

# ST. PIUS V CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## COVID-19 GUIDELINES FOR RETURN TO ON-SITE SCHOOL OPERATIONS

We are cautiously optimistic in announcing a plan to reopen St. Pius V Catholic School (St. Pius V) for the 2020-21 School Year. It is the hope and desire of the clergy, faculty, and staff of St. Pius V to return to regular day-to-day operations as soon as possible, in compliance with federal, state, local and Diocesan guidelines. We have developed detailed guidelines in the interest of a safe return to school for everyone.

The health and safety of students, staff, and families is the top priority when making the decision to physically reopen school campuses for use by students and staff. We have been, and will continue to be, guided by responsible and due consideration of the circumstances, under the guidance of the Diocese of Orange and Department of Schools.

These guidelines have been developed by the Health & Safety Committee (comprised of healthcare professionals from our school and parish community), and the faculty and staff of St. Pius V. Our hope is that by providing you with these guidelines you will be able to make calm and informed decisions for your family and will understand the protocols that have been put into place at St. Pius.

All of us at St. Pius V Catholic School are grateful for your cooperation as we navigate our way through these extraordinary and unpredictable circumstances.

### Goals for Safe Return:

- PROVIDE the necessary level of care and support for all students, faculty and staff.
- PREPARE for the possibility of the presence of COVID-19 and how to manage any cases for the safety of our school.
- PROTECT our parish school community and reduce the possibility of an outbreak at school.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

St. Pius V Catholic School will offer families a choice of three school attendance options: (1) 100% virtual learning for part or all of the school year; (2) all day, in-person for five days a week; or (3) a hybrid of the first two options. As of August, 2020, over 60% of the families have indicated that their child(ren) will begin school using the 100% virtual option.

# UNDERSTANDING COVID-19

## What is COVID-19?

- According to the CDC, Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- COVID-19 has many symptoms (see below) but the most prevalent ones are a high fever, persistent dry cough, and difficulty breathing.

## Signs and Symptoms to Look for:

- Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus, according to the CDC. Any of the following symptoms (ranging from mild to severe) may be an indication of COVID-19:
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
- **The following symptoms indicate emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If you have any of these emergency warning signs, get medical attention immediately:**
  - Trouble breathing
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion or inability to arouse
  - Bluish lips or face

## [CDC Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)

## How is COVID-19 spread?

- You can be infected by coming into close contact with a person who has COVID-19. Infection is transmitted through respiratory droplets by an infected person's cough, sneeze, or by conversation.
- You can also get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, eyes.
- COVID-19 may also be transmitted by persons who are asymptomatic and never show any symptoms.

## [CDC Resources for Prevention of Coronavirus](#)

## [CDC Resource: "If you are Sick or Caring for Someone"](#)

## [CDC "Frequently Asked Questions"](#)

## STRATEGIES TO LOWER THE RISK OF SPREADING SARS-CoV-2

Currently, the most effective way to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is the use of multiple mitigation strategies. For the health and well-being of all those who are on campus, St. Pius V Catholic School will use all of the following strategies:

1. Any and all students, teachers, and staff will stay home if they feel sick.
2. While at school, all students, teachers, staff, and any visitors to campus will wear cloth face masks any time they are indoors or are outdoors and less than 6 feet from others.
3. All student and teachers' desks will have clear safety guards (i.e., "sneeze shields") around their desks.
4. All students, teachers, and staff will be trained on effective hand-washing techniques and use of hand sanitizers, as well as the appropriate and effective use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).
5. All teachers and staff will be trained on effective procedures for cleaning and disinfecting classroom spaces.

Parents will be educated on the ways to lower the risk of infection and on the content of these guidelines by email, website (stpius5school.net), and at the individual (in-person or Zoom) meeting with the classroom teacher prior to the beginning of the school year.

## DAILY HEALTH SCREENING PROCEDURES

### Daily Screening Procedures (Students)

- 1) **Passive Screening (At home)** – Parents are expected to screen their children every morning. This will include:
  - a. Daily temperature check.
  - b. Screening for any symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Parents are directed to keep a student at home if the student has a temperature over 100.4° F, any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or has been in close contact with any person diagnosed with COVID-19. Parents will be directed to contact their healthcare provider.

### 2) **Active Screening (Arriving at School)**

- a. Parents will drive their children onto campus. There will be no walk-ons.
- b. While still in the car, students will have their temperatures taken with no-touch, digital thermometers. There will be multiple check-in points along the west side of campus to allow for as rapid an intake process as possible.
- c. While still in the car, students and parents will be asked screening questions pertaining to any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 with the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.
- d. Students who do not pass the screening will remain in the car and the parent will be directed to take them to their health care professional.
- e. Students who pass the screening will be allowed to exit the car. They will sanitize their hands before entering the campus.
- f. Once at the classroom door, students will also apply BIOPROTECT to their hands.

## Daily Screening Procedures (Employees)

- 1) **Passive Screening (At Home)** – All employees are expected to monitor themselves every morning. This will include:
  - a. Daily temperature check.
  - b. Screening for any symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

If an employee has a temperature over 100.4° F, has any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or has been in close contact with any person diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee will stay home and contact the principal immediately.

- 2) **Active Screening (Arriving at School)**
  - a. All employees will be screened for entrance onto the campus daily at a designated check station outside of the office.
  - b. All employees will have their temperature taken to ensure that it is below 100.4° F.
  - c. All employees will be asked screening questions and will be observed for symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
  - d. All employees will sanitize their hands and apply BIOPROTECT before entering the campus.
  - e. Once in the classroom or work station, all employees will apply BIOPROTECT to their hands.

Employees who demonstrate symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will not be allowed to move onto the campus and will be directed to contact their health care professional.

## Screening of Outside Visitors

- 1) Outside visitors will be limited to the extent possible.
- 2) Any visitor to the campus will be screened.
  - a. All visitors will be screened for entrance onto the campus daily at a designated check station outside of the office.
  - b. All visitors will have their temperature taken to ensure that it is below 100.4° F.
  - c. All visitors will be asked screening questions and will be observed for symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
  - d. Any visitor admitted to the school campus will sanitize their hands and apply BIOPROTECT prior to entering the campus.

Visitors who demonstrate symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will not be allowed to move onto the campus and will be directed to contact their health care professional.

## HEALTH AND HYGIENE PROCEDURES

The school will modify all drinking faucets to serve as handwashing stations, providing additional open-air access to sanitization. Areas of high traffic not near a handwashing station and all classrooms and offices will have fragrance-free hand sanitizer stations. Each classroom and office will additionally have a bottle of BIOPROTECT for use by students, staff, and any visitor allowed on campus.

The number of students permitted in any restroom at any given time will be limited to half the number of sinks in the restroom. This will provide the necessary distancing required between students while in the restroom.

Staff and students will be trained on proper handwashing techniques and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the school setting, including the following:

- 1) Washing hands for at least 20 seconds or, if soap and water are not accessible, to use hand sanitizer. Signs have been placed on the mirrors of the restrooms, directly above the faucets, to encourage students to sing the “ABC song” twice while washing their hands;
- 2) Washing hands at various times during the day, including when leaving and entering home or the school, after playing outside, after close contact with others, after sharing surfaces or equipment, before and after using the restroom, before and after eating, and after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose;
- 3) Using paper towels to dry hands thoroughly;
- 4) Proper use, removal, washing and care of face masks;
- 5) Using tissue to shield a cough or sneeze and to wipe a nose;
- 6) Avoiding touching the face and/or face covering;
- 7) [CDC guidance](#) on proper PPE use.

Posters from the CDC and OCHCA’s “[COVID-19 Community Toolkit](#)” will be posted in classrooms, restrooms, and other locations frequented by staff and students. Links to this information will be provided to parents via the school website and emails.

## SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICE

The school’s health office consists of an outside office, a quarantine room, and a quarantine restroom. The quarantine room and restroom can be accessed from outside and are also connected to the main health office. Any student in the quarantine room will be monitored and supervised by the health office staff.

Staff members engaged in COVID-19 symptom screening will be provided with surgical masks, face shields, and disposable gloves.

If a student becomes symptomatic during the school day:

- 1) The classroom teacher will notify the health office staff. The student will be sent to the health office with their face mask in place.
- 2) The health office staff will screen the student for symptoms consistent with COVID-19, including temperature check.
- 3) If the student has a fever and/or any additional symptoms of COVID-19, the parent will immediately be contacted and the student will be placed in the quarantine room. If more than one student is in the quarantine room, they will be socially distanced as far apart as possible and a clear physical barrier will be placed between them.
- 4) Students will remain in supervised isolation, with face masks on, until parents arrive.
- 5) Parents of sick students will be advised that students are not to return to school until they have met the [CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).

## **TESTING OF STUDENTS AND STAFF**

To ensure the safety of students and staff, surveillance testing be implemented. The school will test staff periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. When a student or staff exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, the student or staff member will be sent home and testing will be recommended. School employees and students who need testing will be directed to either go to their health care provider or a state-operated or other community testing site. The Department of Managed Health Care has filed an emergency regulation to require health plans to pay for COVID-19 testing for all essential workers, including school staff. In addition, tests are available at [community testing sites throughout the state](#).

## **IDENTIFICATION AND TRACING OF CONTACTS**

If a student or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, the school will immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action. The school will likely dismiss the exposed students and staff for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for custodial staff to clean and disinfect the affected facilities. The school will work with the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further the spread of COVID-19.

An infected employee will be directed to consult with their health care provider immediately and follow the directives provided to them by their health care provider. The infected employee will be expected to follow CDC recommended steps, and not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments. Currently, the CDC's criteria for discontinuing home isolation require that the employee experience all of the following: (1) 3 days with no fever, (2) respiratory systems have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath), and (3) 10 days have passed since his/her symptoms first appeared.

The school will review symptoms with employees and parents of students. Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) will be directed to notify their supervisor and will be sent home as soon as possible. Students who have symptoms should be kept home. Anyone who experiences these symptoms at school will be separated from well students and staff until the sick person can be sent home.

Employees and students with an underlying medical condition, and who are concerned, will be directed to consult their health care provider.

## **ENTRANCE, EGRESS AND MOVEMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

At the beginning of the school day, all students will enter the school campus from the west side of the campus and be screened for possible COVID-19. After screening, students will move directly to their classrooms (all of which open to the outside). Students will sanitize their hands and apply BIOPROTECT prior to entering the classroom.

During the school day, movement of classes/cohorts will be staggered, allowing students to move with limited contact with other classes. Teachers can easily monitor the movements of other classes by simply looking out the classroom windows. Teachers will send their class out when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

At the end of the school day, students will be escorted to the west side of the school to be picked up by parents via a carpool line. Younger students who require the use of car seats, and their siblings, will be picked up by parents on the south side of the campus.

## **CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

Classrooms will be set up with a desk for each student. All desks will be treated monthly with BIOPROTECT, fitted with desk guards (i.e., “sneeze guards”), and will be six feet apart from each other. All classrooms will have hand sanitizers at the doors and students will be taught to sanitize their hands when entering and exiting the classroom. Additionally, when the students first enter the classroom in the morning, and when they enter the classroom after lunch, they will apply BIOPROTECT on their hands.

Class size will be limited to the number of students that can comfortably fit into the class while maintaining a distance of six feet between students. Students and teachers will keep face masks on during class time.

As part of their curriculum, each teacher will teach students healthy hygiene practices to use in the restrooms, classrooms, and outside. This will include the use of masks, hand-washing, appropriately covering coughs and sneezes, social distancing, and cleaning personal space and items. Teachers will continue to reinforce this instruction throughout the school year. Teachers will provide a regular schedule of hand washing or use of hand sanitizer throughout the day. Additionally, teaching methods will be adjusted to minimize shared equipment or learning materials among students. In order to ensure the safety of students, all stuffed animals have been removed from classrooms other learning areas.

Students will be organized into “cohorts” – groups of students who will stay together, in the same room, all day. Teachers of junior high classes will rotate into the classrooms – students will not rotate, allowing them to stay in one room all day.

To ensure adequate outside air circulation, teachers will be encouraged to leave doors and windows open, unless the weather conditions warrant air conditioner or heater use only. All classrooms and work HVAC systems have been fitted with MERV 13 filters. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to provide additional outdoor breaks and learning opportunities for their classes.

## **PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

St. Pius V has enough classroom space to provide the necessary social distancing of at least six feet between students in all classrooms. Additional rooms and staff will be available to divide classes into smaller cohorts if needed to ensure the social distance requirement. If classes need to be split into smaller cohorts, teachers will divide their time between the cohort groups, virtually teaching the other group which will be supervised by a classroom aide.

Staff members will be reminded to avoid congregating together in the staff lounge and in classrooms. All staff meetings will occur in rooms that can easily accommodate a social distance of at least six feet. In the school office, physical transparent barriers will be used to separate the receptionist from teachers as they enter to talk with her.

Cohorts will also remain together during recess and lunch. When weather permits, cohorts will eat lunch together outside. There is sufficient room in the school's courtyard and athletic field for students to eat together while maintaining a social distance of at least six feet.

During recess, cohorts will be segregated from each other, providing less opportunity for interaction between groups. Students may bring a sports bag and include a ball, jump rope, or other item they would enjoy playing with individually at recess times. The sports bag and any play items will be clearly marked with the student's name. The sports bag will remain outside of the classroom at all times. Any items used for recess will be disinfected after recess, allowed to sit in the sun for further disinfection, and returned to the sports bag at the end of the school day.

Cohorts will alternate days that they are assigned to play on the playground equipment. This will ensure safe distancing and will allow for the equipment to be disinfected after each use.

## **CLEANING AND DISINFECTING**

Faculty and staff will be trained on cleaning and disinfecting protocol, including the protocol to follow at the end of every school day. These protocols ensure that:

- All classroom and offices have been fitted with MERV 13 air filters.
- Hand sanitizer stations are placed in every classroom, office, and around the campus in high traffic areas. Additionally, all outdoor faucets have been converted into handwashing stations.
- Every classroom is equipped with cleaning and COVID-19 disinfectant products. Teachers will clean and disinfect classroom surfaces daily, including student and teacher desks, chairs, and other frequently touched surfaces.
- Frequently-touched surfaces outside of the classroom (e.g., playground equipment, external door knobs, sinks and restroom surfaces, handwashing stations, etc.) will be disinfected multiple times a day, including at the end of the day after students have left.
- Teachers will be trained and reminded to disinfect all faculty equipment (e.g., copiers, etc.) after each use.
- At the end of every school day, the custodial staff will use electrostatic sprayers to disinfect every classroom, office, restroom, and other interior space used by students and/or school staff. Custodial staff has been provided with the appropriate PPE for deep cleaning and disinfecting, in accordance with Cal/OSHA and product instructions. All cleaning and disinfecting products are stored out of the reach of students and in a space with restricted access.
- Prior to the first day of school, and every month following, in addition to being cleaned and disinfected, all rooms and the surfaces inside the rooms will be sprayed with BIOPROTECT solution.]
- Any area used by a person with symptoms of COVID-19 will be closed off and will be sanitized after waiting 24 hours or as long as possible.