



Our Lady Star of the Sea School
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Pastor: Father Ken Gill
Principal: Mrs. Jennifer Thompson

PARENT'S HEALTH GUIDE TO IN SCHOOL INSTRUCTION FOR 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

We are so excited to have our OLSS students return to the school at the end of August. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, we have enacted many safety precautions to protect both our children and staff so they can continue to learn, grow, and thrive; mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually at Our Lady Star of the Sea School. As the School Nurse, I would like to provide some information to assist in ensuring optimal health and safety to prepare both you and your student(s) for the start of this school year, I would also like to offer some tips to help prepare you and your student(s) for the new safety precautions that will be in place.

What does COVID-19 look like?

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – 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, chills, or shivering
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rash

Illness among pediatric cases appear to be mild, with most cases presenting with symptoms of upper respiratory infection such as: Fever, Cough, Nasal congestion, Rhinorrhea (runny nose), and Sore throat. (*CDC, July 17, 2020*)

Should I send my student to school if they only have mild symptoms?

It is important to familiarize yourself with the symptoms above as students will be assessed in the morning, mid-day, and end of the day for fever (temperature at or above 100.4) and for the symptoms above. DO NOT give fever reducing medications prior to the start of the school day. A child with any fever should remain home.

If a student presents with fever OR new onset cough/shortness of breath OR two of the above symptoms at any time during the school day the “OLSS sick child Protocol” will be initiated. The school nurse will assess the child and report symptoms to the health department. If deemed appropriate, the child will be sent home and will need to be assessed by the child’s health care provider prior to returning to school to determine if COVID testing is needed. A note must be provided before re-entry to school.

Getting in the habit of checking your child’s temperature before leaving for school and assessing for symptoms will help prevent added stress of being sent home upon arrival.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of the COVID-19 illness, symptoms are very similar to other common illnesses including the common cold and flu, ESPECIALLY in children. It is best if there is any question that your child is exhibiting any of the above symptoms, to stay home and utilize the virtual learning option until symptoms have resolved and have been evaluated by a health care professional.

Any sick child in school could potentially shut down a classroom or the entire school depending on the health department’s evaluation. Please help us keep our kids in school, healthy, and learning without disruption, by keeping students at home and learning virtually that exhibit symptoms.

How can we help to protect ourselves and others?

HAND WASHING is the number one way to protect ourselves and others from germs. Please review the following guidelines on handwashing and review them with your children:

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Talk with children about how to stay healthy – avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth and covering their cough.

Students and staff must wash hands/use hand sanitizer regularly throughout the day.

You should always wash your hands when:

- Before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings or touching your face
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared materials
- After using the restroom
- Before lunch and snack time
- Before and after recess

Teach and monitor student use of hand sanitizer with children.

Students should never put hands to their mouth.

Four Steps: Cleaning Hands with Hand Sanitizer (Minnesota Department of Health)

1. Make sure all visible organic matter (such as dirt) is removed from hands.
2. Apply a dime sized amount of waterless hand sanitizer to the palm of one hand or use a waterless hand sanitizer wipe.
3. Rub hands together covering all surfaces of hands and fingers.
4. Rub until waterless hand sanitizer is absorbed.

NOTE: Children must not use disinfecting wipes due to exposure to chemicals. Students must wash hands thoroughly with soap and water if they come in contact with wipes. For protection, gloves should be worn whenever using a cleaning agent including wipes. (*Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Reopening Plan and Guidelines Onward Together in Faith, pgs. 41-43*)

Will my child need to wear a face mask?

All children age 5 and above will be required to wear a face mask.

For our Pre-K students, it is recommended that children less than 5 years of age who can wear a cloth face covering safely and consistently also wear a cloth face covering while in the child care center. (*MSDE/MDH COVID-19 GUIDANCE For Child Care Facilities, August 2020*) More information to follow from our Pre-K staff.

All children will wear masks whenever they are moving about in the building.

Please review the following Face Covering Education for you and your child:

All adults must wear non-medical face covering or mask at all times while in the school/program building. Face coverings do not need to be worn outdoors when social distancing of at least six feet is feasible. Students will be afforded opportunities throughout the day to have a break from wearing a mask.

Any individual entering the school/program must wear a face covering. All students must wear a face covering or mask when moving through the building regardless of age or grade (children under 2 years old should not wear face coverings). All students age 5 and above should wear face coverings at all times.

When students proceed to outdoor recess, a face covering should be worn until they are outside. To protect the face covering when students are not wearing it, the following options are available:

Face covering is wrapped in a sheet of paper or paper towel and placed in a labeled plastic re-closable bag.

Face covering is placed in a labeled small paper bag then put into a plastic re-closable bag.

Face coverings should not go directly in a plastic bag due to moisture retention. Students will bring paper and re-closable bags as a part of their classroom contribution similar to boxes of tissues, paper towels, etc.

Per Governor Hogan's order effective July 31, 2020, **all Marylanders over 5 years old are required to wear face coverings in public spaces of all businesses AND will be required to wear face coverings in outdoor public area whenever it is not possible to maintain physical distancing.** If children are unable to maintain physical distancing while playing outside, they may need to remain masked outdoors. Please talk with your children and work with them on social distancing habits and becoming accustomed to wearing a mask. This will make for an easier transition when we return to school.

Parents, Student and Staff Review the following points regarding face coverings:

- Masks must fit snugly to cover the nose bridge, mouth and chin
- Wash hands before putting on mask and when removing mask
- Only touch mask by its straps
- Avoid touching the mask while it is being worn
- Change mask if it becomes wet
- Place mask in a container when not in use
- Bring an extra mask to school (*Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Reopening Plan and Guidelines Onward Together in Faith, pg. 44*)

Face Mask Do's and Don'ts

DO:

1. Make sure Mask fit snug to cover your nose, mouth and chin
2. Wash hands before putting on mask and when removing mask
3. Only touch mask by its straps
4. Change mask if it becomes wet
5. Place mask in a container when not using
6. Bring an extra mask to school
7. Wear the same mask on the SAME side all day
8. Ask for help when needed
9. Practice mask wearing at home prior to school starting

DO:

1. Make sure Mask fit snug to cover your nose, mouth and chin
2. Wash hands before putting on mask and when removing mask
3. Only touch mask by its straps
4. Change mask if it becomes wet
5. Place mask in a container when not using
6. Bring an extra mask to school
7. Wear the same mask on the SAME side all day
8. Ask for help when needed
9. Practice mask wearing at home prior to school starting

DON'T:

1. Touch the mask while it is being worn
2. Pull below nose
3. Pull under chin
4. Chew on mask
5. Play with mask as a toy, it's there to protect you from germs
6. Leave a mask on that is dirty or wet, ask to get your extra mask
7. Put back on if dropped on floor or ground, ask for your extra mask
8. Don't reach under mask and touch face, nose mouth
9. Switch face mask to opposite side. Keep the same print/color on outside of face throughout the day.

Do I need to send in any updated Health Documents and Immunization records?

Yes! The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) launched a public service announcement May 2020 encouraging parents to review their children's scheduled vaccination status and bring them up-to-date on missed vaccinations.

"MDH is raising awareness based on recent data showing a significant decrease in pediatric vaccination rates both in Maryland and across the United States after a national emergency was declared on March 13."

"Parents have kept children home to keep them safe, which was the right thing to do. But now we need to bring children up-to-date with their vaccinations to protect them," said MDH Secretary Robert R. Neall. "There is no vaccine yet to prevent COVID-19, but there are vaccines to prevent other serious illnesses, like measles and pertussis. If children fall behind on necessary vaccinations, it leaves them vulnerable to these illnesses." (*Maryland Department of Health, May 2020*)

Below are the following immunizations your child is required to have for school:

Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3, 4 5 & 6 (ages 5-10):

- DTaP/DTP/Tdap/ DT/Td- 4 or 3 doses
- Tdap-0 dose
- Polio 2- 3 doses
- Measles- 2 doses
- Mumps, Rubella- 2 doses
- Varicella (Chickenpox)-2 doses
- Hepatitis B -3 doses
- Meningococcal(MCV4)- 0 dose

Grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12 (12- 8 yrs):

- DTaP/DTP/Tdap/ DT/Td- 3 doses
- Tdap-1 doses
- Polio 2- 3 doses
- Measles- 2 doses
- Mumps, Rubella- 2 doses
- Varicella (Chickenpox)- 1 or 2 doses
- Hepatitis B -3 doses
- Meningococcal(MCV4)- 1 dose

*Please note that upon entry into 7th grade students will need their TDAP and meningococcal vaccines.

The above information on immunizations for your child based on grade can be reviewed in full from the following link:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/IMMUN/Pages/back-to-school-immunization-requirements.aspx>

Please be sure to send in ALL updated Health records and immunization documents prior to or on the first day of school.

We look forward to supporting you and your children both virtually and in person this year. If you should have any questions please feel free to reach out to me via email prior to the first day of school at schoolnurse@olss.org I will be checking my email regularly. Once school is in session, you can reach out via the email address or by phone at 410-326-3171.

Sincerely,

Brandi Hutchins
RN, BSN
OLSS School Nurse