



St. Symphorosa School
Family/Student
Handbook Addendum
Fall 2021

As of 8-12-21

***Items in this handbook are subject to change, you will be notified as soon as possible regarding adjustments**

Dear Families,

Welcome back to St. Symphorosa School! We are so happy to have our doors open and to have everyone together. We believe all things are possible with God.

There has been much planning and work put into opening our school this fall. Our first priority will always be to keep our children, our staff, and our families safe because we believe that a community of kindness, love and support equals success. We also believe that our children are stewards of God's gifts. To that end, we have created guidelines and procedures to be followed throughout the school day. They are spelled out in this packet.

I ask that you read through the information so that you are familiar with the requirements. Please talk with your child, too, about the importance of following the guidelines to keep everyone safe.

The school will monitor news from the State, the Department of Public Health, and the Archdiocese of Chicago. Our plans may change depending on the information we receive. We will need to be flexible.

Please stay current with communication you receive from the school. We will use email, text messaging, and print. Information will also be posted on our school website and social media platforms. In addition, we are a Google school and will use Google Classroom as our Learning Management System.

Per the OCS, all families must read, sign and return the Family Pledge that will be sent home at the start of the year with your youngest child.

I am open to your comments and suggestions, as well as any concerns you may have. Please reach out to us at any time.

Thank you for your love and support of St. Symphorosa School.

With Gratitude,

Mrs. Kathy Berry
Principal

The following are guidelines that support our WHY!

We believe our children are stewards of God's gifts.

ARRIVAL

- We will use three doors for arrival-PK and K students will enter through **Door 2** (previously known as the K door off of the garden), students in grades 1-4 will be admitted through **Door 3** (previously known as the PK door off of the garden) and students in Gr. 5-8 will enter through **Door 1** (the front doors) of the school, on Austin between 7:45am-8:00am. Children are encouraged to line up socially distanced by 3 ft.
- All students will receive hand sanitizer and asked wellness questions before completely entering the building. Please do not send your child to school if they are showing any signs of illness.
- All students must properly wear a facemask when entering the building. This face mask must be worn throughout the day. Students will not be allowed in without a facemask.
- For the safety of all students, parents are not allowed to bring their children into the building in the morning. Staff will be at the doors in the morning to assist the younger students and to maintain social distance between the children.

BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY TREATS

- Students may bring a small treat to share with the class to celebrate their birthday or for various holidays throughout the school year, but they must be store bought and individually wrapped.

CLASSROOMS

- Desks/Tables will allow for 3 ft. distancing when possible from chair to chair within each classroom.
- Students and staff will wear facemasks throughout the school day. If your student is utilizing reusable masks, please purchase at least two masks, and masks should be washed after every school day. If students are utilizing disposable masks, masks should be discarded after every school day. Students should bring 2 extra disposable masks in case they are damaged

during the day. Masks may not contain messages or images that would distract from the educational environment of the school. Gaiters” (pull-up face coverings) are permitted as an alternative to masks, provided they have three layers of fabric and can remain over the mouth and nose at all times. Valve masks should not be used.

- Group tables and other furniture arrangements will be used to enhance the academic program; there is no longer a requirement that students all face the same direction.
- Students will be able to move freely throughout the building and change classes.
- Seating charts will be maintained in all classrooms and other settings in the event they are needed for contact tracing purposes.
- Students will be allowed to remove their masks and place in a paper (not plastic) bag when they are eating, napping, outdoors and able to social distance.
- Students are asked to bring their own headphones/earbuds to school, kept in a separate bag, marked with the students’ names.
- Hand sanitizer is available in every classroom and students will be asked to sanitize every time they enter a classroom.

CLEANING/VENTILATION

- Portable air purifiers are in every classroom as well as fans. Windows will be open slightly to increase ventilation.
- Daily cleaning and disinfection, including wiping down desks and high traffic areas.

COMMUNICATION

- The school will communicate with families using several means – Thursday Electronic Backpack (previously Thursday Envelope); messenger emails; blast phone and text messages and social media sites. **It is critical that your preferred contact phone and email are kept up to date so that you receive all**

the communication. Items in the electronic backpack can also be accessed on our website.

DISMISSAL

- Children will be dismissed from school by classroom at the same door they entered through except K dismisses at the front door, according to this schedule:
 - First Floor/PK & K at 3:00pm.
 - Second Floor/Grades 1-2, at 2:55pm
 - Third Floor/Grades 3-4 at 2:55pm
 - Third Floor/Grades 5-8, at 2:50pm

- Students going to extended day will wait in the A hall socially distancing and be taken over to the I Hall by 3:05pm, guided by our daycare staff.

MORNING/AFTERCARE

- Morning and After care will be held in classrooms in the I Building. A staff member will meet your child at the front door of the I Building to follow the arrival protocol.

- Morning care begins at 6:30am and students will be escorted by the staff to the main school building by 7:40am.

- Drop off and pick up will be at the I building door on Mason Ave. You will be asked to sign your child out at the door upon pick up.

- While at extended day, students will be seated at tables keeping a recommended 3ft distance, especially while eating. A seating chart will be maintained in the event it is needed for contact tracing. Weather permitting, students will be taken outdoors. Air purifiers are in the rooms and the windows will be slightly open for ventilation.

- All children must wear a mask while at extended day unless they are eating or outdoors.

- Students need to bring their own snack and there will be no sharing of food. Cell phones are not permitted. We cannot be responsible for any items brought from home.
- Tables, toys, and supplies will be disinfected on a regular basis.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- All activities, including sports teams, choir, and afterschool programs will resume following the indoor safety and masking guidelines.

ILLNESS/ABSENCE/QUARANTINES

- Students with a fever or any symptoms of illness should not be brought to school, under any circumstance.
- **When students are absent from school, they are to bring a note explaining the absence. If the absence is three days or longer, a doctor's note will be required.** Students will be asked for their absent note at arrival. Make up work will be given per our regular policy, see the 21-22 Parent/Student Handbook.
- Students who become ill during the school day must go home as soon as possible. Sick children will come to the main office and wait until they are picked up. The office will contact the parent/guardian first, followed by the emergency contact. A mask must be worn when picking up a student.
- All individuals must remain at home when sick or experiencing any symptoms to minimize the chance of spreading COVID-19 or other germs and viruses. Specific to COVID-19 quarantines:

Symptomatic or COVID-19 Positive Individuals

- All symptomatic individuals must remain home, regardless of vaccination status. Families are obligated to report COVID-19 diagnoses, or close contact cases, to their school office
- If symptoms last longer than 24 hours, an individual must receive a negative COVID-19 test or alternative medical diagnosis prior to returning to school.

- Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 10 days from the date symptoms first appeared or the date of a positive test result.

Quarantine Procedures for Close Contacts

- Students/faculty/staff who are masked and maintain three feet of physical distancing from the positive individual do not need to quarantine.
- Vaccinated students/faculty/staff do not need to quarantine if they are asymptomatic. **Proof of Vaccination will be required.**
- Unvaccinated students/faculty/staff who are close contacts to positive household members, including siblings, must quarantine.

*Quarantine guidelines continue to be fluid and we expect to issue updated guidance closer to the start of the school year.

- There will be no recognition for perfect attendance this school year due to the possibility of more than typical absenteeism.

LUNCH/SNACKS

- FSP will provide free daily hot lunch to all children, the menu is available online at <http://fspro.com/menus.html>
- If your child prefers his/her own lunch, please make sure they have it with them when they arrive at school. **You will not be allowed to bring lunch in during the school day.**
- All students in grades PK-8 will have a daily snack/brain break. Please make sure to pack your child with a healthy snack and drink each day. Students are not be able to share food.
- Children will wash their hands/sanitize before and after eating. All classrooms have hand sanitizer readily available.
- Students will be distanced a minimum of 3ft when eating.
- **Water fountains will only be used to fill individual student water bottles. Please make sure to send your child with a marked reusable water bottle each day.**

MASKING

- In keeping with State of Illinois mandates and with the recommendations of public health authorities, we will start the school year requiring masks for all individuals while inside school buildings, regardless of vaccination status.
- As conditions improve across our regions and the mandates and guidance of civil authorities and public health agencies allow, the OCS will regularly evaluate whether to continue to require masks for all individuals in our school.
- Students and staff who are masked and three feet from a confirmed case indoors are not considered close contacts in the new CDC guidance. Therefore, consistent and correct mask use will drastically reduce the number of students and staff needing to quarantine. Under these new guidelines, only the positive case should need to quarantine.
- No masks are required outdoors, regardless of vaccination status.

MEDICAL CARE FOR STUDENTS

- We will follow our usual procedures for providing the ongoing medical needs of students. Please see the 2021-22 Family/Student Handbook for more details. This includes the administration of approved medicines and prescriptions and basic first aid with the exception of nebulizer treatments, which may not be administered at school.
- Staff will wear gloves when providing medical care that involves touching students.

QUARANTINE REMOTE LEARNING

- If a student is mandated to quarantine due to close contact or contracting Covid they will complete assignments remotely according to teacher direction and listed in Google Classroom. Instruction will be asynchronous. **Instruction will not take place over zoom.** Teachers will check in with the students via zoom throughout any quarantine period.
- All students are assigned a stsymsschool gmail address. This address will be used to communicate assignments during periods of quarantines mandated by the OCS safety guidelines.

- Work maybe a combination of paper and on-line, depending on the age of the child.
- Teachers will communicate assignments via Google Classroom. There may also be books or work packets that go home with the child.
- We have a 1-1 environment at St. Syms. Families/students are responsible for the equipment and will be asked to sign an acceptable use agreement when given a device. Repair/Replacement costs are the responsibility of the family.
- All students will be assigned a device-Chromebooks for Gr. 1-8 and iPads and/or Chromebooks in K & PK. **All devices must have a cover that is purchased by the family to protect your child's assigned device.**
- Devices will be sent home in the event of a quarantine or at the discretion of the teacher.

Returning to near pre-pandemic full operation

The following will return to near-pre-pandemic full operations with adherence to regular guidance from the OCS:

- Classrooms arranged without cohorting-seating charts will be kept
- School Masses, assemblies, fundraisers, can resume.
- Regular Lunch schedule and service-details of classroom/A Hall are being considered and planned-more details will be forthcoming
- Full use of Restrooms
- Full use of library, science and computer labs
- Shared lockers
- Regular Traffic flow through on stairs and in school corridors
- Sharing of materials (e.g., crayons, markers, math manipulatives, etc.)
- School volunteers are permitted, regardless of their individual vaccination status; volunteers must follow mask guidelines
- All extra-curricular activities, athletics, theater, music, clubs, field trips, etc.

TRAVEL

- We will follow the [City of Chicago Travel Advisory](#) for all schools, whether they are located in Chicago, Lake County or Cook County.
- Domestic Travel
 - Fully vaccinated students/teachers/staff do not need post-travel COVID-19 testing or self-quarantines as long as they are not symptomatic and provide proof of vaccination.
 - Unvaccinated students/teachers/staff must follow the prevailing post-travel quarantine recommendations when traveling to Orange States. This currently means a 10-day quarantine OR proof of a negative test no earlier than 72 hours prior to returning to Chicago (or anytime post return, though an individual must quarantine until a negative test result is received). A negative test = no quarantine required.
- International Travel
 - The CDC currently requires a negative COVID-19 test or proof of recovery to board a plane to the United States. Because of this negative test, there is no required quarantine upon arrival, regardless of vaccination status.

UNIFORMS

- We are returning to our regular uniform policies. Please see the 2021-22 Family/Student Handbook for more details.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

- Visitors to the school building will be asked to sign in and out
- Anyone who enters the building must wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status

Thank you for trusting us to take care of the children, and with all of us working together, with God's help, all things are possible.