



**Saint Matthias Parish School COVID-19 Parent Handbook
2021 - 2022**

Saint Matthias Parish School is committed to providing a faith based academically rigorous education for students in Grades K4 – 8. In this COVID-19 pandemic, St. Matthias is also committed to providing a safe environment, one that mitigates the risk of infection and exposure to COVID-19.

This handbook is a special supplement to the St. Matthias School Parent and Student Handbook. Safety protocols, procedures, processes, and policies related to the Coronavirus Pandemic are outlined here. The protocols may be adapted, deleted, or revised as needed based on guidance from the CDC, AAP, DPI and Milwaukee Health Department.

The CDC recommends that in areas of substantial community transmission or high community transmission everyone wears a mask when indoors including those who are fully vaccinated. As of 8/12/2021, Milwaukee County is in the high transmission category. Should the community transmission decrease to the moderate or low transmission rates, the masking policy will be re-evaluated in accordance with CDC and health department guidance. St. Matthias Parish School Principal Alissa Turner, along with Director Deacon Stan Lowe, will determine which covid policies the school is following at any given time based on the current covid situation in the Milwaukee area. Families will be informed through the Remind text and by email if it is determined that the school should shift to a different operational structure.

We know that students learn and achieve the most when they are attending school in person; therefore, our goal is to have students at school in person five days a week. St. Matthias Parish School will not be offering a virtual only option for the 2021-2022 school year.

Face Masks

Face masks will be worn by all students, staff and anyone entering the building regardless of vaccination status. They must be worn in all common areas and in the classrooms. Teachers may allow for short periods of the day for a mask break if students are seated, socially distant and not talking. Face masks will be optional and not required outdoors. Disposable masks will be available for visitors or should a student or staff member need a mask for any reason. Families are encouraged to provide disposable face masks or cloth face coverings for their child. Masks must not display any messaging contrary to our Catholic Social Teachings. Students must be able to put on and remove masks independently. Parents/guardians will be required to pick up their student immediately if the student is not in compliance with the school's mask policy. Students not in compliance will be sent to the school office and supervised until pick up. If a student is not able to wear a mask due to a medical condition, a note from the child's doctor stating the condition and why they are exempt must be provided. Families requesting a mask waiver must contact the principal and provide documentation from a medical professional explaining the need for the waiver.

Classroom Protocols

- Each grade level is considered a cohort. Students must stay in their cohort (their grade level classroom) throughout the school day including outside.
- The playground structure will be scheduled so only one cohort is using it at a time.
- Students must use hand sanitizer upon entering the classroom.
- Physical distancing of three feet or more should be maintained as much as possible. The kindergarten cohorts are allowed to have children in closer proximity to each other while wearing face masks as needed during activities.
- All students and staff will wear face coverings regardless of vaccination status indoors. Teachers may allow for mask breaks if students are seated at their desks and not talking.
- Students will travel to the individual teachers' classrooms for their instructional time, this includes the specials teachers.
- Students attend weekly Mass and occasional prayer services in the church with a minimum of three foot distancing. Parishioners attending all-school Masses will be required to wear a mask.
- No field trips outside of school are allowed at this time. Guest speakers and substitute teachers are allowed if willing to wear masks and remain a three foot distance while working with students.

Social Distancing

Saint Matthias students and staff will practice social distancing throughout the school day.

To assist students with distancing:

- All classrooms will have markers on the floor for physical distancing in the classroom.
- Students and teachers will be distanced three feet apart when possible during learning and social activities.

- Teachers will practice and enforce all required PPE guidelines.
- Hallways will be marked to indicate physical distancing during any transition times.

Classrooms

All desks will be facing the same direction to reduce transmission of infection. All classrooms will have a teacher-only designated area. One pod of four desks can be set up with space in the middle of them for small group work. Outdoor areas have been designated to allow for outdoor learning space while weather permits. The Courtyard Space will be equipped with picnic tables to distance students.

Health Screenings

Daily health screenings will be done: All students, staff, and visitors will have their temperature checked upon entering the school building or classroom. Families will screen students at home in the morning for any covid symptoms or exposure to covid.

Before arriving at school each day students should be checked for:

- Fever (at least 100.4°F)
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If there is a positive response to any of the above symptoms or if a student has been in close contact with a covid positive person within the last ten days, the student cannot attend school. The symptoms need to be reported to Principal Alissa Turner at 321-0894 (Note: Close contact is defined as within 3 feet without PPE for more than 15 minutes in a 24 hour period)

Hygiene Practices

Greetings will be limited to “peace sign” or nods. Students and staff will not hug, shake hands or use contact methods of greeting.

Handwashing

Handwashing will be a routine expectation throughout the school day. Students will wash hands at the start of the day, before and after recess, before and after lunch, after using the bathroom, at the end of the day and as directed by the teacher. Handwashing protocols of the CDC will be stressed. When handwashing is not possible, students and teachers will use hand

sanitizer. Hand sanitizer stations are installed in every classroom, hallway and entry in all buildings.

Ventilation

All classroom and office windows will be open to assist with air flow until weather makes it prohibitive. Classrooms have fans to assist with air movement. MERV 13 filters have been installed in each classroom HVAC unit and they are replaced regularly.

Cleaning/Disinfecting

Regular daily and environmental cleaning will be done. Teachers and students will develop classroom routines of ongoing disinfecting during the school day. The school's cleaning service will provide nightly cleaning and disinfecting services.

Technology

If it is determined that schools in the Milwaukee area need to move to virtual learning, St. Matthias will provide Chromebooks to any student who does not have access to a computer at home. Students using school issued Chromebooks must sign a loan agreement and must care for the device as outlined in the agreement.

3rd - 8th grade will use Google classroom when in person in order to make the transition to virtual learning less disruptive to their learning. K4 - 2nd grade families will receive instruction on how to use the SeeSaw platform through teacher emails if it becomes necessary.

Food in Classrooms:

Any snack sent to school must be for the individual student only. For special occasions (birthdays, class celebrations), guidelines will be sent home by the teacher. In every case, no snacks may be sent to school unless they are individually wrapped.

Water bottles

Water fountains throughout the school will not be available for use. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles. Staff members will refill water bottles at the classroom sink. Students may not share water bottles and should take their water bottles home to be cleaned each day.

Visitors/Contactless Delivery

Contactless deliveries will be possible by placing items for drop off and delivery in the front entrance vestibule. Parents will not be able to accompany their children into the building or into their classrooms. We appreciate parent cooperation in this regard.

Parents/guardians who need to visit the school office may do so using the entrance off of Beloit Road. Visitors will be required to wear masks and practice all current school protocols for distancing and hygiene. Any lunches, school materials or other items needed by students during the school day need to be dropped off at the office. All items must be labeled with the student name and grade.

Lunch

Lunch will be provided in Steiger Hall.

- All eating surfaces in the hall will be disinfected before and after each lunch period.
- All students will wash their hands thoroughly before lunch.
- Students will maintain social distancing while eating.
- St Matthias will ensure the safety of all children with food allergies and will meet all requirements under Special Dietary Needs
- Children will have the option to bring their meals from home.
- All St Matthias food services employees will be trained on proper safety and/or disinfecting procedures for school cafeteria and kitchens, following CDC disinfection guidelines.

Bus transportation

Bus transportation is available through the West Allis-West Milwaukee public school system to certain designated areas. Contact the school office for further information.

Arrival/Dismissal

Arrival and Dismissal procedures will be the same as pre-covid, with the addition that students will line up with three foot distancing in place.

Arrival Times:

School doors open at 7:45 am; classes begin at 7:55 am. **Students may not exit vehicles before 7:35 am.** There is no supervision before then. Should this arrival time present a problem, child care is offered on site at MEC beginning at 6:15 am. Students dropped off before 7:35 am will be directed to MEC. Starting at 7:35 am, students line up outside by grade cohort. K4 - 2nd grades line up in the courtyard, 3rd - 8th grade in the parking lot. Staff members will supervise the students.

Dismissal times:

K4 and K5 dismissal is at 3:05 pm, 1st through 8th grade dismisses at 3:15. Dismissal supervision ends at 3:25 pm. Students not picked up will be taken to MEC (Matthias' Extended Care). Fees for MEC will be applied and handled through Mrs. Terri Czerwinski.

To ensure the safety of all, the Play Structure MAY NOT be used during arrival and dismissal.

Morning Drop-off Routes

Oklahoma Avenue: Enter from Oklahoma through the gate and turn right immediately. Follow the fence all the way to the drop-off area near the '62 Building. Turn left, stop and drop off child(ren) parallel to the '62 Building. Turn left and, after passing the parking area, angle back

towards the Oklahoma gate.

Please exit via the Oklahoma Avenue gate if you enter through that gate. Do not exit via the one-way alley; this would interrupt the flow of the Euclid Avenue entrance drivers and endanger the students walking toward the school buildings. Should you need to park your vehicle on the lot, please park in rows 1 or 2 facing east (**away** from the cemetery) and exit via the Oklahoma Avenue gate.

Euclid Avenue: Enter from Euclid Avenue and turn left at row 3 of the parking area. Proceed toward the Gym Building, turn left once more and go to the stop sign. Drop off your child(ren) parallel to the Gym Building. Turn right exiting into the alley and proceed toward Beloit Road. Right turn only on Beloit Road will aid in keeping the car line flowing. Should you need to park your vehicle on the lot, please park in rows 4, 5, or 6 facing west (**toward** the cemetery). As a reminder, the Euclid Avenue gate is an **entrance only** and should not be used as an exit.

For the children's safety, it is best if the child(ren) exit on the right hand side of the vehicle.

Afternoon Pick-up Routes

Oklahoma Avenue: Enter from Oklahoma Avenue through the gate and turn right immediately. Follow the arrows and select one of the first three rows of the parking area. Park only in rows 1 and 2 facing east (**away** from the cemetery). After picking up your child(ren) and ready to exit, turn left and drive to the end of the row; then angle toward the Oklahoma Avenue gate. Right turn only onto Oklahoma Avenue.

Please exit via the Oklahoma Avenue gate if you enter through that gate. Do not exit via the one-way alley; this would endanger the pedestrians in the safety zone.

Euclid Avenue: Enter from Euclid Avenue and proceed down the aisle turning either left or right to park in rows 3, 4, 5, or 6 facing west (**toward** the cemetery). If you enter the Euclid Avenue gate, please do not proceed across to park in rows 1 or 2; these rows are reserved for the Oklahoma Avenue entrance drivers. If parking in row 6, do not park up against the Euclid Avenue gate fence. After picking up your child(ren) and ready to exit, Rows 4, 5, and 6 drive left to the end of the row. Turn left and exit at the one-way alley proceeding toward Beloit Road. Right turn only onto Beloit Road will aid in keeping the car line flowing. If you are parking in Row 3, turn right and exit onto Oklahoma. As a reminder, the Euclid gate is used as an **entrance only** and should not be used as an exit.

You are encouraged to park your vehicle and use the pedestrian safety zone as you walk to and from the school building to pick up your child(ren). Please do not drive up to the school building to pick up your child(ren); this would interrupt the flow of exiting drivers from the parking rows.

SPECIAL NOTATIONS

- **Parking on the east side of the Gym Building is restricted and assigned to the**

faculty/staff by number. DO NOT PARK IN THIS AREA.

- For the safety of all, please keep your vehicle speed to 5 mph or below **and** do not back up your vehicle in the parking lot. Patience and courtesy is appreciated by all.
- **NO students are to be dropped off or picked up along Beloit Road** except for school buses. Students are to be dropped off in the school parking lot. Do not unload in the alley between the Beloit Building and adjoining businesses.
- The Police Department is informed of these policies and is occasionally asked to patrol the areas to assist us in providing safety for your child(ren).
- Students should not be dropped off or picked up in the church lot as there is no supervision there.

Reporting

The principal of the school will monitor and compile information on absences, tracking illnesses, and identifying potential COVID-19 clusters. She will report required information to the City of Milwaukee Health Department.

A report of a positive case of COVID-19 (student or staff) will be shared with the community via email. Families will be notified to check email via the REMIND text app. Due to privacy laws, any student or staff member contracting COVID-19 will not be identified specifically.

Contact tracing is performed by the City of Milwaukee Health Department if there is a situation in the school. The Health Department is also responsible for informing individuals if they have been exposed.

The principal and the parish director together will approve and distribute communications regarding:

- Confirmed COVID-19 in student or staff member
- Questions regarding general safety and school programs
- Changing community spread conditions in the area surrounding the school

Responding

Symptoms exhibited during the school day.

Students exhibiting symptoms will be sent to the school office and then taken to the COVID-19 Health Room. A staff member will document the symptoms and supervise the student until pick up. The school Principal will share next steps with the parent at pick up via written guidelines for return to school. Students must be picked up within an hour of being notified. If Parent/guardian are not available, emergency contacts will be contacted to pick up the student.

Vaccination

Students and staff are welcome at St. Matthias School regardless of their vaccination status. St. Matthias will not require staff or eligible students to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Fully vaccinated students and staff will not be required to quarantine following a close contact COVID-19 exposure.

Quarantine Requirements

St. Matthias School shall follow the Milwaukee Health Department expectations for COVID-19 contact tracing and quarantine protocols for all students and staff members. If a non-vaccinated student comes in close contact with a COVID-19 positive case, we expect parents to report this information directly to the school office. Fully vaccinated students and staff will not be required to quarantine following a close contact COVID-19 exposure, however, reporting exposure should be reported to the school office.

Positive Cases of COVID-19 of a Student, Faculty or Staff

Any St. Matthias School students or employees who test positive for COVID-19 or its variant strains, even if fully vaccinated, will need to quarantine for 10 days from the start of symptoms first appearing, be symptom-free for 24 hours prior, and provide the school with evidence of child's negative COVID-19 test result and/or a release from child's healthcare provider.

Positive Cases of COVID-19 in one's Household

Any **non-vaccinated** student, faculty and staff member living in a household with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 must quarantine for a minimum of 20 days from date of symptoms first appearing and be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

Any **vaccinated** student, faculty and staff members living in a household with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 may be required to quarantine for a period of time, based on the most updated information from the Milwaukee Health Department. These cases will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Regardless of vaccination status, any student, faculty or staff member living in a household with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 must immediately inform the school.

Close Contact with a COVID-19 Positive Individual

Close contact is defined as any individual who was within 3 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for at least 15 cumulative minutes in a day. Students and their parents, staff and faculty members who have been identified as a close contact will be informed, and the following protocols will be expected based on their respective vaccination status.

Any **non-vaccinated** student, faculty or staff member, who comes into close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual, must quarantine for a minimum of 10 days from the last known close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual and be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

Any **vaccinated** student, faculty or staff member who comes into close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual is expected to closely monitor her/his symptoms. Vaccinated persons may elect to seek a COVID-19 test but are not required to do so.

COVID-19 Testing within your Household

Any **unvaccinated** student, faculty or staff member must remain home if they, or anyone in their household, has taken a COVID-19 test and is waiting for results. They may return to school immediately with a negative test result.

A **vaccinated** student, faculty or staff member does not need to stay out of school when an individual in their household is awaiting testing results.

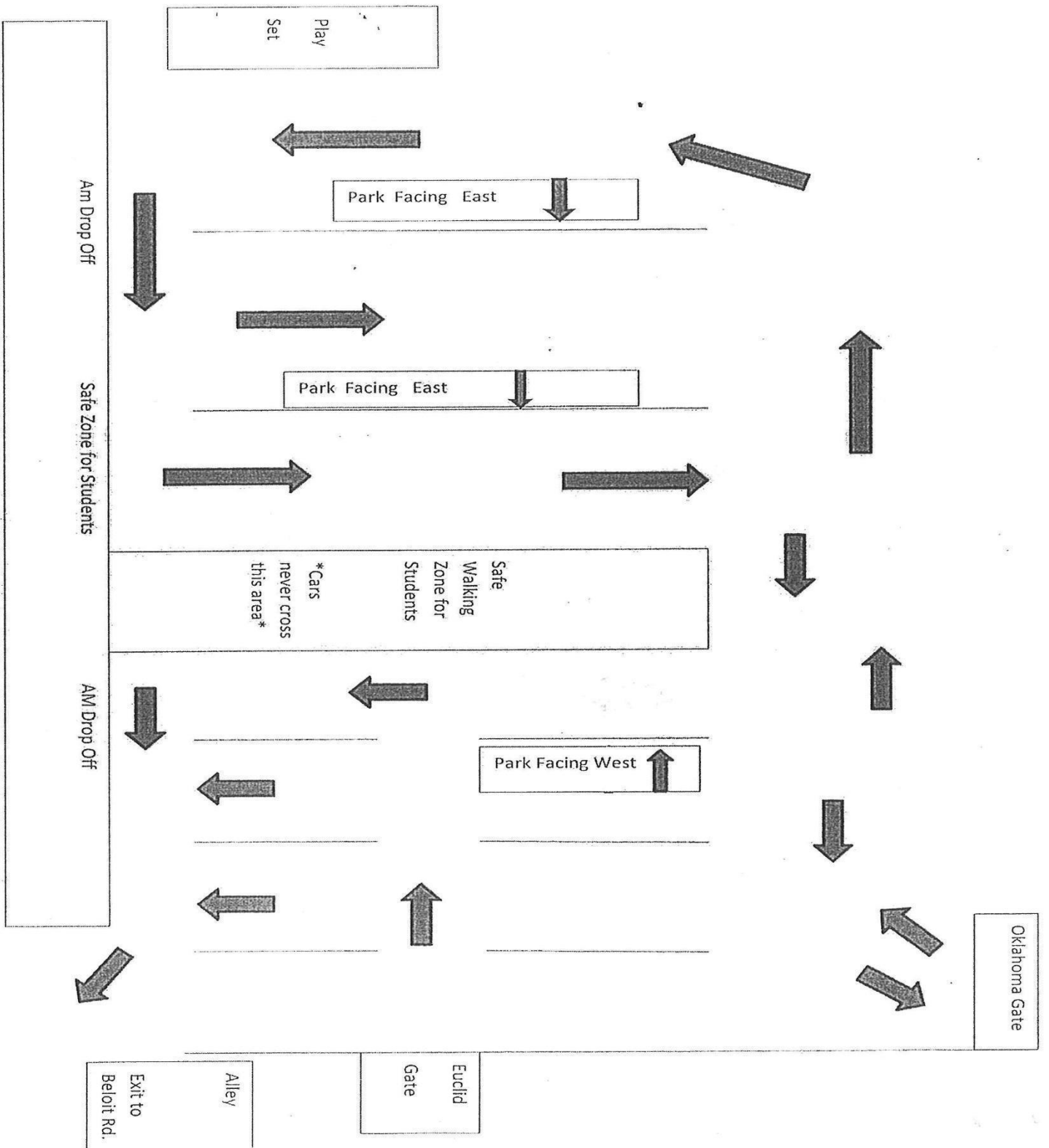
Attendance Policy related to COVID-19

Sick students are to remain home. Student absences will be tracked by the principal to determine if absence is due to quarantine from being in contact with anyone exposed to COVID-19, positive test for COVID-19, contact with any testing positive for COVID-19, COVID-19 symptoms or another health reason. The principal will monitor absences and log any students asked to isolate to assist in contact tracing and student/staff notification.

Families of students experiencing absence due to quarantining, COVID-19 symptoms, exposure to COVID-19 or a positive COVID-19 diagnosis should set up a time to pick up student work at school and receive instructions on how to make up work when the student is able to complete it. A virtual schooling option will not be available when students are absent from school.

Students absent due to quarantining, COVID-19 symptoms, exposure to COVID-19 or a positive COVID-19 diagnosis will be marked Absence Excused for any time missed.

Please complete, sign and return the back page to school with students on the 1st day of school.





COVID – 19 Parent Agreement 2021-2022

Children Names and Grades:

I have received and have reviewed the St. Matthias School COVID-19 Handbook 2021-22 and agree to uphold the policies and procedures of the school.

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

All school policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated based on local, state and national guidance from the Milwaukee Health Department and the Center for Disease Control.