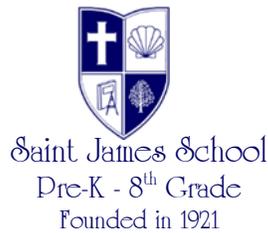




**Return to In-Person Learning Plan  
2020-2021  
Kindergarten through Grade 8**



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Dear Families,

The Saint James School administration, faculty, and staff have been diligently working to prepare our school for a return to in-person learning this fall. We have taken the time to brainstorm, research, evaluate, and design a comprehensive plan. Everything discussed and decided upon has been examined through the magnified lens of protecting the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff, while still providing the high-quality, Catholic education that is part of our everyday standards at Saint James School.

As you may recall from earlier communications, we established our RIIS (Return to In-Person Instruction Strategy) committee, which includes representatives from all facets of our Saint James School community. The primary focus of this committee is the safe return of students to a full five-day schedule of in-person instruction, with an option for distance learning. As the COVID-19 Health & Safety Compliance Liaison for our school, I will communicate all updates to our school community and be the point person to any agencies with which we will be corresponding.

The committee has met several times and, utilizing all the information at our disposal (including results from the survey in which our families participated, health/safety information from the town and government, and mandates/recommendations from the Governor and Archdiocese of Hartford) we are now able to share many of the preliminary processes and procedures being implemented for the upcoming school year.

While you read through the next several pages, please note that these plans are in-line with state requirements set forth in the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) "Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together" published on June 29, 2020. Of course, our plans and procedures will continue to evolve over the next several weeks as we will undoubtedly receive more information from the Governor, The Archdiocese of Hartford, and local health experts.

After you have had a chance to fully review this document, we will be asking all families to make a decision regarding in-person learning or distance learning to start the school year via the questionnaire posted in today's email. The deadline for this decision is Tuesday, July 28th, which will allow us to further prepare our classrooms and evaluate other spaces in our school building accordingly. All of the learning models that may come into play this year will align with the Curriculum Standards from the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Thank you again for your continued commitment to the Saint James School community and entrusting us with the education of your children as we navigate and meet the challenges of the 2020-2021 school year together.

*"Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act." Psalm 37:5*

God's Blessings,

*Bridget Zorger*

Bridget Zorger  
Principal



### Option 1: Attending School in Person

**Face Coverings:** When we return to school all students, faculty, and staff will be required to wear a cloth mask or face covering that covers their mouth and nose while in the building. There may be times when it will be safe and appropriate for masks to be lowered while in the building. These times will be determined based on current health and safety regulations. The school will provide lanyards to which students can attach their masks, so it will reduce the risk of being lost or getting dirty. Opportunities for scheduled mask breaks will take place daily. Each class will have outdoor time without masks, weather permitting. Our uniform supply companies are offering masks for sale, however, families are not obligated to purchase a mask from the uniform company. Masks need to cover students' noses and mouths when in use. Masks may include pictures, but no writing or slogans.



**Classrooms:** Student desks will be spaced throughout classrooms for maximum physical distancing. All desks will face the same way in the classrooms. We are carefully considering class size and classroom area; some classrooms may be relocated to take advantage of larger spaces. This is still a fluid process and will depend upon how many families in each grade opt for distance learning. Classroom windows will be open to ventilate the air and exhaust fans will be utilized.



**Transportation:** Saint James School students who are Manchester residents will continue to have the option of utilizing the Manchester Public School bus system. According to the Manchester Public School Transportation Office, all students taking the bus will be required to wear a mask while on the bus. Buses will be operating at normal capacity. To minimize contact with others, students will be loaded on the bus from the back to the front. Disinfection will take place between school routes. *Driving your student to and from school is highly encouraged.*



**Morning Arrival:** Morning arrival will take place between 7:30 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. Only students will be allowed to enter the building. To maximize physical distancing, students will enter through one of four entryways assigned by grade and proceed directly to their classrooms. Prior to entering the building, touchless temperature checks will be conducted each morning on staff and students. All staff and students will utilize hand sanitizer upon entering the building.



**Afternoon Dismissal:** Students will be dismissed daily outdoors in the pre-kindergarten parking lot. Grades will be released in a staggered fashion over a 10-minute period, as to avoid students mixing in the hallways and stairwells.



**Lunch Time:** Lunch will take place in the classroom. Lunch options from the Manchester Lunch Program will be available for students in grades 1-8 to purchase and will be delivered to the classroom. Students who bring lunch from home will need to pack items that they can open on their own.





### Option 1: Attending School in Person (Continued)

#### Visitors & Volunteers:



Non-essential adults will be limited in the school building. The protocol for the pick-up and drop-off of items during the school day, as well as early dismissals and late arrivals, will be communicated in the coming weeks.

#### Cohorts:



The Connecticut State Department of Education recommends utilizing cohorts to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. Each grade will be considered a cohort for recess, busing purposes, and in the Extended Day Program. Students will be kept together by homeroom as much as possible. Teachers will rotate to the various classrooms, instead of students going to different rooms with the exception of leveled classes in grades 5 - 8. When students move to attend a leveled class, desks will be sanitized between occupants.

#### School Mass:



School-wide Masses will not take place, but rather Masses will be celebrated in individual cohorts at different times throughout the year.

#### Outdoor Space:



All grades will utilize areas of our outdoor space, weather permitting. Gym class and recess for all grades will be conducted outside. Students in grades K - 5 will be asked to have a beach towel in their backpacks daily to be used both inside and outside. The beach towel may be used to bring outside to sit on for reading or other class activities so mask breaks, movement, and fresh air can be regularly incorporated into the day.

#### Health Practices

##### & Protocols:



All absence calls will be taken by our school nurse, Mrs. Vignati. As an employee of the Manchester Board of Education, Mrs. Vignati has been making preparations for the upcoming school year based on state requirements and town of Manchester guidelines. As per state requirements, an "isolation room" has been identified to utilize for any student or staff member who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms. At all times, the school nurse will be staying with the student in this "isolation room" until dismissed (immediate pick-up of child will be required). Parents/guardians are required to contact their child's health care provider for further evaluation. A doctor's note is needed before the student/staff member can return to school.

Signage reminding students of safe practices will be posted in classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and other common areas throughout the school.

Students and staff members are **required to stay home** if exposed to, or tested positive for, COVID-19, or if travel has occurred to any of the CT DPH current list of COVID-19 hotspots. In addition, students and staff members are required to stay home if experiencing other illnesses that are not related to COVID-19. These include, but are not limited to, sore throat, fever, cold/flu symptoms, gastrointestinal symptoms, strep throat, and any new and/or untreated rash or skin conditions in need of antibiotic treatment. A doctor's note is required to confirm these conditions are not related to COVID-19 before returning to school. *(Continued on next page)*

# Saint James School

## Return to In-Person Learning Plan for 2020-2021



### Option 1: Attending School in Person (Continued)

#### Health Practices

##### **& Protocols (Continued):**



We strongly encourage families to conduct a health screening with your child prior to coming to school each morning. It is required for your child to remain at home if he/she exhibits any symptoms of illness.

The most recent CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 related illness can be found [HERE](#).

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, or has been exposed and in contact with someone who has tested positive, the school nurse will need to be informed.

If a student or staff member has traveled to any of the [CT DPH COVID-19 hotspots](#), he/she will need to quarantine for 14 days prior to returning to school.

*As of today, the Town of Manchester Board of Education and Health Department have not finalized their protocols regarding suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 in school facilities. This information will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead as we get closer to the start of school.*

#### Cleaning & Sanitation:



Our maintenance staff and cleaning contractors will clean and disinfect according to state and local guidelines in all areas of the school including, but not limited to, classrooms, common areas, main office, nurse's office, teachers' workroom, door handles, stairwell banisters, etc. All bathroom and common area surfaces will be sanitized at least twice daily. All toilets and urinals have been equipped with touchless sensor flushers and sinks have been equipped with touchless sensor faucets. Scheduled bathroom use and hand washing will be implemented several times a day for all classrooms. Only two students at a time will be allowed in the bathroom. Hand sanitizer stations will be available at the entry of every room and all entrances into the school building. Drinking fountains will be shut off, however, the touchless filtered water bottle filling stations will be available to staff and students.

#### Extended Day:



Recognizing this is a necessity for our families due to work schedules, Saint James School will continue to offer an Extended Day Program. To maintain the integrity of cohorts for contact tracing purposes, along with the limited space available for our program, we are asking families to only use the Extended Day Program if absolutely necessary.

#### Tuition:



Our scheduled tuition remains in effect for all families regardless of in-person or distance learning. If in-person instruction needs to be cancelled due to a mandated shut down, tuition responsibilities will remain the same and instruction will continue via distance learning.

# Saint James School

## Return to In-Person Learning Plan for 2020-2021



### Option 2: Distance Learning

This option is available for families who do not choose in-person instruction or for students who may have to temporarily remain at home because of COVID-19 related restrictions. Distance learning will take place daily during school hours. **Student attendance during daily live teaching is mandatory.**

This learning model will incorporate live streaming of classroom instruction, live meetings with teachers, supplemental lessons, small group meetings, and independent assignments. If this option is selected, students will remain in distance learning from the first day of school through at least January 4, 2021 with the potential to continue through the end of the year. If a situation arises that a family needs to move from in-person learning to distance learning, arrangements will be made to ensure a smooth transition to that learning model.

This year, each student in grades K-2 will be provided with an iPad and each student in grades 3 - 8 will be equipped with a Chromebook, regardless of whether they choose in-person or distance learning. Students will be a part of, and have assignments in, all “specials” subjects such as Art, Music, STREAM, and Gym.

Depending on the grade, parents/guardians may be required to drop-off work and/or pick-up packets on a regular basis.

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### Mandated Yellow Phase:

If there is a spike in the positive COVID-19 cases in Connecticut and the Governor mandates a reduction in the number of people in a building, schools will implement a “Yellow Phase” model. Should this occur, in-person learning will continue, however, the in-person student population will be split into two groups (Group A and Group B). Groups will alternate attendance and be present in school on opposite days. On the day that in-person learners are not in school, they will participate in distance learning as noted above.