

## **SY 2021-22 LEA Health and Safety Plans**

**School Name: St. Albans School**  
**School Contact: Jason Robinson**  
**School Type: Private, Parochial or Independent School**  
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### **Background and Purpose**

[OSSE's Health and Safety Guidance for Schools](#) is issued for LEAs and private, parochial and independent schools (schools). LEAs and schools must develop and submit to OSSE comprehensive health and safety plans. This plan is intended to provide the public with information on how the School will support the safe reopening and operation of school buildings, including guidelines on masking, social distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, and appropriate response to a positive COVID-19 case.

OSSE reviewed each School's responses to the questions for clarity, completeness, and compliance with the DC Health and OSSE health and safety guidance for schools and provided feedback to the School. Before publication, School's were given the opportunity to revise their responses based on OSSE's feedback. LEAs and schools are responsible for incorporating additional or updated public health guidance into their policies and procedures throughout the school year as such guidance is released.

## Face Masks

### 1. Provide the School's plan to comply with the requirements to:

- **a. except for specific circumstances (e.g., while eating) articulated in OSSE's guidance, all students, staff and visitors, including those who are full vaccinated, must wear non-medical face coverings or face masks at all times while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and**
- **b. masks must be worn correctly.**

The school recognizes that non-medical face coverings (“masks”) have been an important part of a layered COVID-19 risk mitigation plan. At the start of the 2020 - 2021 school year, the school acquired and distributed to all students and employees washable, reusable masks which meet the WHO guidelines for non-medical face coverings and has distributed masks to every student and employee. The school maintains a supply of extra masks in case of lost, forgotten, or damaged masks. The school plans to similarly make available masks to all students, faculty and staff this year. All students, faculty, staff, visitors or contractors, regardless of vaccination status, will wear masks at school. In settings in which students are engaging in athletic competition or vigorous physical exercise, as clarified on the May 26, 2021 video call with AISGW, OSSE, and DC Health, particular attention will be paid to mask-wearing on sidelines, bench areas, in locker rooms and on school buses to games.

The school uses indoor and outdoor signage all over campus to provide reminders of masking requirements. With younger students (primarily in grades 4 - 6) still unvaccinated at least at the start of the school year, teachers, staff members and the school nurse will model the proper wearing of masks and reinforce proper mask-wearing technique to all students, but with a focus on the youngest students, with individual attention and instruction as necessary.

### 2. Provide the School's policies and procedures in the event that a student, staff member, or visitor is unable or unwilling to wear a face mask at all times.

The school begins in Grade 4 so there were no issues in 2020 - 2021 with students being too young to wear masks; moreover, no employees were unable to wear masks. Were any such issues with an inability to wear masks to arise with students this year, the school would work with the student and family in a collaborative spirit with the goal of promoting in-person instruction, and would focus on other risk mitigation measures if necessary. If a visitor were unable to mask the school would look for ways to accommodate the purpose of their visit virtually (e.g. through Zoom). Employees are expected to comply, and have been fully complying, with all health and safety requirements communicated by the school. Were there to be an issue due to medical reasons, the school would work interactively with the employee to explore solutions.

### 3. Provide the School's policies and procedures to support physical distancing between individuals and within and across groups, including in classrooms, common spaces, during arrival and dismissal procedures, and during extracurricular activities.

The school plans to support physical distancing in the following ways: (1) in classroom settings, keeping class sizes small (20 or under), facing desks in the same direction, and keeping at least 3 feet of physical distancing between students where practicable and consistent with the goal of promoting in-person learning; (2) posting signage to encourage physical distancing at entrances, near restrooms, in hallways and other

areas; (3) for the youngest, fully unvaccinated grades, using a large outdoor tent with physically distanced seating for lunch; and (4) designing outdoor athletic or PE activities to promote physical distancing as much as practicable.

**4. Provide the School's policies and procedures regarding the use of cohorts for students and/or staff, including steps to minimize interactions between cohorts, as applicable.**

The school's use of cohorts differs by division. In the youngest grades (4 - 6), students are cohorted in homerooms of 14 - 17 students and they engage in activities within that structure. For the middle and high school aged students (grades 7 - 12), cohorting is not possible due to rotating academic schedules and students taking different classes, so the school has focused on good record-keeping and documentation of student interactions to facilitate contact tracing where necessary.

**5. Provide the School's policies and procedures to support handwashing and respiratory etiquette including frequent, proper handwashing strategies and encouraging covering coughs and sneezes.**

Students are supervised so that they perform hand hygiene before eating; before and after using the restroom; before and after putting on, touching, or removing masks or touching their face; and after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing. Additionally, there is signage displayed throughout the school to encourage proper hand hygiene and other hygiene practices by employees and students alike. The school nurse reinforces the importance of handwashing and respiratory etiquette with all students and employees in multiple settings during the academic year.

**6. Provide the School's plan to make available adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues) to support healthy hygiene practices including, as relevant, in classrooms, bathrooms, offices and common spaces.**

In addition to maintaining generous supplies of soap, paper towels, and tissues, the school has acquired over 70 additional foot-pedal-operated hand sanitizer stations and placed them throughout all school buildings. The hand sanitizers contain an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Additionally, all students and faculty are asked to bring individual supplies of hand sanitizer with them to campus. Each classroom includes bottles of hand sanitizer and tissues, which are checked and replenished by our housekeeping staff, for use by students and faculty.

**7. Provide the School's policies and procedures to acquire, distribute and support the appropriate use of PPE including gowns/coveralls, gloves, surgical masks, eye protection (face shield or goggles) and N95 masks, as relevant and necessary.**

The school has during the 2020 - 2021 school year acquired and made available to all employees not only masks, but additional PPE such as face-shields (used by some teaching faculty in addition to masks) and gloves as necessary for the employee's job function (e.g. the housekeeping staff) or for specific tasks (e.g. cleaning supplies including gloves are maintained in every classroom for spot cleaning of classrooms by teachers throughout the day). The supplies of PPE are checked and replenished by our housekeeping staff.

The school plans to similarly make available masks and PPE to all students, faculty and staff this year. The school nurse and athletic training staff have available to them, and use, medical grade PPE when appropriate for examinations of students.

### **Maintain Clean and Healthy Facilities**

- 8. Provide the School's schedule for routine cleaning of rooms, surfaces and objects, including high touch objects and surfaces (e.g., pens, keyboards, elevator buttons, light switches, handles, stair rails, faucets, phones, doorknobs, grab bars on playgrounds).**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the school has increased the frequency of environmental cleaning of high-touch surfaces and throughout the school buildings, using COVID-19 specific cleaning methods and EPA-approved disinfectants. Restrooms and other high-touch objects, for example, are cleaned by the housekeeping staff multiple times throughout the school day. Additionally, every classroom contains additional EPA-approved cleaning supplies and PPE (such as gloves) so that teachers can do additional spot cleaning between classes (for example, using disinfectant wipes or sprays on desks and alcohol based cleaners on computers or video equipment).

- 9. Provide the School's cleaning and disinfecting protocols in the event that (1) a student, staff member, or visitor develops symptoms of possible COVID-19 while in the school; or (2) if the school is notified that a student, staff member or visitor who tested positive has been in the school.**

These protocols start with a comprehensive daily cleaning of classrooms and other areas, using EPA approved cleaning materials effective against the coronavirus, with particular attention to high-touch surfaces which are cleaned multiple times per day. If the school is notified that a COVID-19 positive individual has been in the school within the prior three days, the school assesses the areas in which that individual was present and undertakes immediate additional and comprehensive cleaning of those spaces. Students/faculty/staff who would ordinarily be in such spaces would be relocated to another location in this scenario as well.

- 10. Provide the School's plan to make available sufficient and appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies.**

Our facilities and operations departments both work with our housekeeping staff to make sure we have ample cleaning and disinfection supplies. The housekeeping supervisory staff as well as our facilities and operations departments are present on campus to ensure that employees are wearing gloves and other appropriate PPE while cleaning and disinfecting spaces within the building. The school has had outstanding cooperation from our housekeeping staff during this past school year.

**11. Provide the School's plan to perform necessary maintenance to ventilation and water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) so that they are ready for use and occupancy and are adequately maintained throughout the operating period.**

**Water systems and features:** The school has been open since October 2020 and fully open since April 2021. During the time period in which the school was all-remote (March 2020 - June 2020) and/or had no indoor classroom activity (September 2020), our facilities staff continually undertook water management activities such as flushing the water system through all points (e.g. faucets, showers, toilets) as per CDC recommendation to minimize the risk of *Legionella* and other biofilm associated bacteria. Additionally, our housekeeping staff regularly cleaned all water systems during this time period in which students were not in the building to ensure maximum safety. Finally, this past year the school modified water fountains so they could only be used as bottle fillers.

**Restroom Modifications:** The school has focused extensively on restroom modifications given the relatively confined space and high volume of use of restrooms. The following measures have been taken:

- Installation of hands-free automatic faucets, soap dispensers, and paper towel dispensers;
- Installation of lids on toilet seats;
- Removal of any air hand dryers;
- Installation of screens, where practicable, to allow the opening of bathroom windows to improve air flow;
- For bathrooms with operable windows, provision of spacers to allow doors to be slightly propped open several inches to allow for cross ventilation;
- Increased ventilation fan speeds where possible.

**Ventilation Upgrades and Modifications:** During summer 2020, prior to the 2020 - 2021 school year, the school worked extensively to evaluate opportunities to potentially reduce transmission of the coronavirus through the air as well as to enhance overall air quality. Actions taken include:

- Installation of specialized filters both in building air handlers and within individual spaces. MERV 14 air filters have been installed in air handlers and MERV 13 filters for perimeter fan coil units. Air exchange rates were measured before and after installation of the upgraded MERV filters to ensure continued robust air exchange rates.
- Installation of ultraviolet light (UV) devices in the HVAC air handlers where possible as an additional means to kill viral and bacterial pathogens in the air passing through the mechanical system.
- Maximizing outside air exchanges by (a) maximizing the fresh air intake dampers to bring in as much outside air into the HVAC system as possible; (b) turning on the system several hours earlier in the morning to get several complete air flushes of the interior spaces prior to the start of the school day; and (c) inspecting classroom and other windows to allow them to be opened whenever possible;
- In addition to changes made to the school's mechanical equipment, the school has purchased portable IQ HEPA air purification units and installed them in every classroom.

**Response to a Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Case**

**12. Describe the School's policies and procedures to:**

- **a. Comply with the requirement to not admit or to dismiss any student, staff member or visitor who is COVID-19 positive or otherwise meets criteria for exclusion, per OSSE's guidance; and**
- **b. Dismiss any individual or cohort that is potentially exposed to COVID-19 within the school setting.**

a. All unvaccinated students and employees (and all contractors or other visitors entering campus buildings) must complete a daily health screening survey prior to entering the school campus. For unvaccinated students and employees, the school uses an app designed by Magnus Health which screens for (a) symptoms potentially consistent with COVID-19 (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea); (b) whether the individual has had close contact with anyone with COVID-19 or has been instructed to self-quarantine within the past 14 days; and (c) whether the individual has engaged in high-risk travel. The Magnus app instructs individuals who answer “yes” to any of the screening questions as to symptoms to not come to campus and immediately seek guidance from their healthcare provider.

In the case of vaccinated individuals (whether students or employees), they have been informed on multiple occasions and will be reminded going forward on a frequent basis that if they manifest a symptom potentially consistent with COVID-19 (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea) they must stay home from school/work until they are cleared to return by a healthcare provider.

Non-students/employees use an online health screening questionnaire that contains the same questions on the same topics as the student/employee Magnus app.

School administrators review the results for employees and the School Nurse and School Health Team review the results for students daily. They engage in follow-up communications via telephone and email to ensure that the screening was accurately completed and that, if necessary, the employee or student/student’s family understands the need for consultation with a healthcare provider and understands and adheres to the detailed return-to-school protocols that are provided in writing to students and employees on the school’s internal website.

For employees or students who develop symptoms potentially consistent with COVID-19 during the school or work day, the school has a procedure for observation and isolation in which the still-masked individual can isolate until it is safe for them to go home (for an employee) or be picked up by a parent (for a student) and to seek guidance from their healthcare provider.

b. For situations in which an individual or cohort was deemed a close contact during the 2020 - 2021 school year, the school nurse contacted every affected individual employee or family (for student exposure) as soon as possible to (i) explain the potential exposure and recommend outreach to the individual or family’s healthcare provider; (ii) explain the quarantine policy; and (iii) require that the individual either leave campus immediately (if the information about the close contact was received during the school or work day) or refrain from coming to campus (if the information about the close contact was received after the school or work day or on a weekend). The school will employ the same procedures for the upcoming school year.

**13. Provide the School's plan to comply with the requirements to:**

- **a. Identify a staff member as the COVID-19 point of contact (POC) to whom families, staff, contractors and vendors should report a positive case of COVID-19 and who is responsible for reporting positive cases of COVID-19 to DC Health;**
- **b. Report any applicable positive COVID-19 case in a student, staff member or essential visitor to DC Health on the same day the school is notified;**

- **c. Not exclude students or staff with pre-existing health conditions that present with specific COVID-19-like symptoms on the basis of those specific symptoms, if a healthcare provider has provided written or verbal documentation that those specific symptoms are not due to COVID-19.**

- a. All employees, students and families have been notified on multiple occasions, and will continue to be reminded frequently, that the school nurse is the designated point of contact to whom a positive case of COVID-19 should be reported and who will then report the positive cases of COVID-19 to DC Health.
- b. The school has a contact tracing team comprised of the School Nurse (the lead contact tracer), senior administrators, and other members of the school Health Team, which conducts contact tracing and consults, where necessary, with an infectious disease physician/epidemiologist, once a report of a diagnosis of COVID-19 for a student or employee has been received. The school's contact tracing team follows a written protocol, adhered to throughout the 2020 - 2021 school year, under which it has responded to reports of positive COVID-19 cases within the school community by engaging in same-day contact tracing sufficient to make a report to DC Health and making the report to DC Health using the online form immediately, before any disclosure to the wider school community.
- c. The school's written COVID-19 protocols for students, families and employees, made available to all on the school's internal website and covered in Zoom training sessions and follow-up communications, make it clear that community members with a pre-existing health condition (e.g. an asthmatic cough) can verify that condition via written documentation from their healthcare provider to the school nurse so that the community member may still come to school/work if the symptom is due to the relevant pre-existing condition.

**14. Provide the School's procedures to support DC Health with contract tracing in the event of a positive case of COVID-19.**

The school nurse is the lead contact tracer for the school. Upon report of a positive case, she (i) conducts an immediate telephone interview with the individual and family to learn of potential close contacts; (ii) interviews reported close contacts by telephone to ask about additional potential close contacts that the individual diagnosed with COVID-19 may not have remembered; (iii) checks the school schedule to determine all activities the individual may have participated in (e.g. a student's class schedule); (iv) consults with the school administration to cast a wide net for potential close contacts; and (v) frequently contacts the school's advising epidemiologist. The school nurse then makes a detailed written report to DC Health with her initial assessments, providing the contact information for potential close contacts, and consults as needed with the DC Health contact tracing team for any follow-up.

**15. Describe how the School will notify the school community, as appropriate, of the positive case and corresponding actions taken by the School.**

The school is committed to transparency about instances of positive COVID-19 cases with due safeguards to protect the privacy of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19. The school nurse makes a direct notification to those who have had a close contact with the individual so that they will quarantine as required. In case of a student exposure, the school nurse notifies faculty and staff members in the relevant division (elementary school, middle school, or high school) via email that a case has occurred and that contact tracing has been completed but does not identify the name of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19. Finally, the larger

community is notified each week in a weekly written communication sent via email if there have been any positive COVID-19 cases within the school community, and, if so, that contact tracing has been completed (the name of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19 is not disclosed) and close contacts, if any, are quarantining.

## **COVID-19 Testing and Vaccines**

**16. If applicable, describe the School's current or planned COVID-19 testing protocol for symptomatic and/or asymptomatic students and/or staff, including steps the School will take to encourage participation in the testing program. Please include the School's plan to ensure that results of such testing programs are reported to DC Health per DC Health's COVID-19 reporting requirements: [dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements](https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements).**

During the 2020 - 2021 school year, the school implemented COVID-19 screening testing for all students and employees. From January 2021 on, the COVID-19 screening testing for the overall school community was generally conducted at two week intervals. From March 2021 on, the school also implemented weekly COVID-19 screening testing for students/adults involved in interscholastic athletics. All positive test results for individuals positive with COVID-19 while on campus were reported to DC Health after the lab results were received by the school and the school nurse completed the preliminary contact tracing. The aggregate test positivity rate for all the community screenings and weekly testing of students involved in athletics was well under 1% at all times this past school year.

COVID-19 testing also was used for return-to-campus decisions in cases in which students or employees had symptoms potentially consistent with COVID-19. For community members with symptoms potentially consistent with COVID-19, under the school's written COVID-19 return-to-campus policies, they could not return to campus until either (i) 10 days after symptom onset, after which they could return to school if any fever had been resolved for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication **and** their symptoms were improving; or (b) they are able to provide the school nurse with clearance from their health care provider, generally via a PCR COVID-19 test that was reviewed by the health care provider, that the symptom was related to a diagnosis other than COVID-19.

For the upcoming year, the school plans to keep the requirement for symptomatic testing as described above for community members with symptoms potentially consistent with COVID-19. The school currently plans that asymptomatic screening testing will be a requirement for unvaccinated students/employees. To facilitate ease of screening testing the school will make arrangements, as it did this past year, for on-campus testing conducted by an area lab under the auspices of a physician.

**17. Provide the School's plans to support COVID-19 vaccination of staff and students, as eligible, including efforts to encourage participation in public and community-based vaccination opportunities.**

The school has adopted a COVID-19 vaccination requirement as of July 30, 2021, for all students aged 12 and over. (Exemptions are available based upon religious belief or if the COVID-19 vaccine is medically contraindicated as certified by a physician.) The school strongly encourages vaccination for all employees

and all classroom teachers have been vaccinated. As was the case last year, when employees were vaccinated under the opportunity arranged by OSSE and the Mayor's office, for which the school remains grateful, the school will give employees time off if they need to be vaccinated during work hours. Similarly, students have been given excused absences for vaccination appointments. The School Nurse has assisted employees in finding vaccination opportunities and stands ready to refer families to public and community-based vaccination opportunities should families seek assistance in finding vaccination locations.

## **Students with Disabilities**

### **18. Provide the School's plans to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities with respect to its health and safety policies and procedures.**

At this time, the school is not aware of any students with disabilities that would affect compliance with the school's COVID-19 health and safety policies and procedures. Should such a situation arise, the school will engage in an interactive process with families to identify mission-appropriate accommodations (e.g. by engaging in alternate risk mitigation strategies that will facilitate in-person learning).

## **Training, Technical Assistance, and Monitoring**

### **19. Please provide the School's plan to provide training and technical assistance on its policies and procedures to safely reopen schools in accordance with the DC Health Guidance for Schools and the OSSE Health and Safety Guidance for Schools, including:**

- **a. who will receive training and technical assistance; while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and**
- **b. the topics that the training and technical assistance will address; and**
- **c. how and by whom the training and technical assistance will be delivered.**

Given that the school has been fully reopened since April 2021, returning students and employees have had ample training and education on the school's policies and procedures for safe reopening, and for the 2021-2022 school year the training and education will continue to reinforce policies for existing students/employees and provide a high level of education to new students, families, and employees. Those efforts will include:

- In opening meetings for all employees in August 2021 prior to the start of the new school year, the school nurse has been scheduled to speak specifically on COVID-19 risk mitigation efforts and related policies and procedures;
- The school has a detailed COVID-19 risk mitigation and return to campus policies and procedures document, updated as needed, that is available on the school's internal website to the school community and sent via email link to all students and employees. The existence and contents of that document has already been, and will continue to be, publicized and discussed again with students, families, and employees prior to the start of the 2021 - 2022 school year;
- The school handbook contains detailed written guidelines for school life during the pandemic for students and families which will has been updated for the 2021 - 2022 school year and made available

via an email and on the school's website;

- School administrators and the school nurse will engage in frequent meetings at the beginning of the school year and thereafter as needed, via Zoom and in person, with employees, students and parents to explain the COVID-19 policies and procedures and answer questions;
- School administrators and the school nurse have been and remain available to students, families and employees to answer all questions about operating the school safely during the pandemic.

**20. Provide the School's plan to monitor the implementation of the health and safety plans at each campus, including how, when and by whom the implementation will be monitored, and how the School will respond if a given campus is not adhering to the plan.**

St. Albans School is a small school (under 600 students) with only one campus. The implementation of the health and safety plans that allowed reopening this past year was monitored by the school nurse; by senior administrators including the Head of School, Associate Head of School, Assistant Head of School for Finance and Operations, and Division Heads of the elementary, middle, and upper schools. Such monitoring will continue in the 2021 - 2022 school year. Any issues with implementation are dealt with quickly, via clear communication with employees, students, and families as necessary, and with collaborative efforts among the school administration and employees to find practical solutions to any obstacles to adherence.

**21. Describe the School's plans to communicate key health and safety policies and procedures to students, families, staff and visitors.**

Please see the response to question 19, above, for how key health and safety policies and procedures are communicated to students, families, and staff.

In the case of visitors, the school makes every effort to identify regular categories of visitors (e.g. families interested in having their child attend the school) and provides detailed written instructions before the visit as to the school's health and safety policies and procedures. For other visitors (e.g. a visiting contractor), the school communicates its policies through ample signage and via instructions at the reception desk.

Lastly, the school requires contractors to sign a special COVID-19 rider to standard service contracts in which they agree to abide by all of the school's COVID-19 health and safety protocols.