Grace Episcopal



 School

Guide for Managing COVID-19

 2022-2023

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The policies in this guide are intended to aid our work at Grace Episcopal School in an environment that is ever-evolving and ever-changing. Grace Episcopal School may change, delete, or suspend any part or parts of the policies in this guide at any time without prior notice. Any such action will be communicated to all employees, parents, and affected parties.

As Grace Episcopal School opens for the 2022-2023 school year, we offer the following protocols and considerations to help protect students, teachers, staff, and administrators and to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This guide is created in alignment with suggested best practices by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Texas Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), state and federal health and government officials, and the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. These protocols and considerations are meant to supplement, not replace, any state or local safety laws, rules, and regulations with which the school must comply.

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#  Guiding Principles

We are committed to delivering the Grace Episcopal School mission through on-campus learning. In order to safely open school, we are assessing information, acting decisively, and developing guidelines and procedures in service of our community.

 The following ideas have guided Grace Episcopal School’s decisions regarding school attendance during the current pandemic.

* Protect the health and safety of GES students and staff.
* Be compliant with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC); the Texas Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); local, state and federal health and government officials; and the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.
* Provide a school day experience with as many familiar routines as possible.
* Use prevention strategies as recommended by the CDC. Best practices involve layering the following strategies so that if one is not present, the other layers together will help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
	+ Promoting vaccination
	+ Consistent and correct mask usage
	+ Staying home when sick and getting tested
	+ Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantining
	+ Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
	+ Physical distancing and cohorting
	+ Ventilation
	+ Cleaning and disinfecting

#  State Mandated Requirements

1. **Reporting COVID-19 Cases to WCCHD**

GES must report COVID-19 cases within the school to Williamson County and Cities Health District within 48 hours of being notified of cases.

## Reporting COVID-19 Cases to Child Care Regulation

GES must contact Child Care Regulation to report the presence of COVID-19 in our school within 48 hours of being notified of cases.

## Notification of COVID-19 Cases

When a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 case has been on campus, GES will notify parents. GES must maintain confidentiality of the child or employee.

## Exclusion of COVID-19 Cases

As provided in the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Rule, GES must exclude students from attending school in person who have or are suspected of having COVID-19. As noted in the rule,

exclusion shall continue until the conditions for re-entry are met:

* For children with symptoms, at least 5 days have passed since symptom onset, and fever free, and other symptoms have improved.
* Children who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms must stay home until at least 5 days after the day they were tested.

# Prevention and Mitigation Measures

Using multiple or layered COVID-19 prevention strategies remains critical to protect people, including children and child care program staff, especially in areas of moderate-to-high community transmission levels.

## A. Masks

1. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19, should wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time they are around others inside their home or in public regardless of whether they are vaccinated or have recently had COVID-19 as per the CDC. They should not go to places where they are unable to wear a mask.
2. GES will ask all adult visitors and staff members, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a mask indoors when the COVID-19 Community Level is high.
3. GES will model and teach respect for individual choices regarding masking making clear that bullying of individuals for their personal choices about masking will not be tolerated.
4. Per the CDC, in general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors.

## B. Quarantine and Isolation

For detailed guidance on quarantine and isolation in early care education, please visit this website flowchart for determining readmission to GES. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/community/schools-childcare/sick-at-child-care-flowchart.html

## Symptoms of COVID-19

People with COVID-19 may have a wide range of symptoms. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. People with the following symptoms may have COVID-19:

* Fever or chills
* Cough
* Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
* Fatigue
* Muscle or body aches
* Headache
* New loss of taste or smell
* Sore throat
* Congestion or runny nose
* Nausea or vomiting
* Diarrhea

 This list does not include all possible symptoms.

Any member of GES (staff, guardians, children) exhibiting any of these symptoms should stay home. We encourage anyone exhibiting new or worsening symptoms of possible COVID-19 to seek a COVID-19 test.

C. **Ventilation**

Improving ventilation is an important COVID-19 prevention strategy that can reduce the number of virus particles in the air. Bringing fresh outdoor air into a building helps keep virus particles from concentrating inside. At GES we will keep doors and windows opened as much as possible. We may use child-safe fans within the classroom to increase the effectiveness of open windows.

## D. Testing

1. Testing of symptomatic Individuals

Anyone with COVID-like symptoms should get tested, regardless of vaccination status or prior infection. If a staff member or child is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, GES will recommend the symptomatic person be tested. Per the CDC, “Getting tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are compatible with COVID-19 will help with rapid contact tracing and prevent possible spread, especially if key prevention strategies of masking, distancing, and cohorting are not in use.” If a child in care or staff member gets tested because they have symptoms or were potentially exposed to the virus, they should stay away from others pending test results and follow the advice of their health care provider.

1. Testing of close contacts

Per the CDC, people, regardless of vaccination status, who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should get tested at least 5 days after exposure. (Note: If a close contact has had COVID-19 in the last 90 days, they do not need to test unless they develop symptoms.) Per CDC, people who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 should wear a well-fitted mask for 10 full days any time they are around others inside their home or in public (regardless of whether they are vaccinated or have recently had COVID-19). They should not go to places where they are unable to wear a mask. • Free at-home COVID-19 tests are now available to order from the federal government. Every home in the U.S. is eligible to order free at-home tests. If you already ordered your first set, order a second or third set today. Visit https://www.covidtests.gov/ to place an order or call 1- 800-232- 0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489).

## E. Meals and Snacks

The CDC offers the following guidance to childcare programs on meals and snacks:

1. Given very low risk of transmission from food, food packaging, surfaces and objects, GES will not make any changes to normal lunchtime or snack time procedures. (Note, children will not share cups, utensils, etc.)
2. We will wash hands with soap and water before and after meals.
3. Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food will be washed and sanitized before and after meals.

## F. Field Trips and Events

When the COVID-19 Community Level in Williamson County is high, GES will suspend all field trips and large events or gatherings. We will do our best to communicate this in advance of the event.

## G. Vaccination

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States are effective at protecting people from getting seriously ill, being hospitalized, and dying. When infections occur among vaccinated people, they tend to be milder than among those who are unvaccinated. As with vaccines for other diseases, people who are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines are optimally protected. However, scientific evidence suggests that infected persons, even if vaccinated, can spread virus to others. We encourage staff and families, including extended family members who have frequent contact with children in GES, to get vaccinated and boosted as soon as possible. Parents should talk to their pediatricians about the COVID-19 vaccine for children. For more information regarding the vaccine, please visit

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html **Please note:** When your child receives any immunizations, including the COVID-19 vaccine, please submit an updated immunization record to GES as soon as possible. We will be audited for vaccination compliance late in the first semester with follow-up of delinquencies in the spring semester.

## H. Considerations for At-Risk Individuals

Per the CDC, some people are more likely than others to become severely ill if they get COVID-19, which means they are more likely to be hospitalized, need intensive care, require a ventilator to help them breathe, or die. Those people include older adults, people with certain medical conditions, and pregnant and recently pregnant people. People at higher risk for severe illness should talk with their healthcare provider about how best to protect themselves from COVID-19. Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines (getting primary series and booster) and following preventive measures for COVID-19 are important. This is especially important for people who are older as well as those who have severe health conditions or more than one health condition. Per the CDC, people who are unvaccinated are at greater risk of becoming infected with and dying from COVID-19 than those who are vaccinated. Those who are vaccinated and received booster doses have the lowest risk of becoming infected or dying from COVID-19. Those who are at high risk for severe illness and those who are unvaccinated can take the following steps to protect themselves: • Get vaccinated and boosted as soon as eligible • Wear a well-fitting mask • Test early

People who have symptoms should get tested using a viral test (rapid antigen or PCR) for COVID-19 right away. People should also test at least 5 days after known or suspected close contact to COVID-19. For people who test positive for COVID-19 and have one or more health conditions that increase their risk of severe illness, treatment may be available that could lower their chance of becoming very sick. These people are advised to contact a health professional right away after a positive test to determine if they are eligible for treatment, even if symptoms are mild. Treatment must be started within the first few days to be effective.