

“Miss no single opportunity of making  
some small sacrifice...  
always doing the smallest right  
and doing it all for love.”  
— St. Thérèse of Lisieux

**2021-2022**

# **BACK TO SCHOOL**

**COVID-19 Mitigation Policies and Procedures for  
St. Therese Catholic School**



AUGUST 15, 2021

*introduction*

# WELCOME BACK!

Dear St. Therese Families,

Welcome back to school!

This past June, we wrapped up the school year with great joy and optimism about our ability to significantly modify COVID-19 health and safety policies for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. We continue to be extremely proud of the joyful resilience of our students, staff and families navigating the ever-changing COVID situation while successfully executing in-person learning for the 20-21 school year!

As we are now into full preparation mode for the upcoming 21-22 school year, we recognize that COVID-19 still poses risks for our community. At the same time, the circumstances are very different from last year. As we maintain vigilance, our school will still need to implement a health and safety plan to mitigate the spread of all infectious diseases, including COVID-19. We are prudentially evaluating all public health recommendations and implementing those that will best serve our students, staff, and entire community. **While the included mitigation strategies represent our plan to start the school year, it is likely that strategies will change as the path of the virus changes.** We encourage everyone to enter the school year with a positive and supportive attitude and remain flexible and patient as we strive to keep our entire community safe.

Again, we are so proud of how our community worked together to navigate our entire year of in-person learning last year. I know, that as a Catholic community of faith, we will continue to come together for a successful and safe in-person school year again this year.

We are excited to welcome our children back to the classroom and are grateful for your trust in providing your child with an excellent Catholic education in a safe and nurturing environment. Be assured of my prayers for you and your family.

God Bless,

Adam Groebner  
Principal

Father Leonard Andrie  
Pastor

*planning for the year*

# COVID-19 MITIGATION STRATEGIES

While our situation is different today than one year ago, we remain committed to the health, safety and overall well-being of our school community. We are taking an approach that includes a broad number of steps. Here are some of the mitigation strategies you can expect at the start of this upcoming school year and we will continue to update our plan as the landscape changes:

## Staying Home When Sick

We continue to require all individuals to stay home when they are sick. We ask all parents to continue do a [health check](#) before sending your child to school each day. Students can return to school once they are feeling better and their symptoms have substantially improved (including being fever free for 24 hours with no fever-reducing medication). Students who are home with symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to receive a negative COVID test or alternate diagnosis before returning to school. Turnaround time on COVID tests has greatly improved as have testing options. [HERE](#) is a site to find local testing and [HERE](#) is where you can order tests to use at home.

## Reinforcing Good Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

We will continue increased hand washing throughout the day including: to start the day, before/after recess and lunch, and after using the restrooms. Teachers will often review respiratory etiquette with students: cough and sneeze into elbow then wash hands.

## Physical Distancing

We will set up our learning environments to encourage keeping a physical distance of 3 feet or more during the school day when it does not disrupt the development and learning of our students.

## Air and Ventilation

We will continue to use our beautiful campus to encourage opportunities to learn outdoors as much as possible. We will also continue to use medical grade air purifiers and maintain open classroom windows as often as possible.

## Mass

We will again celebrate our first Mass of the school year outside on the front lawn (September 1st at 8:15am). Parents are welcome to bring a chair and join us. For the remainder of September, the weekly school Mass (Wednesdays at 8am) will be separate from the parish Mass. Students and classes will continue to spread out and practice physical distancing.

*planning for the year*

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES CONTINUED

### Parents and Visitors in the Building

We are excited to update our school families soon regarding our construction progress! Due to the construction, parents/guardians will be asked not to enter during the busy times of drop off and pick up. Parents are welcome in the front office if they need something during these times or throughout the day.

### Face Coverings in the Building

Last year, the Governor through an Executive Order required all individuals in public and nonpublic school buildings to wear face coverings throughout the entire school year. This legal mandate ended over the summer. Districts and schools across Minnesota are making decisions based upon the actual COVID-19 circumstances that are present in their respective communities.

The CDC and MN Department of Health are recommending that all individuals in K-12 school buildings wear face coverings while indoors. The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis has sent guidance to Catholic Schools that parents and guardians are best positioned to determine if their child should wear a face covering while outside of the home. Masks are welcome and encouraged for all. For the start of the 2021-22 school year, the decision for a child to wear a face covering is in the hands of each parent or guardian. We ask all parents and guardians to consider what is best for their child in making this decision while also being vigilant in the monitoring of symptoms and the health of their child.

We know that there are a variety of positions and opinions on the use of masks, for children in particular, and so our school faculty and staff will be working diligently to eliminate any bullying or stigmatization for wearing or not wearing a face covering. We ask that you help us in this goal and talk to your children about respecting each other and the choice each family makes. During times of uncertainty, prudence, charity, and a calm spirit can be a great blessing to your family and our school community.

### Face Coverings on the Bus

All people are required by an Order from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to wear face coverings while in public transportation hubs and on all public transportation conveyances (airplanes, public buses, etc.), including school buses (both public and private).

*planning for the year*

# COVID-19 MITIGATION STRATEGIES

## Lab-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

State law requires us to report to Minnesota Department of Health any cases of COVID-19 that occur among students or staff in our building. If your child has COVID-19, we will require that they not return to school or school-sponsored activities until they are no longer contagious. This means:

- They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are substantially improved;
- It has been at least 10 days since they first felt sick or tested positive for COVID-19;
- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

We will notify families of a lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the school. The Minnesota Department of Health has trained staff to conduct contact tracing. We will be ready to assist MDH in this area.

## Quarantine

We are required to report every onsite COVID-19 case to the MN Department of Health. We will follow the guidance provided by MDH regarding close contacts and those who might need to quarantine. Each case will be handled individually. Current guidance indicates that individuals who are consistently masking during the school day or who are fully vaccinated will likely not be considered close contacts and not required to quarantine. For quarantine, St. Therese will begin the year with the shorter, 7-day quarantine. When a close contact is required to quarantine, we will ask that they get tested between days 5 and 7 after exposure. Those with negative tests and no symptoms can return on day 8 after exposure.

## Distance Learning

St. Therese Catholic School is doing in-person learning and will only provide distance learning options to those who are quarantining due to a lab-confirmed COVID case or a required quarantine due to exposure. If this happens, individual teachers will reach out with plans. Please allow at least one day for teachers to gather materials and coordinate.

## Plan Updates

In conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Health and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, we will be monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic closely and will be promptly communicating any updates to this plan.





# ST. THERESE

## CATHOLIC SCHOOL

18325 Minnetonka Blvd  
Deephaven, MN 55391

[WWW.ST-THERESE.SCHOOL](http://WWW.ST-THERESE.SCHOOL) | 952.473.4355

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*St. Therese School is a preschool through eighth grade Catholic parish school that welcomes all, and acknowledges the worth and dignity of each student. We believe in nurturing spiritual growth and offering excellence in education, so that each child's unique potential is realized.*