



BAY RIDGE
Catholic
Academy

Covid-19 Reopening Plan

2020-2021

Last Updated: August 28th, 2020

The Board and Academy Administration retain the right to amend this plan when necessary in accordance with NYC City Government, Department of Health, NY State Education Department and Diocese of Brooklyn policies, guidelines, regulations, or internal practices.

Responsible Party

The school principal and assistant principal are responsible for ensuring all portions of this plan are followed. The school principal and assistant principal are considered the safety coordinators for the school.

Communication Plan

This plan will be shared with stakeholders via OptionC Alert and an updated copy will be posted on www.bayridgecatholic.org prior to the beginning of the school year.

Parent Choice

All parents choose to send their children to Catholic School and that is a choice we respect and value. If at this time you choose not to send your children to school due to health concerns, you will have the opportunity to continue through Distance Learning. If this option is selected, families will still be required to make full-tuition and program payments. The Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens Distance Learning Plan will supersede the initial plans of the Academy. This plan will be announced shortly.

School Attendance

School attendance records will be maintained on OptionC for in person and online instruction.

Daily Temperature Screenings and Questionnaires

All students will enter the building via the Fourth Avenue entrance. Upon entry, students will be asked to adhere to the spacing required by the Social Distancing floor markings. Students will be screened for elevated temperature levels. Any students identified as having a temperature above 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit will be screened with a second device. Students with confirmed elevated temperatures will be quarantined and not admitted to attend. Parents must return to pick up their children immediately.

School staff and potentially students will be required to submit daily screening questionnaires. The Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens is currently working on a questionnaire for school use.

All visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors to the school require the same health screening as students and staff members. Every effort will be made to limit the number of visitors, guests, contractors, and vendors in the building when students and staff are present.

YOUR CHILD MUST STAY HOME IF THEY ARE SICK. Failing to adhere to this basic tenant of respect for all students and staff may result in the family being discharged from Bay Ridge Catholic. Parents/guardians are required to observe their children for signs of illness that require staying home from school. These symptoms include any that may be consistent with Covid-19 or any other communicable disease.

Hand and Respiratory Hygiene

The school will ensure all students are taught or trained how to follow new COVID-19 protocols safely and correctly, including but not limited to hand hygiene, proper face covering wearing, social distancing, and respiratory hygiene. Appropriate signage will be displayed throughout the building.

Masks

All those inside the school building will be required to wear a face mask which covers their mouth and nose at all times. It is suggested that you begin working with your children to find an option that fits them most comfortably. This requirement is not negotiable and we are unable to accommodate the learning needs of students who are unable to wear a mask throughout the school day. As a private institution, this is our right.

Office of the Superintendent of Schools ~ Diocese of Brooklyn

Students are required to wear face coverings when in the school building and maintain appropriate social/physical distancing. Students should bring an appropriate face covering from home. The school will have surgical masks available for students as needed.

Faculty and Staff shall be required to wear masks. Masks will be provided to all staff members by the individual school. Choosing to wear a mask of their own is equally acceptable. In addition, face shields will be provided upon request, but they are not to be used in lieu of a mask.

All visitors to the school for any reason will always be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds or in the school building.

All masks for faculty, staff, and students are subject to approval by the principal and Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Masks should be plain and free of any objectionable statements or support for any group, product, political view, and so on, other than the name of their Parish School or Catholic Academy.

Non-disposable mask should be washed daily.

NYS Department of Health Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at PK – Grade 12 schools during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (July 13, 2020) recommends that if face coverings are to be worn by all individuals at all times, students should be allowed to remove their face coverings during meals, while outside in the fresh air, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance.

CDC recognizes that wearing cloth face coverings may not be possible in every situation or for some people. In some situations, wearing a cloth face covering may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, lead to a medical emergency, or introduce significant safety concerns. Adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

Appropriate and consistent use of cloth face coverings may be challenging for some students, teachers, and staff, including:

- Younger students, such as those in early elementary school.
- Students, teachers, and staff with severe asthma or other breathing difficulties.
- Students, teachers, and staff with special educational or healthcare needs, including intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, and sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

While cloth face coverings are strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recognizes there are specific instances when wearing a cloth face covering may not be feasible.

In these instances, parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, and school administrators should consider adaptations and alternatives whenever possible. They may need to consult with healthcare providers for advice about wearing cloth face coverings.

Clear Face Coverings or Face Shields

Teachers and staff who may consider using clear face coverings or face shields include;

- Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, per the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) 
- Teachers of young students learning to read
- Teachers of students in English as a second language classes
- Teachers of students with disabilities

Face shields are not to be used for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings because of a lack of evidence of their effectiveness for source control.

Practical Recommendations

- Include cloth face coverings on school supply lists and provide cloth face coverings as needed to students, teachers, staff, or visitors who do not have them available.
- Include clear face coverings on school supply lists for teachers and staff who regularly interact with students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students learning to read, students with disabilities, and those who rely on lip reading as a part of learning, such as students who are English Language Learners.
- Ensure that students and staff are aware of the correct use of cloth face coverings, including wearing cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth and securely around the face.
- Ensure that students, teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize their hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before putting on a cloth face covering.
- Ensure that students, teachers, and staff are aware that they should not touch their cloth face coverings while wearing them and, if they do, they should wash their hands before and after with soap and water or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol).
- Ensure teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a cloth face covering.
- Ensure that all students and staff are aware that cloth face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.
- Ensure that all students and staff are aware that they should never share or swap cloth face coverings.
- Students' cloth face coverings should be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Students' face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back.
- Cloth face coverings should be stored in a space designated for each student that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labeled containers or bags, personal lockers, or cubbies).

- Cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.

Students and schools should consider having additional cloth face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up cloth face covering is needed during the day and to facilitate every day washing of cloth face coverings.

An adequate supply of face coverings will be maintained for school staff. Students will be required to maintain a supply of two backup masks in case one is lost or contaminated. There will be an emergency supply of student masks in case there is a need. Parents will be required to replenish all masks immediately.

Hand Washing

Students will be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water throughout the day. Bathrooms will be checked multiple times per day to ensure adequate supplies. Additionally, each room will be equipped with a sanitizing station. We encourage parents to teach their children how to safely use hand sanitizer. Students will be able to possess their own sanitizer if capable of self-dispensing. Any students demonstrating inappropriate use of hand sanitizer that may result in harm to themselves or a classmate will no longer be permitted to self-dispense sanitizer.

Social Distancing

Social distancing will be encouraged inside and outside of the elementary school. Social distancing where able will be encouraged through the use of floor markings and teacher supervision.

Within classrooms, 20 square feet per person will be maintained consistent with guidance from the New York State Reopening Guidance for Religious and Independent Schools released July 27, 2020. All Bay Ridge Catholic grades/classrooms which traditionally have tables will be using desks instead.

Except in cases of emergency (fire drills, evacuation, etc.), and single direction use (specifically the beginning and end of the school day), stairwells will operate in a single direction. Stairwell A will be used to travel upstairs and Stairwell B will be used to travel downstairs. Even during required emergency drills, social distancing will be encouraged and students will be required to continue the use of masks, even outside.

All hallway travel will be done single file with students walking on their right leaving a social distancing gap in the middle of the hallway between the two lines.

School Lunch

To avoid issues of cross contamination, we are asking all Pre-K 3 and K-8 students to bring their own lunch to school each day. Students will not be asked to wear their masks while eating, but will be asked to refrain from talking to students while they are eating and not wearing their face coverings. I know this may seem impractical, but we are working to avoid transmission. Students will use cardboard dividers which will be placed inside their desk when not eating.

UPK students will receive lunch as per NYC requirements.

All allergy policies will be maintained in classrooms. The school has a nut aware policy and students should not bring nut based items to school. This is especially important in classrooms with student or staff members which may have an airborne nut allergy.

All students will wash or sanitize their hands prior to and following lunch.

School Recess And Gym

Students will need access to fresh air and physical movement daily. A simple yet pertinent reminder; being wet and cold does not cause you to get sick. As a result, all recess periods will take place outside, even during inclement weather as long as student safety will not be compromised. Therefore, if students would play soccer outdoors in light to moderate rain conditions, students should expect to be outside during the school day. Students would be expected to simply walk around during these periods rather than any more strenuous activities. If parents choose not to send their kids outside, they will sit on the floor in the auditorium 6 feet apart and be required to wear their masks.

Before and Afterschool

There has been no guidance given regarding Before School and After School programs. Before School and After School programs will likely be held in Meletia Hall to maintain appropriate social distancing requirements and to enable the cleaning of rooms after students vacate the area. Students will be required to maintain social distance and wear masks. Due to the additional needs related to health and safety, this

program may be unable to offer services beyond supervising students. Parents should be prepared for significantly higher costs associated with the after school program.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Surfaces

Every Day: All high frequency touch surfaces will be cleaned multiple times per day. For example (but not limited to):

1. Handrails will be disinfected
2. All door handles and push/pull hardware will be disinfected
3. Water fountains will be disinfected. Students should use the bottle filler option only.
4. Soap dispensers will be checked.
5. Sanitizer dispensers will be checked.
6. Classroom desks will be wiped down.

Every Evening:

The school will be cleaned each evening by our cleaning company.

Additional Cleaning:

The school will use an electrostatic sprayer and fogging devices to treat hard to clean surfaces.

Transportation

A very small number of students utilize school bus transportation. This transportation is provided by the NYC DOE and all of their rules and procedures will be followed.

Online Instruction

In the event of a long-term school closing, instruction for students in grades Pre-K through 8 will take place online via Google Classroom. Teachers will post assignments for students to complete. Teachers will provide videos/Zooms to serve as direct instruction and will be available to answer questions during class meetings. Students without access to the internet will receive an iPad or Chromebook with a Sprint data plan.

All students who are at high risk or live with a person at high risk may choose the online learning option. Staff members at high risk or live with a person at high risk will be recommended to the Diocese online learning program.

Any families with questions related to instruction or technology in the event of a shift to online learning should first contact their classroom teacher via email. If questions still remain, they should contact the assistant principal via email.

Observing Students and Staff for Covid-19 Related Symptoms

All staff members should observe throughout the day and take note of students and staff members who may be displaying Covid-19 symptoms.

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Infected people have had a wide range of symptoms reported – 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

Nausea or vomiting

Diarrhea

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

Trouble breathing

Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

New confusion

Inability to wake or stay awake

Bluish lips or face

Any students or staff members showing signs of Covid-19 related symptoms should be sent to the nurse immediately.

Teachers should contact the office to ensure the student has gone to the nurse's office.

Ill students and staff must be assessed by the school nurse. If a school nurse is not available, ill students and staff will be sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider.

Quarantine

In the event a student or staff member must be quarantined due to symptoms consistent with Covid-19, the Colbert center will be utilized as a quarantine space. There is access to a bathroom and the room can be accessed from outside. A bin will be stocked in the room with food, water, and medical supplies to provide comfort until students are picked up or otherwise sent home.

Confirmed Covid-19 Cases

In the event of a confirmed Covid-19 case, the Diocese policy will be enacted. This policy is not yet in place at the time of this update.

The most recent CDC guidance states that someone who has had COVID-19 can discontinue isolation once they have met the following criteria:

1. It has been more than 10 days since your symptoms began.
2. You have been fever-free for more than 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
3. Other symptoms have improved.

The CDC is no longer recommending a negative COVID-19 test before going back out in public.

Anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 but never experienced symptoms may discontinue isolation 10 days after they first tested positive for COVID-19.

Even after discontinuing isolation, you should still take all precautions when you go out in public, including wearing a mask, minimizing touching surfaces, and keeping at least six feet of distance away from other people.

The Diocese plan may require additional measures.

Students or Staff with Exposure Risk

International Travel:

Per the Diocese of Brooklyn:

Effective Immediately: For students and Catholic Academy/Parish School personnel returning from international travel, the following policy for the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn is in place:

All students and Catholic Academy/Parish School personnel returning from international travel are required to get written medical clearance from their physician before returning to Catholic Academy/Parish School.

Parents must submit this written medical clearance letter signed and stamped by a licensed physician to the principal.

City Mandated Policy On Exposure

The Health Commissioner has ordered any educator, healthcare worker, or first responder employed by the City of New York, New York City Department of Education, and the New York City Health Hospitals Corporation who the Department determines presents a danger of infection to others, in accordance with accepted public health guidelines or information about the contagious period of COVID-19 shall submit to testing for COVID-19 by the Department or a medical professional.

The criteria for these employees to be tested are as follows:

- 1) Travel to China, South Korea, Japan, Italy or Iran; or
- 2) Close contact with confirmed case; or
- 3) Relevant symptoms for COVID-19 including fever, cough and shortness of breath

The Commissioner may order any educator, healthcare worker or first responder required to be tested by this order who declines to submit for such testing to self-quarantine at home, or such other location determined by the Department, until such date as the Department determines such person no longer presents a potential danger of infection to others, in accordance with accepted public health guidelines or information about the contagious period of COVID-19.

In The Event Of A School Closure

Parents and staff will be notified via OptionC alert. The government will be notified through either the NYSED Business Portal, or the SORIS@nysed.gov mailbox which is being monitored closely for these notifications.

Recommended Precautions

It is vitally important that we all routinely employ infection prevention strategies to block the transmission of common respiratory viruses. That means strongly encouraging all staff and children to:

1. Stay home if you are sick.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (in the absence of a tissue, cough or sneeze into your shirt sleeve or bent arm).
3. Keep your hands clean (wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds).
4. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
5. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Guidance from the DOH (Some of this is redundant but including for the sake of fidelity)

- Keep your student home when he or she is ill and contact a health care provider if you or your student have symptoms, especially fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, or any contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, or the flu.
- Administrators, Faculty, Staff or Volunteers who are feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms should stay at home and contact a health care provider.
- Teach your child to cover his or her mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth – germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects frequently touched.
- There should be increased cleaning of doorknobs, panels, handrails, and similar surfaces in the Catholic Academy/Parish School.
- Avoid sharing drinking glasses, utensils, dishes, towels, or other items.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick whenever possible.
- Practice healthy habits and encourage your children to do the same – get plenty of sleep, drink plenty of fluids, be physically active, and eat healthy.

Action Steps

In the event of a Coronavirus related issue, the Academy Principal will:

- Report and document any suspected incidents immediately to the School Superintendent and Associate Superintendent of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

- Decisions for any local school closures will be made in collaboration with the School Superintendent and Associate Superintendent and the DOHMH
- School will copy the School Superintendent and Associate Superintendent on any communication with the DOHMH or NYC DOE or ONPS relating to the Coronavirus.
- Decisions regarding the exclusion of anyone not covered by the “Precautionary Measures” will be reviewed on a case by case basis with the School Superintendent and Associate Superintendent and the School Principal.

Return to School Acknowledgement-Parent/Guardian

1. At this time all schools have shared their Re-Opening Plans with all employees and parents and have the plans available on the school website along with the CDC and OSHA website links.

2. Please add the links below for the CDC and OSHA to the Re-opening Plan on your School Website

a. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) i. <https://www.cdc.gov/> ii. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

b. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) i. <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

3. The Return Acknowledgements to Work and School references Step 1, and Step 2 listed above.

4. The school should share the appropriate Return Acknowledgement and maintain a signed digital or hard copy on file.

Return To School Acknowledgement

As a community, we all play a crucial role in keeping our students, staff, and families safe and reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19. To further that goal, Bay Ridge Catholic (“Academy”) has put in place several preventative measures in an attempt to minimize the spread of COVID-19. By signing below, I agree to the following:

1. I acknowledge that I have read the School Re-Opening Plan which is available on the School Website along with the online links to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and have reviewed these Materials with my child(ren). While on Academy premises, my child(ren), myself, and all other family members or legal guardians agree to abide by all the policies and measures in the Materials and understand this is necessary to protect the health of my child(ren) and others.

2. I acknowledge that I am familiar with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”) guidelines regarding COVID-19 and agree to review them with my child(ren), and that we will abide by them. I understand that the CDC and OSHA guidelines are regularly modified, and although the Academy will endeavor to update me, I understand that I must familiarize myself and my child(ren) with any updates.

3. I acknowledge that the Academy has implemented the Materials, the CDC guidelines, and the guidelines by OSHA for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of my child(ren) and the Academy’s employees, visitors, students, and their families.

4. I understand that if, within the past 14 days, my child(ren) or anyone living in the household with my child(ren): 1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, 2) suspect they have COVID-19, 3) are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, 4) have been in close proximity to someone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, or 5) have traveled to a highly impacted area, including all those for which a Travel Advisory has been issued by New York State, my child(ren) will not arrive to school. If any of these circumstances arise, I or another legal guardian of my child(ren) will promptly notify Academy administration and understand that this notification is crucial to preventing the spread of COVID-19 at the Academy.

By signing below I agree to the Return to School Acknowledgement.

Signature of Parent: _____

Print Name of Parent: _____

Name(s) of Child(ren):

Date: _____