



Saint Rita School COVID Plan

Updated February 2022

Given the fluidity of the COVID situation, in terms of the ever-changing legal landscape as well as the strains of the virus itself, Saint Rita School is providing this updated COVID Plan to our families and staff in February 2022. It will be updated as needed with changing conditions.

1. What is the school's sick policy?

- Students and staff may not come to school if they have had a fever, nausea / vomiting, or diarrhea within the last 24 hours. Anyone experiencing respiratory symptoms severe enough to interfere with learning (or working) also needs to stay home until they improve.
- Families will be asked to pick up any children manifesting a fever, nausea / vomiting, diarrhea, or severe respiratory symptoms within 30 minutes of being called.
- Families will not be asked by the school to test their children for COVID unless we are required to obtain a negative test for students returning from quarantine.

2. What is the school's mask policy?

- Per [Executive Order #2](#) effective in Virginia on January 24, 2022, parents can decide whether or not to comply with a school mask policy. Our preschool parents have had this option all year, but now our K-8 parents can make this decision and inform the school as directed by the principal.
- Staff mask policies are outlined in the Employee COVID Handbook of the Diocese of Arlington, which contains regulations based on the Virginia Permanent Standard for employees. This Standard currently requires masks for unvaccinated employees, though vaccinated employees remain free to wear masks if they so choose. Exemptions and alternative accommodations are available for staff with religious or medical problems with masks per Diocesan directives.

3. What should families do when getting tested for COVID?

- If any member of a household is getting tested for COVID or awaiting results, ***no members of that household may come to school*** until a negative result is obtained.

- If a child, parent, or other household member tests positive or are presumed positive for COVID, please inform the school immediately by emailing the school nurse. She will provide information about next steps and a potential return date.

4. What does “presumed positive” for COVID mean?

- Typically this is used in COVID notifications when at least one member of the household has a confirmed positive case and then other family members manifest the same symptoms (even if they do not end up getting tested).

5. What happens if there is an exposure in school?

- The relevant time window for an exposure is 2 days before symptoms emerge or - if asymptomatic - 2 days before testing
- Once the school learns of a positive case, the school nurse will send a notification to the whole school community, noting the grade of the student (or staff) and date last in school
- Per updated protocols disseminated to schools by the Virginia Department of Health, the school will no longer be contact-tracing for each individual positive case at Saint Rita
- Targeted contact tracing may be available in the K-8 building for families with special circumstances if requested in advance
- Per the updated guidance on individual contact tracing, we will no longer be presuming all preschoolers present in the classroom with a positive case are close contacts who need to quarantine (unless fully vaccinated or recently had COVID). Families are welcome to keep their children home for a few days following an exposure in their classroom if they so choose

6. Who DOES and DOES NOT have to quarantine?

- The school will no longer be contact tracing to identify close contacts in the classroom who have to quarantine, however...
- If there is COVID in the household, all family members must stay home for at least 5 days following their last exposure unless...
- Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine. Children are considered fully vaccinated if they have had two shots - a third (booster) shot is not currently required
- Individuals who have had COVID within the last 90 days do not have to quarantine as a close contact. Please make sure to report positive tests to the school so we have a record of this.

7. What are the current quarantine and isolation timelines and protocols?

- **Timeline for students with COVID:** The standard duration of isolation for COVID is 10 days, but there is now an option for a 5-day return provided certain criteria are met and a close-fitting mask is subsequently worn. This 5-day option requires that:
 - ***symptoms are resolving***
 - ***the individual has been fever-free for 24 hours without medication, and***
 - ***the individual will wear a mask for 5 additional days (days 6-10)***
 - ***(Note that on days 6-10, the child will be spaced by 6 feet at lunch or snack time as well)***

- **Timeline for students with COVID in their family:**
 - As mentioned above, students who are fully vaccinated or have recently had COVID do not need to quarantine
 - Students who are NOT fully vaccinated or have not recently had COVID need to quarantine for at least 5 days following the last exposure. If the family members do not separate when there is a positive case, the first five days elapse as the illness of the positive family member runs its course and THEN the quarantine clock (minimum of 5 days) starts for family members quarantining. So if MOM gets COVID, children stay home for at least 5 days whilst Mom is still considered to have COVID and THEN children quarantine at least 5 additional days as close contacts (to afford time for their symptoms to develop if the children have contracted the virus).
- If quarantining children start showing symptoms or test positive, please update the school nurse as that would affect the children's return date.
- When counting the days for quarantine or isolation, Day Zero is the day of the exposure, the day symptoms began, or the day of the COVID test.

8. What is the process to return to school from quarantine or isolation?

- When the school nurse receives word about a positive case requiring isolation or quarantine, she will provide that family with a "next steps" flyer that lists the criteria described above as the conditions for return and explains the mask requirement if an early (5-day) return is desired for a child with COVID.
- Each child (or staff member) must be explicitly cleared by the nurse before their return.
- If we are required to also obtain a negative COVID test to return from quarantine we will update these protocols accordingly.

9. When would a whole class be quarantined?

- If we see several positive cases in a short time frame in a particular grade, in circumstances suggesting that COVID may be spreading at school, we may close a preschool or K-8 class for five days.

10. What about make-up work?

- For students absent just one or two days, students will make up the work upon their return in the ordinary fashion (an additional day is allocated to make up work for each day missed).
- For students who will be absent three or more days due to a COVID case or exposure, the teachers will try to provide and send home as much work as is practicable for the student to be working on at home during the absence. Please bear in mind that all of our teachers are currently dealing with many absent students, so you may need to be proactive in requesting make-up work and patient in receiving it. Some of our teachers have just 40 minutes a day of planning time (i.e. when their class is in PE) so they have quite a lot to do in a very short time.