



# VIRGINIA BEACH FRIENDS SCHOOL

*Knowledge. Character. Community.*

## Consolidated COVID-19 Policies and Updates

1/11/2021

*This document is a consolidated version of all the COVID-19 policies and the current update as of 01/11/2021. Please use this document as the “go-to” for all policies and procedures related to COVID-19. Highlighted items are current updates.*

- **Physical Distancing**

- All desks will be positioned 6 feet apart and facing the same direction. Students will not be facing each other and will sit on one side of a table. If desks cannot be spaced 6 feet apart, students will, at a minimum be 3 feet apart.
- During music and drama, 6 feet of distance will be maintained for all students who are not singing, dancing, acting, or playing an instrument that requires use of the mouth. For students who are participating in singing, dancing, acting and playing a musical instrument that may increase respiration or production of respiratory droplets/aerosols that require the use of the mouth, an increased distance of 10 feet will be maintained. Additionally, each student will have a specific spot in the classroom to practice or perform.
- Hallways and outdoor walkways are marked with six-foot markers to ensure physical distancing.
- The Virginia Department of Health recommends that face coverings should not be used while exercising outside, so increased physical distance of 10 feet between students during physical education class will be practiced. When 10 feet of distance is not feasible outside, the physical education class will be adjusted to decrease the amount of exercising among students.
- Cottage and Pre-Kindergarten
  - The CDC does not state that students in this age group remain 6 feet apart from peers and teachers. The social distancing mitigation strategy for this age group is to keep the students in the same cohort each day and stagger playground and recess times. Although, the school will work diligently at keeping the students socially distanced as much as possible. The CDC states that during nap time the cots be placed 6 feet apart, and therefore this strategy will be utilized.

- **Face Coverings**

- Students, ages 5 to 18, and all faculty and staff must wear a face covering at all times while indoors, unless individuals are alone in a classroom or office.
- During recess and outdoor play, masks are to be worn only when on the playground equipment and not while running or outdoor recess that is not on the playground.
- If students are outside during classroom time or lunch, and there is six-feet of distance between the students, masks are not required.
- While singing in the classroom, including music and drama, face coverings are required except for when playing a wind or brass instrument.

- Per the Virginia Department of Health, face shields can be substituted for a cloth face covering for faculty who are teaching a language, such as Spanish, and when it is important for students to see a teacher’s lips or facial expression.
- Per the CDC, masks with exhalation valves or vents should not be worn, as they do not protect the spreading of COVID-19. Students are required to bring home their mask every day and bring a clean mask to school each day.
- The American Association of Pediatrics states when accommodations are needed for a student with unique medical needs that are requesting not to wear a mask that they not be excluded from school unless required in order to adhere to local mandates or their medical need would put them at increased risk for contracting COVID-19. The CDC states, “Some people, such as people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions or other sensory sensitivities, may have challenges wearing a mask. They should consult with their healthcare provider for advice about wearing masks.” Therefore, if a student is requesting not to wear a mask at school, a doctor’s note must be provided that states they have intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions or other sensory sensitivities that prohibit them from wearing a mask.
- Per the Virginia Department of Health, face shields that cover the front and sides of the face and go below the chin may be considered as an alternative for those who have trouble using a cloth face covering but do not have trouble with a face shield.
- **Minimizing Exposure**
  - Visitors, contractors, vendors, and parents are not permitted in the school buildings at any point during the day. For late drop-off and early pick-up, you must fill out the attendance form in SchoolCues. When you arrive on campus, call the front office, and a staff member will escort your child to their classroom for late drop-off or will meet you in the circle in front of the school for early pick-up.
  - Students will remain in their “pods” for the majority of the day. The only time they will leave their designated academic area is during garden, art, music, Spanish and physical education. During these transitions, one “pod” of students will be in the hallways at this time.
  - The school is limiting objects that are usually shared by students. If a shared object is used, it will be clean and disinfected immediately after use.
  - Singing is prohibited inside the classrooms (Kindergarten through 12th grade) at all times, and only allowed during outdoor classroom time.
  - We will not be providing field trips or extra-curricular activities at this time. Considerations will be made for the spring months, April and May.
  - Early Morning Care and Extended Day will not be offering drop-in options at this time. Considerations will be made for the spring months, April and May. Only students whose families have registered for these programs may attend.
  - The use of hand dryers will not be permitted.
  - The gym will be separated into two sections so that while one part of the gym is being cleaned after a class, the second part of the gym will be in use.
  - Handshaking is prohibited.
  - Each cubby will be labeled with one student's name, so there is no interaction with other cubbies. This cubby will be used by the same student all year. We will be cleaning the cubbies every day, so students should keep them organized.
  - If a student visits a high-risk area, we ask that families let the school know where they visited and when the student returned from that area.

- **Screening Students**

- The CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings (screening all students grades K12) be conducted by schools, which includes temperature checks. At this time, K through 12th grade students will not receive temperature checks when entering into the buildings in the morning. Parents are highly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of infectious illness every day. The school has included an attachment to assist parents with the daily home screening. Students who are sick should not attend school in-person.
- For Cottage and Pre-Kindergarten, temperature checks are recommended and will continue to be a policy for a student entering into the buildings each morning. Upon arrival in the morning, Cottage and Pre-Kindergarten teachers will wash their hands, wear face mask, a face shield and gloves. The teacher will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness, and confirm that the child is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath. The teacher will then take the child's temperature. Since temperature checks will be performed on multiple students at a time, a thorough cleaning of the thermometer between each use is required. So, please be patient when dropping off your child, as these steps must happen for every student.

- **Exposure to COVID-19**

- Students with documentation of a previous positive COVID-19 diagnostic test on file at the school will not have to self-quarantine in the event that they have close contact with a positive case while at school. This exemption from quarantine currently lasts for **three** months from the date that the diagnostic test was administered. A positive antibody test does NOT hold the same weight because individuals could potentially have antibodies to a coronavirus but not specifically COVID-19. Thus, a positive antibody test does not exempt someone from having to quarantine.
- Symptoms of COVID-19:
  - Temperature of 100.4 degrees
  - Chills, Fatigue (more tired than usual), headache, muscle aches, cough, nasal congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, new onset of poor appetite.
- The Virginia Department of Health recommends the following evaluation of a child with COVID-19 symptoms or exposure:
  - Is your child sick with symptoms of COVID-19?
    - If no, has the child had close contact with someone with COVID-19 (being within six-feet of that person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, had contact with the person's respiratory secretions from the mouth or nose, **hugged or kissed the person, shared eating or drinking utensils with the person**)?
      - If no, you can send your child to school.
      - If yes, test for COVID-19 and isolate/quarantine at home. If the test is negative, or the student wasn't tested they must self-isolate for 14 days from the date of the last exposure, if after 14 days there are no symptoms, the student can return to school on day 15.
    - If yes, (student does have symptoms) are the symptoms new for your child?

- If yes, keep your child home, call your healthcare provider and notify the school immediately.
- If no, and symptoms are usual for your child (allergies, migraines, asthma) or caused by a known diagnosis (ear infection, strep throat), seek care as per usual practice. If fever is present, stay home, until at least 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medicines.
- If symptoms are new for the student and the parents have contacted their healthcare provider, and the student is not diagnosed with COVID-19, the student can return to school once they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
- If the student is diagnosed with COVID-19, the student must isolate for 10 days and can return to school as long as symptoms have improved and they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

- If a student/employee has been vaccinated for COVID-19 and then have close contact with a person who has COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19, the guidance above still applies even though the student/employee has been vaccinated.

- **Requirements for COVID-19 testing**

- The United States currently requires air passengers arriving from the U.K to test negative, via PCR or antigen test, within the 3 days before departure from the U.K to the U.S.
- After traveling internationally, the Virginia Department of Health recommends that people get tested with a viral test three to five days after travel and stay home for 7 days. Even if an individual test negative, the recommendation is to stay home for the full 7 days. If an individual doesn't get tested, the recommendation is to stay home for 10 days after travel. The school is taking this recommendation and requiring the above before a student/employee can return to campus.

- **COVID-19 Vaccine**

- The Virginia Department of Health as designated that private school faculty, staff and employees are included in the frontline essential worker 1B vaccination priority group.
- The 1B priority group will be next in receiving the coronavirus vaccination.
- When the vaccine becomes available, we are encouraging all VBFS employees to receive the vaccination. At this time, we are not requiring the vaccination for employees.
- More information will be released in the coming weeks and the school will update the community on the status of the 1B priority group vaccination timeline.
- For more information about the coronavirus vaccine, please refer to the Virginia Department of Health at [COVID-19 FAQ \(virginia.gov\)](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-faq).