2 if indicated. The symptomatic fully vaccinated person should inform their healthcare provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.
- Close contact who had confirmed COVID-19 in the past three months, have recovered and do not have symptoms, do not need to quarantine but should watch for symptoms and get tested if symptoms develop.

If a close contact is neither fully vaccinated nor recovered from confirmed COVID-19 in the past three months and does not have symptoms, the close contact must quarantine unless the school has chosen to adopt a “test to stay” protocol with approval from local public health.

Close contacts following a test to stay protocol must still quarantine at home away from others except for attending school (e.g. the person may not participate in extra-curricular or after school activities and should not attend social gatherings etc.).

There are three options for duration of quarantine:

- Quarantine should last for 14 days after the last close contact with the COVID-19 positive person. This is the safest option. Monitor for symptoms during this time, and if any COVID-19 symptoms develop during the 14 days, get tested.
- If 14 days is not possible, quarantine can last for 10 days after the last close contact, 12 without additional testing required. However, if any COVID-19 symptoms develop during the 10 days, remain in quarantine the full 14 days and get tested. Continue monitoring for symptoms until day 14.
- Quarantine can end after 7 full days beginning after the last close contact if no symptoms have developed and after receiving a negative test result. The test should occur no sooner than 48 hours (2 days) before ending quarantine. Continue monitoring for symptoms until day 14.
- If your school has selected a test to stay option, quarantine can end after successful completion of the approved protocol. Close contacts with symptoms of COVID-19 should follow the steps under “[What to Do if Someone Develops Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School.](#)”

More information can be found at WA DOH’s [“When Can I Be Around Others Again”](#) infographic.

According to [Washington State Department of Health](#), fully vaccinated people do not need to quarantine or be tested if exposed to someone with COVID-19 *as long as they show no signs of illness*. However, you should still monitor yourself for any COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days after you are exposed. If you do start having symptoms, you should isolate yourself and contact your health care provider. Tell them you've been vaccinated before seeking out testing or evaluation.

How many positive COVID-19 cases have occurred on campus since students have returned?

There have been a handful of positive cases that have occurred on campus. All protocols were followed, and there was no indication of transmission within the school buildings. Each situation was reported in NewsViews.

For more information please review the Frequently Asked Questions on the Public Health Seattle King County website.

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/COVID-19/schools-childcare/FAQ.aspx>