

St. Symphorosa School

**Family/Student**

**Handbook Addendum**

**For School Reopening**

**Fall 2020**

\*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 our re-opening. 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 using **a cohort model** to be followed throughout the school day. *A cohort is defined as your child’s classroom in PK or grade level in K-8.*

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.

I also recognize that things may change quickly, just as they did last spring. 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 going to be a Google school and will use Google Classroom as our Learning Management System.

Our goal is to have in person safe instruction for our students in the core academic subjects. 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, anytime between 7:45am-8:15am. Children will line up socially distanced with their grade level (cohort). **Only 3 spots for each cohort’s line will be available at a time near the door.** Please wait, socially distancing at the sidewalk on Austin or in your car, until there is an open spot in your child’s cohort’s line.
* All students will undergo a temperature check, receive hand sanitizer and will be asked wellness questions before completely entering the building. If they have a fever of 100.4 or over they will not be allowed to stay. Please do not leave the area until your child is safely in the building. If your child walks to school and has a fever they will be isolated until a parent can be reached for pick up.
* All students must properly wear a face mask when entering the building. This face mask must be worn throughout the day. Students will not be allowed in without a face mask.
* 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, do wellness checks, and to maintain social distance between the children.
* Please do your best to bring your child on time. If your child arrives after 8:15am, he/she must enter through the main door and wait in the vestibule. Only one student will be allowed in the vestibule at a time. The same arrival health and safety protocol will be followed prior to entry.
* Students will have to wait outside while they are waiting to be screened, please make sure your child is dressed for the weather and/or remain in your vehicle until there is an available spot in their cohort’s line.

**CLASSROOMS**

* Students will be spaced out to the degree possible within each classroom. Minimum of 3ft spacing when wearing masks and 6ft when mask are removed. Rooms are in the process of being decluttered, desks distanced and facing in the same direction.
* 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. Gators are not permitted.
* Please practice proper mask wearing with your child before school starts and gradually have them wear one for longer periods of time prior to the start of school.
* Students are asked to bring and use their own supplies. Please mark these supplies with the students’ names. There will be no sharing of supplies.
* Students will remain with their own classmates (cohort) for the school day. They will have brain breaks, outdoor breaks (weather permitting), and eat lunch together in their classroom. Content specialists and specials teachers will rotate into the classrooms (cohorts), rather than having the students move.
* Students will be allowed to remove their masks and place in their own 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.

**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 and emergency contacts 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 cohort at the same door they entered through, according to this schedule:
  + First Floor/PK & K at 3:00pm.
  + Second Floor/Grades 1-2, at 3:00pm
  + Third Floor/Grades 3-4 at 2:55pm
  + Third Floor/Grades 5-8, at 2:50pm
* Parents are to remain in their cars or socially distance around the school grounds if waiting outdoors. Teachers and staff will escort the children outside the doors, where parents can pick them up. Please wear a face mask when outside your car.
* 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 the I Hall. A staff member will meet your child at the front door of the I building on Mason to administer a temperature check and follow the arrival protocol. Students with a fever will not be allowed into the building and will need to go home.
* Morning care begins at 6:30am and students will be escorted by the staff to the main school building by 7:30am. **If you cannot arrive at before care prior to 7:25am you must wait with your child until they are checked into the main school at their classroom’s (cohort) designated door starting at 7:45am.**
* Drop off and pick up will be at the I building door on Mason Ave. You will be asked to sign out your student at the door upon pick up. Please wear a mask and maintain a six-foot distance if you are there at the same time as another family.
* While at extended day, students will be seated at tables in their cohort and expected to stay within that grouping. Weather permitting, students will be taken outdoors dress appropriately.
* All children must wear a mask while at extended day unless they are eating or outdoors.
* Snacks will be individually wrapped and students will be allowed to bring their own items to play with during before and after care. Cell phones are not permitted. We cannot be responsible for any items. Students will not be able to share any supplies or toys.

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

* All activities, including sports teams, band, and afterschool clubs, are postponed or will take place virtually. They will resume in person when it is deemed safe to do so. We will communicate about virtual programs as they become available.
* An exception may be granted for clubs that are grouped by cohort or for small groups that can be physically distanced by at least six feet.

**FAITH FORMATION**

* Weekly mass is important to the faith formation for our children, more information will be forthcoming as to how we will participate.

**ILLNESS/ABSENCE**

* 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 20-21 Family/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 in isolation in the Stejbach room, supervised by a staff person, 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 your student and signing them out.
* If a student is exhibiting a fever or two or more other COVID-19 symptoms, they will be immediately separated from others and parents will be immediately contacted so the student may be taken home. We will utilize other emergency contacts if parents are not reached. **Please make sure your contact information is current and reliable.**
* The student should see a doctor to assess symptoms and/or administer a COVID-19 test. Parents are encouraged to read the **CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others**.
* After your child sees a doctor and if it is determined the illness is not COVID-19, either through a test or the doctor’s diagnosis, the student may return to school when symptoms subside **with a doctor’s note confirming the negative COVID-19 diagnosis**.
* If the student has symptoms but has tested negative on a COVID-19 test, they should remain at home until symptoms disappear. They must provide a doctor’s note or the documented COVID-19 test results before being allowed to return to school.
* If a student tests positive for COVID-19, he/she must isolate and not return to school until they have met CDC’s **criteria to discontinue home isolation**, which currently includes:
  + Three days with no fever **and**
  + Other **symptoms** improved by 75 percent **and**
  + 14 days since symptoms first appeared.
* Students will be allowed to complete and submit make up work following our regular procedures outlined in the 20-21 Family/Student Handbook.
* If a student or the classroom teacher becomes ill with or tests positive for COVID-19, the entire grade will quarantine and move to remote learning for the next two weeks of school.
* If a student’s family member or sibling tests positive for COVID , he/she must isolate and not return to school until they have met CDC’s **criteria to discontinue home isolation**, which currently includes:
  + Three days with no fever **and**
  + Other **symptoms** improved by 75 percent **and**
  + 14 days since symptoms first appeared.
* In the event of a whole (classroom) cohort quarantine, the entire cohort (students and the teacher) are sent home. They are asked to remain home until they have met the CDC’s criteria to discontinue home isolation, which currently includes:
  + Three days with no fever and
  + General symptoms improved by at least 75 percent and
  + 14 days since symptoms first appeared or
  + 14 days since exposure to the infected individual(s) for asymptomatic individuals.
* The whole school – may close down temporarily if there is a significant safety risk or stay at home orders. If that happens, the school will move to remote learning until we can be back in the building.
* There will be no recognition for perfect attendance this school year due to the possibility of more than typical absenteeism.

**LUNCH/SNACKS**

* As in previous years, FSP will provide daily hot lunch. Families will place their orders and make payment online.
* All students in a cohort will come down to the A Hall to retrieve their hot lunch and walk back up to the classroom together. Students will eat together in their cohort, social distancing and supervised by a staff member.
* 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 will not be able to share food.
* Children will wash their hands/sanitize before and after eating. All classrooms will have hand sanitizer readily available.
* 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. For young students please practice having them fill their own water bottle at home.

**MAINTENANCE**

* An increased schedule for school cleaning and maintenance is in place throughout the school building and gym.
* Staff will wipe down common areas after cohort use. Bathrooms and high contact areas will be cleaned several times per day.
* Extra cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be kept throughout the school, in each classroom, and at extended day.

**MEDICAL CARE FOR STUDENTS**

* We will follow our usual procedures for providing the ongoing medical needs of students. Please see the 2020-21 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.

**REMOTE LEARNING**

* There may be times when the safety of our students and staff require us to move to remote learning. ie: quarantine or stay at home order.
* Work may be 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 are working toward a 1 to 1 environment at St. Syms. Our goal is to have a device, Chromebook or IPad, in every child’s hands to be used in school and if/when we need to transition to remote learning. We are in the process of securing funds and purchasing more devices. Our distribution of available equipment that will be loaned to each student, will begin with our 8th grade class and move to 7th and so on. There is currently a high demand for Chromebooks so we will be loaning them out as we receive them. If a family needs a device at home and the child has not yet received one at school, the school will loan one out. Families/students are responsible for the equipment and will be asked to sign an acceptable use agreement when given a device.
* Teachers will check in with students using Zoom, an on-line meeting tool. The length of time and number of meetings will depend on the grade level of the students.

**SPECIAL EVENTS (MASSES, ASSEMBLIES, FIELD TRIPS, ETC.)**

* Large group gatherings, such as assemblies or parent meetings, will be avoided or conducted virtually.
* We will be holding back to school nights virtually. More details will be forthcoming.
* Prep Day August 11th will be conducted by appointment only through sign –up genius, more details to follow.
* We will encourage virtual group events, gatherings or meetings when possible, and promote social distancing of at least six feet between people if events are held and limit group size to the extent possible.
* Off-site field trips are prohibited during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**TRANSITIONS/LOCKERS**

* Students will leave their classrooms only when necessary. Traffic in the hallways will be limited to one class at a time.
* Social distancing will be maintained as much as possible. We recognize this will be easier with the older students. Please help your child understand the 6ft distance, the term and action of, “helicopter arms” has been used with young children as an example.
* Specials teachers (music, Spanish, etc.) will come to classrooms, rather than the students moving. Gym will take place in a variety of places to keep the children safe and active,-the gym, outdoors or in the classroom. Children will be allowed to remove their masks for any strenuous physical activity as long as they are social distanced. These subjects may look different this year, such as no singing in music class.
* Classrooms (cohorts) will have separate times for recess and bathroom breaks. Bathrooms will be limited to 2-3 students allowed in at one time to insure distancing.
* Teachers may also take classes outside for learning more often so they can have a break from wearing their mask. Send your child to school with appropriate clothing layers because they will most likely go outdoors each day.
* Students will have the use of their own locker to store their personal items. No sharing.

**TRAVEL**

* We discourage families from travel out of town.
* Students should remain home for two weeks after traveling to another country, or to states experiencing significant COVID-19 outbreaks (as determined by the CDC).
* Families should inform schools immediately if their student displays COVID-19 symptoms during the two-week period.

**UNIFORMS**

* Students will be permitted to wear gym or regular uniforms each day through the month of September, even on a non-gym day. Gym or khaki uniform shorts are permitted in August and September. We will revisit this policy in mid- September.

**VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

* Visitors to the school building will be limited as much as possible.
* We will do our best to limit access to the school by asking visitors to stay in the area of the main office and corridor as much as possible.
* We will be keeping accurate records of visitors and volunteers, including the individual’s reason for visit, contact information and all locations visited, in case contact tracing is needed.
* Volunteers will be screened similar to the staff upon entry into the building.

I would like to thank the opening teams that have been meeting to prepare for the daily operations and the academic needs of the school and students. We will continue to asses this plan and review additional guidance and questions to continue to do what is best for our students.

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