

Fall 2021 FAQs

We are taking many precautions based on our experiences from last school year, combined with guidance from health experts from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Dekalb County Health Department, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the direction of the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and any illnesses during at PAS.

Undoubtedly, the past year highlighted the increasing importance of the family-school partnership and affirmed the critical importance of working together to protect each other's health. We were blessed by the commitment of our families and staff in efforts to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and keep our classes open. With a measured approach and ongoing evaluation of our plan and protocols, we will take steps to open PAS safely.

Please be aware that it is our intent to monitor and evaluate these protocols to consider when to "lighten up" or "tighten up" periodically and/or as needed.

Please refer to the outlined frequently asked questions for clarification to help us work together for the health, safety and well-being of our entire PAS staff and families.

Will there be in person Orientation and Meet and Greet?

YES!

Parent Orientation Thursday 9/2

Parents are invited to visit classrooms for a brief time to meet your child's classroom teachers. Parents will also be invited to the tent in the "play lot" - gym parking lot, both before and after visiting the classrooms. Tables will be set up outside to learn about and register for volunteer opportunities and Stay and Play offerings. Specific times and breakouts are forthcoming. A prerecorded informational video from the Director will be emailed to families outlining important policies and procedures.

Meet and Greet Day Friday 9/3

Children will visit the classrooms with **one** parent to limit the number of people in the classroom. Meet and Greet is divided into 2 sessions to accommodate classes that share one classroom.

How will children be limited in contact with others?

Each class will remain in their own 'bubble.' Classes will not mix on the Playground or in classrooms. More than one class may share the Pray and Play Meadow, Play Lot, and/or the gymnasium.

Will children be required to wear masks?

Yes! We are opening with a *hybrid* mask policy. Ages 3-5 are required to wear a mask while INDOORS. Due to the highly contagious nature of the Delta variant, the fact that preschool children are not eligible for the vaccine *at this time* and that they benefit from working closely together-not distanced, all children will wear masks in the classrooms. Children in our Twos classes are HIGHLY encouraged to wear masks, if the child can appropriately and independently do so.

Children may remove their masks for some instructional time in the classroom, while outdoors and during eating and drinking. We realize that some children will have less tolerance for a

mask and we will not force any child who is unwilling to wear one. We will ask that families support these unique situations and work with us to help their child transition into tolerating the wearing of a mask.

We were amazed at their ability to wear them last school year and feel strongly that they are an effective tool in limiting the transmission of germs.

We highly recommend that children wear masks attached to a breakaway lanyard for ease of taking on and off without losing their mask and for it to remain with the child that wears it - limiting the spread of germs.

Will teachers be required to wear masks?

Yes! While indoors, all PAS staff and adults are required to wear masks. There may be instructional time that a teacher can distance and remove their mask for educational purposes.

Will children learn outdoors?

YES! Outdoors provides for less transmission of germs. Our facility has wonderful outdoor learning spaces. Weather permitting, classes will have three scheduled outdoor times daily. Teachers will guide intentional learning activities on the playground, Pray and Play Meadow Natural Classroom, and the Play Lot. Lunch will also be eaten outside on the shaded picnic tables.

Will there be carpool at arrival and dismissal?

Yes! We will have ONE carline this year. All children will be dropped at the front of the building.

ARRIVAL

Arrival unloading will begin at 9:10. While parents will be asked to answer the daily health screening questions, we will no longer be taking temperatures in the carline. Cars will line up in front of the school and children will be taken in the front door and brought to their classroom by a staff member.

DISMISSAL

Dismissal will begin at 12:20. All children ages 2-5 will dismiss from the FRONT door. Staff members will bring the children to your cars.

Toddler arrival and dismissal will be in the front church circle. Teachers will meet parents at their cars with the big red strollers for safe transitions to the classroom!

MEET AND MINGLE DAYS - NOON DISMISSAL

One day per month parents will come into the building for afternoon pick up. These days will coincide with our staff meetings. Please find the dates on the updated calendar and information regarding these Mingle Days in the Handbook. We will also send more information regarding these days as they promise to promote fun connecting our staff and families.

Will there be physical distancing in the classrooms?

No. With a year of working with preschool aged children during a pandemic, we learned that children MUST work/play closely together. We will space when necessary and when it is easy to do, but in the classrooms, children will work side by side as they should!

How will children's belongings be stored?

We will return to using classroom cubbies. Each child will be provided with a uniform school bag that fits well into our class cubbies.

Will children share materials?

Yes and no! To promote creativity and social skills, it is necessary for the children to share many classroom items. Some highly porous items like play doh or theraputty will be individually portioned and not shared. Items such as crayons, glues, scissors, etc will be shared. Any shared materials will be disinfected between uses.

Will there be Stay and Play?

YES. We plan to offer our after school programs. We will utilize outside vendors with numerous class offerings. All vendors will follow all PAS health and safety policies. Children will be with children from other classes during Stay and Play. MOST classes will be conducted outside and if indoors, distancing and masks will be required.

Will improvements be made to ventilation in the building?

Yes! During the school day, at least one window will be open in every classroom and the school office. A new HVAC system was installed this summer. The system includes improved fresh air flow, MERV-13 air filters (changed monthly) and as an extra layer of protection, in-duct air purifiers have been added. The REME-HALO® utilizes RGF's patented REME® Cell technology with UV-C light to create low level, airborne hydrogen peroxide throughout the air-conditioned space reducing airborne and surface bacteria, viruses, odors, and mold. The REME-HALO® in-duct air purifier actively neutralizes pollutants at the source ensuring excellent indoor air quality.

Do I report to the school if a parent, family member or child has COVID-19?

YES! Employees, children and their families who obtain a positive COVID-19 test result or experience exposure to someone with confirmed COVID-19, or are experiencing *any* symptoms of COVID-19 are required to report to the Director. In compliance with local and state health requirements, positive COVID-19 testing results will be communicated to the appropriate health officials who will advise further action.

What are the plans when a staff member or child tests positive for COVID-19?

Any person who has tested positive, has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or has had close personal contact with someone who has COVID-19 (unless fully vaccinated) will be required to isolate/quarantine at home. The time away is generally 10 to 14 days. Fully vaccinated staff do not need to quarantine if exposed to a positive case unless he/she begins to have symptoms. Families and staff *must* communicate with the PAS Office if they or anyone in their household tests positive for COVID-19, experiences symptoms, or is exposed to someone who is positive (with symptoms or asymptomatic). Children and staff in this scenario should not report to school but should immediately contact the PAS Office and wait for further direction. Students who become sick or experience symptoms while at PAS will be taken to the Health Ministry Building for isolation from others. Parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately.

Students and staff, who are ill, may not return until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation and symptoms have improved. School families and employees will be notified of confirmed illnesses occurring within the classroom. However, patient confidentiality will be maintained and respected.

The Director will notify local public health officials and the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools will be notified of any positive cases. We will collaborate with these officials to determine the most appropriate response, depending on the situation. Each response to these situations will be individually based on the specifics of the case and driven by guidance and directives of the public health officials. Appropriate quarantine times will be observed. Contact tracing will be implemented to mitigate the spread of infection and community members who may have been in close contact with the infected person(s) will be notified promptly. You may receive a call from the health department and if so, it's important that you speak with them and follow their direction. We may need to close a class for a period of time.

Do I report other illnesses besides COVID-19?

YES, please! As was always the procedure at PAS, parents are asked to share with the Director, Co-director or teacher that a child has a confirmed communicable disease.

Children and staff who experience illnesses that are explained as nonCOVID-19 (e.g., strep throat, seasonal allergies, chronic conditions, etc.) may return to school following clearance by their physician. Families should contact the PAS Office once diagnosis is confirmed for return to school information/plan.

All members of the class will be notified of the illness; confidentiality will be observed.

What are the guidelines if our family travels?

COMMUNICATE! If your family is leaving the country, flying domestically or spending time at a large gathering (wedding, anniversary party) please let the Director know so that proper guidelines may be followed to protect the other children in the classroom. Travel requirements vary from country to country and change over time. Please check with the CDC for most up to date travel guidelines. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>

What can families do to partner in protecting all PAS Families?

- Vaccinate your family for flu, COVID, and other preventable diseases when available and based on discussions with your physician.
- Practice proper hand washing
- Follow mask requirements indoors at PAS.
 - Keep children home when they or household members are ill (including when you suspect or have reason to suspect that your child or a household member is becoming ill)
- Ensure health screening questions are asked every morning
- Ensure that students who have been ill are fever free for 48 hours without medication before returning to school and without potentially contagious symptoms unless cleared by a doctor.
- Ensure that students who have been ill are vomit and diarrhea free for 48 hours without medication before coming to school
- Keep PAS informed of any changes in medical condition

- Be understanding if we need to make changes to our protocols because of changes to health and safety guidelines
- Be patient and kind with us, each other, and yourself. We are all working to keep everyone healthy and safe. Assume positive intent!

Please feel free to email or call our office so that we may address your additional inquiries. We are working tirelessly to provide your children with a safe and loving learning environment upon their return to the Preschool at All Saints.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/child-care-guidance.html>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/dph-covid-19-guidance>

<https://www.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>