



# VIRGINIA BEACH FRIENDS SCHOOL

*Knowledge. Character. Community.*

## COVID-19 Policies and Updates

1/13/2022

*This document provides all of the guidelines for the COVID-19 policies and the current update as of 1/13/2022. Please use this document as the “go-to” for all policies and procedures related to COVID-19. Highlighted items are current updates.*

### Face Coverings

- Students, employees, visitors, VBFS community members, ages two and up, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask while indoors and on buses.
- Masks do not need to be worn indoors while eating, drinking, sleeping, exercising, or playing a musical instrument.
- When outdoors, all students and all employees do not need to wear masks.
- Per the CDC, masks with exhalation valves/vents, ski masks and face shields should not be worn, as they do not protect the spreading of COVID-19.
- Face shields can be worn while outdoors.
- According to the VDH: Masks are not required when exercising, but should still be worn, if possible, when engaging in active sports play. All students should wear a mask on the sideline.
  - Face masks are required during physical education while indoors. If PE is held indoors, students who are not participating in physical activity are required to wear a face mask, and during times of low impact activities. If high intensity activities are scheduled for PE and will be held indoors, then an increased social distance of ten feet will be implemented.
- 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.”
- Families of students requesting a medical exemption from wearing a mask, or requesting a religious exemption due to sincerely held religious objections may request a reasonable accommodation in writing to Candice Jarden. Even with a mask exemption, face masks are required for participation on field trips that are indoors and on buses, and during musical and drama performances.
- Universal mask wearing is required for all students and employees, regardless of mask exemptions, if the student or employee has had COVID-19 or is considered a close contact, for 5 days after the required quarantine period. This includes mask wearing indoors and outdoors, during physical education and recess, and will be 6 feet apart from others during snack and lunch.

### Social Distancing

- Social distancing for cottage through early kindergarten students will not be required. The social distancing mitigation strategy for this age group is to keep the students in the same cohort each day, spend more time outdoors, hand and respiratory hygiene, and staggering playground and recess times. Although, the school will work diligently at keeping the students socially distanced as much as possible.
- Students in cottage and pre-kindergarten will have their nap mats head to toe for rest time to help promote social distancing.
- Social distancing will be used whenever possible among kindergarten through eighth grade students while indoors. When masks cannot be worn, such as when eating, singing, or playing sports, ensuring at least three feet of physical distance will be a priority among students who are not fully vaccinated.
- If a student or employee is vaccinated social distancing policies do not apply.

### **Screening**

- Temperature checks will be required daily for all students before entering any school building each morning.
- If your child has a recorded fever of over 100.4 degrees, proof of a negative antigen or PCR test is required before returning to school.
- If your child is absent due to not feeling well, you must submit the absence in SchoolCues, along with the COVID-19 Screening Tool under Quick Access.

### **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, continuing the cohorting method, as used last year.
- If a student or employee has a fever over 100.4, a negative covid test is required before returning to school.
- If a student or employee tests positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19, and the infected student or employee was within 3 to 6 feet of other students or employees, without consistent mask wearing, for longer than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, indoors or outdoors, or a student or employee were less than 3 feet apart from the infected student or employee, they are considered a close contact. Students who are unvaccinated, will be required to quarantine. (Please refer to the COVID-19 diagram for details on the quarantine period).
- Employees who are unvaccinated, or more than six months out from their second mRNA dose, or more than two months after the J&J vaccine, and not yet boosted, will be required to quarantine.
- Students and employees 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 person who is infected with COVID-19, as long as the student or employee does not have symptoms. This exemption from quarantine currently lasts for three months from the date that the diagnostic test was administered.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine**

- Employees who have chosen to receive the vaccine have been fully vaccinated at this point. At this time, the school is not requiring the vaccination for employees. An employee’s individual vaccination status is confidential medical information that is protected and may not be disclosed.

- The school can't disclose any student or employee's particular vaccination status. The school's safety measure should provide reassurance that we are taking necessary steps to ensure a safe school.
- The school is requesting students who have received the vaccine to voluntarily submit documentation of COVID-19 vaccination status. The protocol to collect, secure, use, and further disclose this information will comply with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, including Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) statutory and regulatory requirements.

**Sports, Field Trips and Extracurricular Activities:**

- Field trips and extracurricular activities will resume for the 2021-2022 academic year.
- The sports program has resumed with basketball, and likely a spring sport. When sports programs and extracurricular activities are offered, guidance will be released in regards to the COVID-19 policy for that program.