



BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

2021-2022

The following guidelines will assist BSCS open for full time learning on August 16, 2021. The public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic is an ever-changing situation and we want to create a safe and welcoming environment for instruction and learning. An increased attention and detail to the health, safety and well-being of our school community continues to be our main focus. An essential and distinguishing characteristic of our community is our strength of spirit. Our families stepped up in a big way last school year as we navigated education during a pandemic, and we are grateful for you! We can and we will continue to work together to provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for our school community. We plan to make intentional decisions to support and develop our community in both the spiritual and physical sense.

We continue to be committed to keeping our campus, our students, our families and our faculty and staff safe. Our COVID Task Force developed this plan based upon current data and recommendations from the CDC, ADH, AAP, and our Diocese. The Task Force is comprised of faculty, parents, physicians, nurses, and mental health counselors, along with the support of our Pastor, Monsignor Friend and Associate Pastor, Father Daniel.

We recognize that each family is different and will have different perspectives depending on their individual circumstances. Each family is important, and we will seek to extend grace, flexibility and understanding. Keeping our community safe in order to minimize risk while at the same time continuing to offer an exceptional educational experience is what makes BSCS unique.

Your participation in implementing our plan is essential to a healthy and happy school year. Please carefully review our Safe Return to School Plan.

We look forward to welcoming you back soon!

May God bless and protect us all.

Mary Kay Jones, Principal

Logistics & Operational Aspects

As new practices are implemented and adjusted by local and state health departments, as well as the Diocese of Little Rock, BSCS will continually evaluate our protocols and make changes when necessary.

Social & Emotional Awareness Response

As we navigate another school year during a pandemic, BSCS will offer comfort and stability to our school community who undoubtedly will have stress reactions and potential anxiety. A Mental Health Counselor will meet with each grade level and offer some guidance a few hours each week. We plan to offer this the first month of school and will adjust accordingly thereafter. Communication with teachers and parents will be essential in helping us address the needs of our community.

Morning Arrival Protocols

Faculty & Staff will complete a health screen prior to arriving at school.

School doors open for students at 7:30am.

Parent/guardian will complete a health screen for each child each morning before arriving at school. The health screen will be delivered through the EPAS App for mobile devices

Instructions for registering with EPAS will be sent to families. If the answer to any of the questions is YES, the child and any other siblings will stay home and not come to school. Follow up with administration will need to be communicated.

Parents/guardians will cue up in two car lines in school driveway and be directed by faculty and staff. Students will exit their vehicle at the front porch once they have been cleared through the EPAS app. Faculty and staff will welcome each student as they arrive. Please ensure your child is wearing his/her face mask.

As students arrive in the building, hand sanitizer stations will be utilized.

Students arriving after 8am will need to be brought to the front porch by parents for health screen.

Preschool follows the same protocols. Preschool faculty and staff will note the time of student arrival on sign in/out sheet.

We value our parents and volunteers and all they bring to our community. At this time, all non-essential visitors to the school will be limited and restricted. If a visitor is admitted, they will be health screened.

Face Coverings

All faculty, staff and students will wear face coverings while inside the school building except when eating, taking mask breaks and experiencing physical activity outside that is socially distant. Masks are for the protection of all BSCS students and staff members and therefore, BSCS families.

All BSCS students will need to provide their own properly fitted face coverings and have clean ones to wear each day. Masks that are two layers of 100% cotton are recommended if cloth masks are used.

Please include an extra mask in your child's backpack. Teachers and staff will reinforce the benefits of wearing a mask, as well as appropriate hand washing/sanitizing after touching one's face mask.

Preschool and Kindergarten students will not wear masks during naptime.

Cleaning & Hygiene

BSCS remains committed to increased cleaning and sanitation, especially high-touch surfaces. Additional cleaning products, hand sanitizer and PPE have been purchased to meet the needs of our students and faculty. Sanitation stations remain throughout the school building as well as in each classroom.

Students will be taught proper handwashing techniques. Hand washing will occur before and after eating or handling food, before and after administering medication, after coming in contact with any bodily fluids, after playing outdoors and after handling garbage. Proper hand washing signs will be posted in bathrooms and near sinks.

Students will need to bring a personally labeled water bottle filled each morning. We have 3 water bottle filling stations in the school.

Teaching & Maintaining Social Distancing

Students will be taught protocols to develop social distancing based upon age level. Visual markings of 6 feet distance will be provided throughout the school as a reminder of what this distance looks like in common areas.

Portable air purifiers will be utilized in each classroom.

School furniture within classrooms will be organized to reflect a 3-foot distance where feasible. Outside the classroom 6-foot visual supports will be placed throughout the school.

Lunch will be served in the dining hall with students seated 6 feet apart.

Class schedules will be structured to keep cohorts of students together when possible, avoiding the mixing of cohorts or grades when feasible.

Most activity classes for students will take place outside their classrooms in large, designated areas inside or outside.

Students in grades 4, 5 and 6 will rotate classes. Face coverings will be worn, and social distancing will be in place while grade levels rotate rooms. Desks and chairs will be sanitized after each grade level change.

Supplies and materials for all subjects will be individual and not community shared.

When appropriate and weather permitting, teachers will utilize the outdoors for teaching and lunch.

Each grade level will have their scheduled recess's each day. Designated playground zones will be in place with a rotation schedule for each grade level.

Mass - Students in grades KN-6th will attend Mass each week. Social distancing and face coverings will be in place. On Mondays, grades 3-6 will attend Mass at 12:40. This Mass is open to parents and parishioners. All parents or parishioners who attend will sit in a designated area and wear a mask. Mass on Thursdays at 9am is for KN-6th and is just for our students, faculty and staff. This Mass will be livestreamed through the Church's Facebook page.

After Care is provided until 5:30 each day school is in session. Playground use and outdoor activity will continue. Snacks will be provided. Upon parent arrival for pick up, an After Care staff member will bring your child to you at the front porch and sign the child out.

Afternoon dismissal protocol

At the end of the school day (3pm) students will remain in classrooms. One faculty/staff member will be outside in the car line announcing names over walkie-talkie. Students whose names have been called will proceed to the foyer with face covering on. Faculty/staff will be in foyer monitoring students and ensuring social distancing.

Faculty and staff who are loading students in vehicles will be wearing face coverings.

Preschool students will follow this same protocol. Preschool faculty/staff will note the time of pick up on sign in/out sheet.

If you need to check your child out early for an appointment, when you arrive at school, please ring the doorbell. Your student will be called to the office and released to you (or a designated person on your list) on the front porch by a staff member.

Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Positive Cases of COVID-19

Please contact your healthcare provider if anyone in the family is symptomatic or answered YES to any of the health screen questions. Please keep children home if anyone in the family is symptomatic. Children must not take a pain reliever at home to mask a fever, which could pose a serious harm to others in our school community. We must look out for each other's best interest and the common good.

Any student or staff exhibiting symptoms while at school will be sent home along with any siblings in the school.

All decisions about whether a child, teacher, and/or class(es) should stay home for a certain number of days and when exactly they may return to campus will be determined by school leadership in coordination with local and state health officials on a case-by-case basis.

If BSCS learns of a positive COVID-19 case within our school community this will be communicated to our families without violating any privacy matters. Privacy, as well as the health and safety of our entire school community, will always be respected.

According to public health guidance, upon learning of a positive case of COVID-19 in our school community, we will provide notification to the Arkansas Department of Health. We will be in communication with the ADH for their guidance for the next steps based on each situation. We will provide this notification and remain in communication with local health officials about their procedures and guidance as we care for our students, faculty, staff and families.

Contract tracing

If a student, employee, or other person who has been in the school building tests positive for COVID-19, the following items may occur:

*Trained school staff will work together to determine who are possible close contacts among the school community.

*The student or community member's close contacts will be considered, such as classmates seated 3 feet apart.

*Families of students who have been in close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual may be contacted by the school in order to recommend the monitoring of symptoms. This may include a recommendation to stay home from school for a period of time. In consultation with the ADH, the recommended days to possibly quarantine and/or be tested, will be shared with each family on a case-by-case basis.

Household Members

If an individual in one's home has COVID-19 or is quarantined because of COVID-19, those in the household—even if siblings attend different schools—should also stay home until speaking with school administration regarding the situation and circumstances. In consultation with the ADH, the recommended days to possibly quarantine and/or be tested will be shared with each family on a case-by-case basis.

General Illness

Please keep students home when he/she or anyone in the home is not feeling well. Before returning to school, the student must be past the period of communicability; that is, free of fever, coughing, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours without the aid of medication, and are able to participate in normal classroom activities. Additionally, a note from a healthcare provider confirming a non-COVID-19 illness may be required.

Travel

If your student will be traveling to destinations via commercial transit and/or among large crowds during the school year, we recommend you practice social distancing and safety protocols. Upon returning home, we recommend you have your student tested for COVID-19 before they return to school.

Impact on Distance Learning

In person learning is most beneficial for the social and emotional well-being of us all. BSCS will provide a virtual-learning option only for students in COVID related quarantine. This option will be asynchronous only, which means no live lessons via Zoom or Google Meet. Teachers may offer a Zoom or Google Meet check in or office hours with parents and student.

As stated earlier, as new practices are implemented and adjusted by local and state health departments, as well as the Diocese of Little Rock, BSCS will continually evaluate our protocols and make changes when necessary. This includes responding to local outbreaks.

Our goal continues to remain open for in person instruction. We recognize that we must be prepared to pivot to virtual learning if the situation warrants. This decision will be made with guidance from our Diocese, Pastor, and the COVID Task Force. In the event this becomes a reality, communication will be sent to our school community and our Distance Learning plan will go into effect.

Creating & Maintaining Community

We plan to continue our same traditions and beliefs that are distinguishing characteristics of our school community. Daily prayers, Mass, Spirit Weeks, Blue Jean and Spirit Wear Fridays, are just a few of the practices that make BSCS a great place.

Our spirit of community is strong, just as it was last year. We will seek to offer times to come together that are socially safe, keeping everyone's health paramount. We must all commit to supporting and protecting one another.

Our partnership is integral in providing an exceptional educational experience for our students.

We thank you for your support!

We pray for God's blessings for our BSCS community.