

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel School**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN  
YEAR 2**



**2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School responded heroically to the challenge of Covid-19, keeping students on campus while taking significant steps to mitigate the disease's spread. This updated document aims to create an expectation of what the coming year holds. While we embrace a less restrictive environment, the safety and well-being of our students and staff remain our top priority.

### **Our priorities remain:**

- **Safety:** Our overall risk has been reduced because adults and students 12 and older have had the opportunity to be vaccinated. We will continue to manage our risk.
- **Hygiene:** We will continue to emphasize robust hygienic practice.
- **Presence:** We plan to keep our school open daily. We understand the importance of our students being in school five days a week.
- **Growth:** Despite limitations, we want our children to continue their academic progress at grade level in their faith and all core academic standards. We have written this document specifically for our school environment, and we expect it to evolve as the public health situation changes. Our team will continue to share any updated documents on the school website and through OptionC.

### **Health and Safety Plan Team**

- Dawn Parker, Principal
- Dawn Brooks, Safety Committee Member
- Debra Convery, Safety Committee Member
- Andrea DePhillipo, Safety Committee Member
- Kristen Genna, Safety Committee Member

### **Health and Safety Plan Team Consultants**

- David C. Damsker, MD, MPH, Bucks County Department of Health
- Dr. Andrew McLaughlin, Secretary for Catholic Education for Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- Fr. Matthew Guckin, OLMC Pastor

## **COVID-19 PREVENTION PROGRAM (OLMC YR 2)**

### **Infection Mitigation Strategies**

For the past year, we have used a variety of mitigation strategies in order to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of Covid-19 on campus. Following the guidance of our local health department, we effectively applied all recommended strategies at our school this past year. Because of the cooperation of our students and parents, along with the tremendous efforts of our faculty and staff, OLMC was able to operate as normally as possible during the Covid-19 pandemic. We anticipate that the same cooperation will allow us to continue to operate safely and normally this year in spite of the continuing health crisis in our world.

### **Daily Screenings**

It is the responsibility of every parent/guardian to daily monitor the health of their child/ren before they leave the house for school. Although we will not be utilizing a daily Google form this year, parents/guardians will be required to screen their child/children for symptoms. This should be done within 60 minutes of arriving at school. It is most important that a child not be given Tylenol and sent to school during this period of the pandemic. Masked symptoms will help no one. If a child exhibits the symptoms below, do not send your child to school. Children who arrive at school with these symptoms will be sent to the nurse for evaluation and you will be required to pick your child up.

### Daily Health Checklist

- Temperature 100.4 or higher
- Cough
- Muscle or body aches
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath/fast breathing
- Shaking and chills
- Nausea or vomiting

We recommend that all families have a plan in place should a child need to go home. Please make sure all contact information is up-to-date and accurate at the start of the school year. Please note that a child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school. Please remember that the first line of defense is YOUR HOME; we are dependent on your cooperation in monitoring your child/s health. By following this protocol, each family is doing their part to protect our OLMC Family.

### **Cafeteria Services**

Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria using a staggered seating plan in order to maximize physical distancing. Surfaces that come in contact with food will be washed,

rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals. Given the very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals. Students in PreK - grade 8 will be permitted to purchase lunches from Aramark.

### **Recess**

Recess will take place outdoors, weather permitting, and students will be grouped by grade level. For example, 2A and 2B students will play together outdoors. Recess equipment will not be limited and students do not need to wear masks for any outdoor activities.

### **Social Distancing**

Classroom configurations will promote learning and maximize physical distancing where feasible. Desks will be spaced three feet or more from center of desk to center of desk. In our PreK and Kindergarten programs where tables are used for seating, trifold barriers will be utilized. Outdoor learning will be employed as much as possible, and PE classes will continue to be held outside, weather permitting.

### **Travel Within the Building**

Students will once again travel to art, physical education, library and computer. Older students will move among the classrooms as dictated by grade level. For example, students in grades 7 and 8 will travel to each of the four Middle Unit classrooms.

### **Ventilation, Sanitizing and Cleaning Routines**

Windows will be opened for proper ventilation and all air conditioners and/or fans will remain on during the school day. Hand sanitizer will be provided upon arrival and used as students enter and exit the classrooms. Faculty will continue to promote good hand hygiene with frequent hand-washing throughout the school day. There will be no use of water fountains except to use the touchless feature to fill water bottles.

High-touch surfaces will be cleaned frequently throughout the school day along with classroom equipment and desks. Maintenance personnel will conduct a mid-day cleaning of bathrooms, handrails and high-touch surfaces in the hallways. Our cleaning crew will continue to thoroughly clean our classrooms and the entire building will be ionized each evening.

**Amendment to masking 8/18/2021:** Until directed otherwise by the Bucks County Health Department and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, all students, faculty, staff and visitors to OLMC School will be required to wear face coverings. When this requirement is lifted, we will return to the mask optional plan listed below. In an effort to replicate the success of last year's mitigation efforts, we intend to continue to follow the advice of BCHD.

**Masks/Face Coverings (Amended 8/18/21 - See Above)**

Mask wearing will be optional during the 2021-22 school year. Anyone is welcome to wear a mask at any time. Healthy individuals may opt to wear a face shield as an option to a mask. It is important to note Our Lady of Mount Carmel School reserves the right to change our optional mask policy to a mandatory one. Such a decision will be dependent on the incidence rate in Bucks County or particular situations at OLMC and will be applicable for an individual child, groups of children, or the entire school. We will monitor all information provided to us from local and state health officials on a constant and consistent basis in order to determine the most appropriate approach to masking (mandatory/optional).

### **Covid-19 Response**

In the event of a positive Covid-19 case, the principal will report to and consult with the BCHD in order to determine next steps for targeted mitigation, contact tracing, and protection. OLMC School will conduct contact tracing and parents will be notified if their child/children are considered close contacts to an individual who tested positive for Covid-19.

### **Isolation/Quarantine**

Whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, any individual who tests positive for Covid-19 must isolate for 10 days as both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals can transmit the virus during that time.

### **Reporting Requirements**

The following information should be reported to the principal in a timely manner.

- If anyone in your family has been diagnosed with Covid-19.
- If your OLMC School student has been diagnosed with Covid-19.
- If your child is a close contact of a person diagnosed with Covid-19.
- Illness of child (include symptoms on the attendance line).

### **Faculty/Staff Information (Amended 8/18/21 - See Above)**

Based on recommendations from OCE and the BCHD, mask wearing will be optional for vaccinated faculty and staff during the 2021-22 school year. Unvaccinated faculty and staff members must wear a face covering when in the building. Staff members are expected to self-affirm that they are symptom-free and fever-free without medication.

### **Visitor & Volunteer Protocols (Amended 8/18/21- See Above)**

At this time, we are allowing limited visitors and volunteers into the school building. Volunteers must obtain all necessary clearances prior to offering service to our school.

### **Vaccination**

OLMC School strongly recommends that all persons eligible to receive Covid-19 vaccines receive them at the first opportunity. This guidance corresponds to direction provided by public health agencies, the Bucks County Health Department (BCHD), and Catholic leadership. In addition to vaccines required for school entry, OLMC strongly

recommends that all students and staff be immunized each autumn against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions, to help:

- Protect the school community
- Reduce demands on health care facilities
- Decrease illnesses that cannot be readily distinguished from Covid-19 and would therefore trigger a response from the school and public health authorities.

### **Virtual Learning**

We will offer in-person instruction to our students throughout the year. When or if a student is absent, the work missed will be documented and sent home as stated in our Handbook. We will not provide virtual instruction. In the event there is a statewide shelter-in-place order or OLMC School is not able to provide in-person instruction, we will implement a school-wide virtual learning platform that will enable us to continue to provide meaningful and robust instruction to our students.

### **Right to Amend**

OLMC School reserves the right to amend this list of guidelines as needed throughout the year, given guidance from the BCHD and/or the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.