



COVID ADDENDUM TO PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK: 2020-21

Divine Mercy Catholic School remains committed to providing our students and families with an educational experience of excellence grounded in our Catholic faith. As we look to the future we have designed a comprehensive plan that is flexible enough to be responsive to the ever-changing impact of COVID in our community. We will continue to re-evaluate as more recommendations are shared by our expert partners and adjust as needed to best serve our community.

Re-Opening Plans: Our reopening plan encompasses guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Archdiocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul (Arch) as well as our local COVID Taskforce. Our goal is to reopen school balancing the educational/social needs of students with protocols and procedures in place that will mitigate risks due to COVID-19. We will implement safety and health measures and place limitations or restrictions on some aspects of life at Divine Mercy Catholic School. We are committed to working in partnership with you to move forward with confidence and cautious optimism as the new school year begins.

Option to Learn from Home: We recognize that some students and families may have health related concerns that require distance learning as we begin the new school year, and we are prepared to support that need as well. We learned much from the distance learning experience of the spring and have taken into consideration your perspective and the teachers' perspectives on how we can improve the at-home learning experience for those who need that option throughout the school year. We will also apply that feedback regarding distance learning in the event that Divine Mercy may need to shift to that mode of learning during the school year.

Flexible Plans: There is still much unknown about COVID -19 and how it will impact our community in the year ahead. Our plan is flexible and will adapt to significant shifts in the risk levels related to major surges close to and within our community. We will also be closely monitoring the educational and emotional progress of our students to assess how they are adjusting to this dynamic environment. We will begin the year helping our students and staff become proficient in the digital platforms that will support in person and distance learning.

Stay Home if Symptoms: Our plan creates a learning model for students which will assist with limiting exposure throughout the school building but this relies heavily on students and families to make sure that students stay home from school if they have a temperature (100° or higher) or any symptoms that are potentially COVID related to protect the rest of the community from a spread. Our success hinges on the efforts of each family to stay healthy and reduce their chance of exposure.

Mission: We are eager for our students to return to the classroom for in person learning. While things may look a bit different, we will follow our mission to educate the whole child; mind, body, and soul. Thank you for your partnership and prayers.

Re-opening Plan for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

General Overview:

We've been working hard to create a comprehensive plan to ensure we could be back at school for in-person learning - and offer a distance learning experience for those who have health related concerns.

Arrival/Departure

- ☐ Student arrival between 7:40-8:00 through door 2 or 3.
- ☐ Preschool students will enter and exit through class specific doors.
- ☐ End of day dismissal at 3PM will be organized by pick-up method and family group to reduce congestion.

Face Coverings Required

- ☐ Preschool students are exempt from the face mask mandate
- ☐ Everyone else entering and exiting school must wear a face covering.
- ☐ Students (K-5) will wear a face covering throughout the day except when eating, exercising, or outdoors. Face mask breaks will be planned throughout the day.

Cleaning Protocols

Cleaning and disinfecting key areas of the building will help limit the spread of germs.

- ☐ We will staff for midday cleaning of bathrooms, the lunchroom, and high touch surfaces.
- ☐ All classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day.
- ☐ Weather permitting, classroom doors and windows will remain open to improve airflow in the classrooms.

Communication

- ☐ We have created a designated space on the school website for updates related to COVID 19.
- ☐ An update will be sent each week specific to our procedures and protocols related to COVID and weekly communication in our *Thursday ENews*.
- ☐ Additional information will continue to be shared on our social media accounts.
- ☐ Power School alerts and emails will also be sent - be sure to update your email!
- ☐ **PLEASE NOTIFY THE OFFICE IF YOUR CHILD IS DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19 OR SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY IS DIAGNOSED:**
Staff person contact, Peggy Johnson
EMAIL: pjohnson@dmcs.cc
CALL: 507.334.7706

Guests, Volunteers

& Parents Visits are Limited

- Limiting the number of adults in the school building each day is a recommendation of the CDC to minimize the potential spread of the virus.
- Parents picking up students during the school day will wait in the front vestibule.

Shopping List

Please add the following to your child's school supply list:

- ☐ Thermometer for taking temperature at home each day.
- ☐ Personal water bottle
- ☐ Mask or neck gaiter/face covering (a Cardinal mask will be provided; please have extras.)
- ☐ Personalized school supplies (will not be shared)

Health Protocols

The health and well being of our students, staff, and parents is our highest priority.

- ☒ Families will be asked to screen students at home daily and review health questions at home. A checklist will be provided.
- ☒ Masks are required per the state mandate. They are not required when students are physically active, eating, or outdoors.
- ☒ There will be increased hand washing throughout the day, including sanitizing stations throughout the building.
- ☒ Teachers will review respiratory etiquette with students: cough and sneeze into elbow, then wash hands.
- ☒ Water fountains are blocked off and only bottle fillers available.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE EXPOSED OR DIAGNOSED:

We will consult public health officials and continue to follow the MDH/CDC guidelines for excluding and return to work protocols around any situation. (Some examples could be)

IF YOU'VE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19:

MDH gives patients guidelines for returning (usually 10 - 14 days)

IF YOU'VE HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE:

Stay home for 14 days. After that period, if you have no symptoms, you may return to school/work.

CLOSE CONTACT= within 6 feet for a sustained 15 minutes within 2 days of symptoms onset.

If students exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19, we will follow our standard protocol for when students get sick at school. The student will be sent to the nurse's office/quarantine room until they can be picked up by a family member. Close contacts will be notified of potential exposure.

All DMCS students will:

- Have a positive approach to learning.
- Complete all work and participate in all class activities.
- Practice all health and safety protocols to remain safe including:
 - *Honor teacher expectations and requests*
 - *Frequently wash hands and practice good hygiene.*
 - *Bring personal water bottle*

A DMCS Parent will partner with DMCS staff and support their child by:

- Keeping a positive and supportive outlook for DMCS, asking questions when clarification is needed
- Encouraging and motivating their child to have a positive approach to learning
- Communicating with teachers any concerns that may arise with their child's educational experience
- Will check in with student/teacher on a regular basis to ensure online learning attendance and work completion.
- Logging in and checking student progress on a regular basis.
- Expressing the importance of their student to remain safe and follow these guidelines:
 - *Health checklist and Temperature check screening each morning before attending school*
 - *Stay home with temperature of more than 100°*
 - *Wash mask, and send clean one to school*

- *Wear mask to school*
- *Physically distance from classmates and teachers when possible*
- *Honor teacher expectations and requests*
- *Frequently wash hands and practice good hygiene.*
- *Bring personal water bottle*

SCENARIO 1: All students are in the building with restrictions

- ☒ Classrooms will be kept as family pods to maintain distancing practices.
- ☒ Room arrangements have been altered to allow for extra space between students whenever possible.
- ☒ Student hand washing required when entering the classroom from other spaces.
- ☒ Specialists will travel or collect and deliver individual classes.
- ☒ Students supplies are kept separate and devices will not be shared.
- ☒ Off-campus field trips will be restricted for now.
- ☒ Weekly Mass will follow Sunday Mass protocols.
- ☒ Masks will be worn throughout the school day.
- ☒ Opportunities for outdoor learning will be encouraged.
- ☒ Lunch and recess will be grouped by class to maintain integrity of classroom family pods.

SCENARIO 2: Hybrid Model-Students in school & at home learning

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY-White Day |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Homeroom #1: Students in Homeroom #1 will report to school. Students in Homeroom #2 learn online. | Homeroom #1: Students in Homeroom #1 will report to school. Students in Homeroom #2 learn online. | Individual/small group meetings online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mass attendance encouraged at IC or virtual ● Meetings (staff/student) ● School building deep cleaned. | Homeroom #2: Students in Homeroom #2 report. Students in Homeroom #1 learn online. | Homeroom #2: Students in Homeroom #2 report. Students in Homeroom #1 learn online. |

- **Homeroom #1** will come to school on Monday and Tuesdays. Homeroom #2 will learn online on Monday and Tuesdays.
- **Homeroom #2** will come to school on Thursdays and Fridays. Homeroom #1 will learn online on Thursdays and Fridays.
 - *Attendance will be taken by the teacher and reported to office for both groups.*
 - *Following attendance, online learning is available following the class specific schedule.*
 - *Wednesday will be utilized for individual and small group instruction/intervention.*

We divide our school by homeroom in our hybrid model to allow for a smaller group of students to further mitigate numbers in our building and ensure safety and health standards are followed. We have coordinated families who share students at DMCS and BA so that the schedules are shared.

Weeks with less than 5 days, will have this model applied on an individual basis, and communicated with families/ staff in advance.

SCENARIO 3: Online Learning only

The Online Learning Model

The Divine Mercy online learning model is changed from what students and families experienced in the Spring of 2020. Each grade level has developed a schedule of instruction that addresses the feedback we received in the spring. They will have more face to face contact with students and meet with them in small groups and individually. Teachers will prepare engaging content and experiences online and implement new expectations and strategies to improve learning, expanding on what went well and improving in key areas, including:

- **Online Attendance:** Attendance will be taken by the teacher and reported to the office each day.
 - *Following attendance, online learning is available for access for students. PreK-2 will utilize SeeSaw and 3-5 will utilize Google Classroom. In online class meetings, students must show live face throughout the class period, be dressed and ready to participate, and should be at a table in a chair ready to work.*
 - *Assignments and/or work (or "Prepared work") needs to be completed following the teacher's guidelines. Video conferencing will be available in case the student has questions or needs help.*

A DMCS Student in Online Learning:

- Shows up to every class on time for the full duration of the class period or follows teacher instructions to complete course work for the day.
- Completes all work and participates in all in class activities.
- Will follow the video conferencing expectations:
 - *Appropriate dress code attire*
 - *Camera/video is required with full face showing*
 - *Participation is required*