



Updated: 2/07/22

RESPONSE TO COVID 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

Masking: In congruence with the diocesan directive, Our Lady of Hope Catholic School will adhere to EO2: *The parents of any child enrolled in an elementary or secondary school or a school based early childcare and educational program may elect for their children not to be subject to any mask mandate in effect at the child's school or educational program.* Those families who are choosing not to mask are asked to turn in an optional election form found [HERE](#). Our Lady of Hope Catholic School will not monitor mask use, but teachers will be able to provide information to parents as needed, if they would like to work with their children on mask use or non-mask use. All faculty, staff, visitors and volunteers will be masked at this time.

New Mask Policy Impact on Quarantine and Return to School: Whether your child is **masked** or **unmasked**, anyone that tests positive AND anyone who is unvaccinated and is identified as a close contact is asked to stay out for five days isolation/quarantine per guidance from the Virginia Health Department. Please take note that unvaccinated students who have a documented case of COVID in the last 90 days are considered to have natural immunity and will be classified as vaccinated for quarantine purposes.

Regardless of vaccination status, once a student returns *after a positive case*, he or she must continue to wear a well fitted mask for days 6-10. For any unvaccinated student that was identified as a close contact, we ask that you test your child on day five before they return to school masked for days 6-10 and asymptomatic.

If a parent does not want his or her child to wear a mask, the student will remain out for 10 days in both of the above scenarios. If the parent agrees to have the child in a mask, the school has the right to enforce that decision and send them home if the child does not comply.

Vaccination Status: Per diocesan policy, the school will not require eligible students or staff to be vaccinated nor will we inquire about vaccination status unless necessary for contact tracing and decisions about quarantining. When asked, it is your prerogative whether or not to answer. Vaccination status does factor in to quarantine directions.

Positive COVID Test/Exposure to COVID: Please inform the school **immediately** if you or a family member receive a positive COVID test or have been exposed to a person who tested positive to COVID. At that time, we will work with you and your family regarding reentry to the school. Positive COVID cases will be communicated to the school community in a timely manner.

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Quarantine-Isolation: Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, who is suspected or confirmed positive for COVID-19 must:

- Isolate for a minimum of 5 days; and
- Continue to wear a well fitted mask around others for 5 additional days.
- Isolation may end after 5 days only if the individual has no symptoms or symptoms are resolving and the individual has been fever-free for at least 24 hours.

OLOH follows the guidance of the Virginia Department of Health in determining and establishing quarantine requirements and options for ending quarantine. Please read the following for more information.

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2021/12/IQ-FAQs-for-K-12-Schools.pdf>

VDH states that individuals who have had "close contact" with someone suspected or confirmed positive for COVID-19 **are** expected to quarantine at home if they:

- are not vaccinated; or
- have completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted; or
- have completed the primary series of J&J vaccine over 2 months ago and are not boosted.
 - Individuals who have been boosted or have completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months or have completed the primary series of J&J within the last 2 months are not required to quarantine.

Students, faculty and staff **who are fully vaccinated** and/or boosted within the last six months (or those with natural immunity) will **not** be expected to quarantine after having exposure to an individual who tested positive for COVID. **They are, however, required to wear a mask for ten days** and test on day five if possible or sooner if symptoms develop.

If a parent does not want his or her child to wear a mask, the student will remain out for the full 10 days. If the parent agrees to have the child in a mask, the school has the right to enforce that decision and send them home if the child does not comply.

The Virginia Department of Health recommends that all who have had "close contact" take a COVID test on day 5, if possible.

Social Distancing/Bathroom/Cafeteria/Hallway: Students will remain at a 3 feet distance while in the school building unless the time they are closer than three feet is less than fifteen

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minutes. For example, there is no limit to the number of students in the bathroom at one time beyond what is reasonable because the period of time in the bathroom is not long. Similarly, students walking in lines should maintain distance as much as possible, but the three feet requirement is not fully in effect since they will be walking a short amount of time. The cafeteria line is another similar example. However, students will be spaced while eating because they are maskless and sit longer than fifteen minutes. The distance teachers and staff stand away from students is left to their discretion.

Wellness Check/Visitors & Volunteers: All members of the community will monitor their own health at home *before* attending school or visiting/volunteering at school by taking their own temperatures and analyzing possible COVID like symptoms (e.g., is this symptom related to something I commonly experience like allergies, or is it different and new?). Please consult the [Health Screening/Daily Symptom Checker](#) for more information. Visitors and volunteers must abide by the COVID restrictions presented in this document.

Sick Child: If you have a child who is sick, please keep your child home and call your primary care for advice. If you have an immediate family member or a child who has tested COVID positive or who has been exposed to a positive case, please keep your child home and please email the clinic immediately. If you are waiting for COVID results for yourself or your child, please do not send your child to school in the meantime.

Sanitize and Frequent Hand Washing: The school will redouble its efforts to keep surfaces sanitized throughout the school day. Our students and staff will be required to wash or sanitize their hands before eating and at other critical times throughout the day (e.g., after going to the bathroom, blowing nose, etc.)

Contact Tracing/Cohort/Recess/Drop Off/Pick-Up: The VDH has modified its approach to COVID mitigation and will no longer be contact-tracing for each individual case or be requiring schools to do so in order to identify close contacts to quarantine. All quarantine and isolation protocols are still in place. Following the VDH recommendations contact tracing will only be done when multiple cases appear within a 14 day window in any particular grade so we can track any evidence of viral spread in the school. The school will now send out a notification letter to each individual class to notify of new cases as needed. To make contact tracing easier and to limit exposure, we will keep heterogeneous groups of students from interacting. At recess, cones will delineate spaces in which the various grades may play. At lunch, the grades will not intermingle. At drop off and pick up students will be encouraged not to gather in groups of intermingled cohorts.

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After School Programs, Before/After Care, Field Trips: All before and after school programs will follow the same restrictions as students follow during the school day. Our students will participate in two field trips a year either in person or virtually. Classes may participate in off campus field trips as long as they meet all the COVID safety precautions of the location of the trip and follow the restrictions or protocols which are commonly practiced at school.

On Line Program: The school will not be offering an on-line program unless an entire classroom or the school is closed, so students quarantining at home well enough to study may pick up work in a bin placed outside the school as soon as the teacher is able to provide it. On occasion there may be interruptions to in person learning due to spread in a particular classroom or the school. Please find information about our [Virtual Learning program here](#).

Data Used to Determine Whether Restrictions Might Be Lessened or Increased: OLOH will use data on the number of new cases in Loudoun County, the number of deaths and hospitalizations, and the rate of vaccination to make future determinations regarding whether or not we can loosen restrictions or increase them. We will communicate with you weekly as necessary via email or in the Friday Messenger.

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