



Our Lady Star of the Sea School
PO Box 560, 90 Alexander Lane
Solomons, MD 20688
Phone (410) 326-3171

Pastor: Father Ken Gill
Principal: Mrs. Jennifer Thompson

August 19, 2021

Dear OLSS Families,

We have been working with the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Office as we prepare to open for in-school learning for the 2021-2022 school year. Our students' and staff's health and safety are our top priority. We believe that our success of keeping the spread of the coronavirus at a minimum has been the result of our adherence to protocols. In compliance with CDC guidelines, Maryland State regulations, and the Archdiocese of Washington's recommendations which were updated today, the following health and safety protocols will be in effect when we open next week:

1) **FACE MASKS:**

We understand that many parents would like to see the end of the face mask requirement. We continue to monitor this situation closely and will continue to study any further guidance that becomes available. We also continue to monitor the impact of legal restrictions imposed by local jurisdictions. It is our goal to get things back to normal as soon as possible and at the same time, keep our children and staff safe. In alignment with CDC recommendations, our current policy is that **all teachers, staff, and students must wear masks in the school buildings.**

- All teachers, staff, and students must put face masks on as soon as they step out of their vehicle in the morning, regardless of vaccination status.
- Students will not have to wear face masks for more than 1½ hours without a break.
- Students must always have one extra face mask at the school.

This does not mean we will not adjust that requirement in the future, as we continue to monitor and review local and national data, the guidance of experts and health authorities, and local legal restrictions. We ask for your patience as we continue to monitor and update these protocols.

2) **TEMPERATURE CHECKS**

- All students in Grades K-8 arriving at school in the morning carline must have their temperature taken by a staff member with a contactless thermometer before exiting their vehicle.
- If a child has a temperature higher than 100.4°F, they will not be allowed into the school and must be immediately taken home by their parent/guardian.
- If a child is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, they may not be allowed into the school and may possibly need to be taken home by their parent/guardian.
- OLSS staff members will be required to ask parents daily in the morning carline the required COVID questions.

- Before Care, After Care, and PK are regulated by the Maryland State Dept. of Education and have specific guidelines that must be followed.
- Before Care and PK students' temperatures need to be taken by the parent/guardian bringing them to school, with a thermometer brought from their home, in front of the teacher, before they may enter the building.
- Aftercare students will have their temperatures taken before the program begins at dismissal.
- Students who arrive at school on the VVS Charter school bus will have their temperatures taken upon arrival at OLSS.
- OLSS staff will have their temperature checked upon arrival.

3) CLASSROOMS

- Teachers and students will practice social distancing in the classrooms.
- Student desks will be at least three feet apart.
- Classroom windows will be left open for air circulation whenever possible.
- All classrooms are equipped with air purifiers.

4) OUTDOOR TIME

- Students will spend more time outdoors for instruction and recess breaks.
- Outdoor classrooms will be set up on the Providence Room patio and in tented areas.
- Students will have snack breaks and lunch outdoors whenever possible.

5) AFTERNOON CAR LINE DISMISSAL:

- Students will be dismissed in small groups (12 vehicles is one group) to the afternoon carline.
- This is a time-consuming process that we must adhere to in order to keep the children socially distanced. We appreciate your patience.

6) PARENTS & VISITORS:

- No parents or visitors will be allowed in the school buildings during school hours.
- If an emergency situation arises where a parent must enter the building, they will be met at the main door by an OLSS staff member and have their temperature taken.
- The School Secretary must be notified in advance if a child must be picked up early from school. The parent will be met at the door by a staff member with their child to be signed out.

7) CATHOLIC IDENTITY/MASS ATTENDANCE

- Children's Masses will be held in the Parish Church at 9am on Wednesdays. Grades 1-8 will attend Mass, and PK and Kindergarten will view the live Mass from their classrooms.
- The Principal and 8th grade students will continue to lead Morning Prayer and students will watch virtually from their classrooms. Students will continue to add to their Prayer Journals throughout the year.
- Student Council and the National Junior Honor Society will continue to meet safely distanced and will continue to sponsor various charity and outreach events throughout the year.

8) FOOD & DRINKS

- Please send a labeled plastic or metal water bottle (NO GLASS BOTTLES) with your child daily, which they can refill at contactless water bottle filling stations throughout the day.
- We will not sell milk or juice at lunch time.
- Children will sit six feet apart during lunch, as they will have face masks off whilst eating.

9) PAYMENTS TO THE SCHOOL

- We will not accept cash or checks at the school office unless announced otherwise.
- Lunch tickets must be purchased IN ADVANCE from the online school store.
- PE uniforms must be purchased through the online school store and will be sent home with your child.
- Any school items requiring payment will be made available on the Online School Store.

10) VOLUNTEER HOURS

- The number of required Volunteer Service Hours has been reduced from 40 to 20 for the school year because of the limited number of volunteer opportunities we can offer.

11) COVID SYMPTOMS

- If at any point during the school day a child exhibits COVID symptoms, such as fever, headache, or coughing, he/she will be taken by the School Nurse to a designated quarantine location on the school grounds.
- Parents will be notified immediately by a phone call from the school and are expected to pick their child up **within 30 minutes**.
- Please have a local contact on your Emergency Pickup Form who will be able to pick your child up if you are not able to arrive at the school within 30 minutes.

12) CONTACT WITH COVID CASE

- If any student or staff member has close contact with a person who is positive for COVID, or is awaiting a COVID test result, the child or staff member must not enter the school buildings until evaluated by their healthcare provider, or until they have completed their quarantine period without becoming symptomatic or diagnosed with COVID.
- If the close contact tests positive, then they must seek guidance from their healthcare provider and follow local jurisdiction health requirements.
- If a student or staff member contracts COVID, they will need to provide a doctor's note stating they are cleared to return to work/school or a COVID test with a negative result.

We will always follow federal, state, and local laws, and will communicate updates with our school families as quickly as possible. I am confident that by working together, we will have another successful school year.

Grace and Peace,

Jennifer Thompson

Mrs. Jennifer Thompson
Principal