Regina Academies

Guidelines for Safely Reopening our Schools

The Regina Academies are [classical schools](https://reginaacademies.org/2020/02/06/catholic-education/)[[1]](#endnote-1), and in classical schools students learn through a dialogue between the teacher and students. As *Catholic* classical schools, we especially honor the Logos – the Word Made Flesh. Through a relationship with him, we come to know the glory of the Father and grow in grace and truth. In fact, the incarnation is the model and foundation of our curriculum. It is not only WHY we teach and WHAT we teach – it is HOW we teach. Catholic classical schools teach as Jesus taught: by word and example, person to person and heart to heart. We trust that by following his example, our students will grow in wisdom and virtue to become the distinct individuals God created them to be. While safety is our first concern, the integrity of our model of classical education is a great consideration.

Our [Catholic community](https://reginaacademies.org/the-regina-academies-faithfully-catholic/)[[2]](#endnote-2) is the heart of the Regina Academies and the last several months of being separated from that community have been painful for our teachers and students. We look forward to welcoming everyone back into our schools in the fall. Technology has been an essential but poor substitute for the personal interaction that is HOW we teach in our schools.

**Guiding Principles: Concern for Children’s Safety**

As much as we look forward to having everyone back in school, **our first concern is safety**. The initial modeling of the spread of the Coronavirus has never reached the level initially projected, but the tragic loss of life has devastated many families. Prudence dictates a reasonable degree of caution in reopening our schools.

As a Catholic community, our concern for everyone’s safety is more than physical. Our concern for children is that they feel safe and secure physically, emotionally, and spiritually in their homes *and* in school. **Children have the least to gain from lockdowns and the most to lose**. They should not be expected to live in fear, and the best way for them to not be fearful and remain positive is to rejoin their peers and re-establish routines.

The CDC [*Considerations for Schools*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html)*[[3]](#endnote-3)* acknowledge that their guidelines must be adjusted “to meet the unique needs and circumstances of the local community.” To this end, all of the Regina Academies will follow the guidelines outlined below. Since our schools are geographically diverse, some modifications may be made to these guidelines by each school as their unique circumstances allow.

**Regina Academies Guidelines:**

**Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread**

The Regina Academies respect parents’ primary role in protecting their children. Therefore, we ask that parents assume the first responsibility of encouraging behaviors that limit the spread of Covid-19 in our schools. The head of school for each Academy will serve as the pandemic coordinator.

1. Temperature Checks
   1. Each school will decide if it is prudent to check temperatures as students enter the school each day. This determination will be made by the number of cases active in their area, a known possible infection, and capacity. Parents are asked to check their children’s temperature before they leave for school in the morning.
      1. NOTE: The effectiveness of temperature screenings, especially for children, is unknown. According to the [Centers for Disease Control](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6914e4.htm?s_cid=mm6914e4_w) (CDC)[[4]](#endnote-4), children are less likely to develop a fever or cough if infected with Covid-19.
   2. Please keep children home if there is any sign of illness, if they have a temperature of at least 100.4 degrees, or have tested positive or are showing [Covid-19 symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)[[5]](#endnote-5) including fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell.
   3. Students who feel ill at school or who have a fever will be sent home.
2. Exposure
   1. Students or teachers who have recently had close contact with a person with Covid-19 should notify the school and stay at home to monitor their health.
3. Hygiene
   1. Students will be asked to bring a small bottle of hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and a container of disinfecting wipes to school as a part of their supply list.
   2. Desks will be cleaned with disinfecting wipes at the end of each day.
   3. Hand sanitizer will be provided at the entrance to the school and in the classrooms. Students will be required to wash hands or use hand sanitizer when entering the classroom and before and after lunch and snack.
4. Face Coverings
   1. While the Regina Academies’ small class sizes allow for physical distancing in the classroom, students and staff should wear a cloth face mask or face shield inside the school building in accordance with the Executive Order issued by the Governor of the State of Pennsylvania updated on August 17. Face covering protocols may change over the course of the school year to conform to changing State of Pennsylvania requirements.
      1. The order makes provision for exceptions to the order for medical or mental health conditions, or disability. Schools may require documentation of the condition.
      2. 10 minute breaks are permitted throughout the day and coverings are not required if eating or drinking, or if they would be unsafe.
   2. Children may be required to wear a cloth face covering if they use district- provided bussing.
   3. Students will follow parish guidelines regarding the use of face covering when visiting the church for adoration or to attend Mass.

**Maintaining Healthy Environments**

Each Regina Academy will implement strategies to maintain healthy environments.

* Cleaning and Disinfection
  + Staff will routinely clean and disinfect touched surfaces throughout the day including playground equipment, door handles, sink handles and any shared object.
  + School cleaning products will be stored safely away from children.
  + Classrooms will be deep cleaned if any student in the class is confirmed to have Covid-19.
* Sharing Objects
  + Children should come to school with the materials they need for their own personal use. Teachers will provide supply lists. Please make sure all supplies are in containers and clearly marked. The sharing of supplies is discouraged.
  + Water fountains will not be available. Students should bring a water bottle with them to school that is labeled for their own use. Bottle may be filled during the day.
  + The Head of School in coordination with the early childhood teachers will determine the best way to manage sharing of objects in Montessori or other classrooms.
* Desks and Tables
  + Desks will be placed as far apart as possible and seating at tables also safely placed to ensure required social distancing.
  + Barriers will not be placed between students in classrooms. We are committed to ensuring the safety of children but wish to avoid instilling in them any sense that they or their peers are a threat to the other’s safety.
* Communal Spaces
  + Any use of communal spaces such as the church, cafeterias, and playgrounds will be staggered and cleaned after use.
  + Restrooms will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day.
* Food Service
  + Lunch will be managed on a school-by-school basis depending upon the space and staffing available. The availability of school lunches will be determined on a school by school basis.
* Morning Forum
  + Each Head of School will determine the best and safest way to conduct Morning Forum in their school.

**Maintaining Healthy Operations**

The primary concern of every Regina Academy is the safety of students and staff. To that end, the following general guidelines will be in place at each school

* Flexibility in Attendance
  + Schools will be flexible in enforcing policies regarding absence. Parents are encouraged to keep children at home without penalty if there is any question of illness.
  + There will be no awards for perfect attendance until further notice.
* Visitors to School
  + For the time being, no nonessential visitors will be admitted into the school. Parents will be admitted into the school lobby only as needed to conduct school business. If a phone call will suffice in lieu of a visit to school, please make the call. Visitors will always be asked to wear masks while on the premises.
* Small Groups (Cohorts)
  + The school will make every effort to keep students together in small groups, e.g., their individual class, to limit exposure to others.
* Communications
  + Each school will implement a parent communication system to notify parents of any significant event affecting the school.
* Staff Training
  + Each school will train staff on proper safety during the beginning of the year in-service meetings.
  + Faculty will be updated regularly regarding protocols and the heads of school, or their delegate, will ensure that safety protocols are being enforced in the school.

**What Do We Do If Someone Gets Sick?**

* Clean and Disinfect
  + If someone becomes sick with Covid-19, the student’s or teacher’s classroom will be closed and disinfected with no further admittance for 24 hours.
* Notifications
  + Parents will be notified in general if there is a confirmed case of Covid-19 in a school. Parents in the class where the virus appeared will be notified that their children might have been exposed and are directed to contact their medical provider for further guidance.
* Quarantine
  + Anyone diagnosed with Covid-19 should be isolated according to the CDC guidelines and will not be allowed to return to school until cleared by their physician.

1. See <https://reginaacademies.org/2020/02/06/catholic-education/> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. See <https://reginaacademies.org/the-regina-academies-faithfully-catholic/> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6914e4.htm?s_cid=mm6914e4_w> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

   |  |  |
   | --- | --- |
   | Arrival -K -8th grade  8:00AM-8:30AM | Cars enter car line from Argyle Rd. entrance to the parking lot and pull to the top near the main office. Students should wear a mask or shield as they enter the school through main office in the rear of the school where a teacher will greet them. The students will proceed to their classroom where a teacher will be present to receive them. |
   | Arrival- AM and PM PK – 8:25AM and after. | Parents park in the upper lot near Lancaster Ave. and walk their child through the parking lot toward Argyle Ave. and to the Church yard. Parents should sign their student in, confirming that they are asymptomatic, then the child will be led into the yard to play. |
   | Classroom | Desks placed to meet social distancing guidance. Classroom procedures for movement within the classroom to maximize distancing. New windows utilized and open when feasible to enhance air circulation. Students should wear a mask or face shield during the school day. Mask/shield breaks will be taken throughout the day. |
   | Forum | Forum will be held in each classroom, led by Mrs. Coffey, over Zoom. |
   | Cohorts | Students will participate in PE, recess and lunch with their cohort:  Kindergarten  Pre-K 3 and 4  1st and 2nd grade  3rd and 4th grade  5th and 6th grade  7th and 8th grade |
   | Lunch | Additional lunch period added to reduce the number of students at recess and eating lunch together.  11:30AM-12:15PM – 1st-4th grade  12:15PM-1:00PM- 5th -8th grades  Students will eat with their cohort in the school hall at assigned seats to maintain recommended social distance. Students will assist with cleaning of tables after lunch.  M-W-F hot lunches will remain available for purchase. Milk will **not** be available for purchase. |
   | Hallway | One class at a time will move in the halls. Visual cues will be placed on the floor to help students spread out while moving in the halls. |
   | Dismissal- 1st-8th grade | Cars will enter car line, marked with cones, from Lancaster Ave. and pull forward to the end of the line near the Argyle Rd. exit. Students will be dismissed from their classroom, exit the main office doors and walk to their car with adult supervision and wearing a face shield or mask. Cones will be used to define boundaries for students as they move to their car.  Parents with children who need to be placed in car seats or who need assistance with buckling restraints need to park in the lot instead of entering car line. |
   | Dismissal – PK3 (11:30AM), PK4 and K (12:15PM) | Students will dismiss from the main office in the rear of the building. Parents should park their car in the upper lot near Lancaster Ave. and wait outside the office doors for their child to be dismissed. Social distance should observed by parents while waiting for their child. |
   | Park Days | Students in 1st-8th grade will walk to South Ardmore Park with teachers during their respective lunch period on Thursdays. Students should bring “brown bag lunch” to the park which is disposable. |
   | Face-Coverings | All students should wear a plain mask or face shield to school daily. Masks or shields should be as plain as possible to avoid distraction in the classroom. Teachers will be given guidance about mask and shield breaks throughout the day. |
   | Outdoor space | Teachers will use outdoor space as much as possible, while maintaining social distancing to afford children more mask/shield breaks. |
   | Handwashing | Students will bring hand sanitizer to school for frequent cleaning of hands. Increased soap and water hand washing will take place before and after eating. Hand sanitizer will also be available throughout the school for use when students enter and leave the school |
   | Cleaning | Cleaning of high touch surfaces and bathrooms will take place daily. Students will clean their desks at the end of the day. |
   | Back to School Nights | Will be conducted virtually |
   | Field trips and other assemblies | On hold until further notice |
   | Special school events | Are on the school calendar, but in a TBD status until we are closer to the event date. |

   [↑](#endnote-ref-5)