

Health and Attendance The school strives to maintain a healthful and safe school environment. We ask parents to keep home any child who, because of illness, cannot participate comfortably in classroom or school activities or who may present a health risk to other children. In addition, the child will be excluded for any contagious conditions according to guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics and District of Columbia regulations. As a general rule, children well enough to come to school are considered well enough to participate fully in all activities, including outdoor recess and sports. Likewise, students who are too ill to attend academic classes should not plan to participate in that day's athletics.

If a child arrives at school ill, or becomes ill during the school day, s/he is sent to the Health Office on either campus. The school nurse will notify the child's parents or designated caregiver and care for the child until s/he can be picked up. Please remember that the Health Office is not designed to accommodate children who become ill at school for long periods of time.

Conditions requiring exclusion from school:

- ***Fever (temperature 100°F and above), nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.*** The child may return to school after being symptom-free without medication **for a full 24 hours.**
- ***Strep throat.*** The child may return to school after being **on antibiotics for a full 24 hours.**
- ***Pink eye.*** The child may return to school after being **on antibiotics for a full 24 hours.**
- ***Head lice.*** The child must be examined by the school nurse, who will determine if treatment has been effective and live lice have been removed.
- ***Illnesses or conditions that are deemed contagious*** according to the guidelines set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the District of Columbia (i.e. chicken pox, shingles, measles, mumps).

The school notifies parents of a contagious disease when it is first reported. Please cooperate with us by promptly notifying the office if your child contracts one of these childhood illnesses.

Food Allergies The growing incidence of food allergies is a serious concern nationally. The partnership that St. Patrick's seeks to foster in all areas among students, parents, and faculty and staff is of particular importance in promoting the safety of our students with life-threatening food allergies.

St. Patrick's is an "allergy-aware" community that strives to help students learn to manage their allergies in developmentally appropriate ways. This approach means that our youngest students may be in classes that have more significant food restrictions than our older students. By taking this approach, we encourage students with food allergies to develop a sense of security knowing that schoolwide guidelines are in place to protect their physical and emotional well-being. St. Patrick's guidelines regarding children's allergies are based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE).

The Health Office assists parents with the management of children's life-threatening allergies while they are at school by providing faculty and staff training; distributing the parent-provided Food Allergy Action Plan to teachers; working closely with the provider of the school lunch program and with other food vendors, including those on off-campus field trips; storing and/or administering medication; and providing other necessary care to children with food allergies.

Parents of children with food allergies must provide the Health Office with a yearly Food Allergy Action Plan (located on the Magnus Health Portal) for their child and prescribed medication for anaphylaxis treatment (such as an Epi-Pen). Parents should contact the Health Office if they have any concerns about their children's participation in the school lunch program. The Health Office is available to parents as a resource for ingredient lists for school lunches and snacks.

Birthdays and other seasonal/holiday celebrations are special times for children, but they can be difficult for children with food allergies. In order to ensure that our classroom celebrations are both safe and inclusive, parents and other caregivers may not bring in any items to share with other members of the class that may contain, or are made in a facility that processes, peanuts or tree-nuts. Other food allergies are managed individually.

At the beginning of the school year, we ask that parents of children with food allergies provide the Health Office and homeroom teachers with a list of child-specific allergy-friendly treats that can guide the selection of birthday and other celebration treats that the entire class can enjoy. Teachers will share these lists with parents at Back-to-School Nights. In Nursery to Grade 1, the school provides allergy-friendly treats from an approved vendor for specified seasonal/holiday celebrations. However, we move away from that arrangement in Grade 2 and beyond, consistent with our commitment to a developmental approach.

Students with food allergies will only be allowed to eat store-bought goods with legible ingredient lists that do not contain the allergen in question or foods specifically approved by their parents. If parents of children with food allergies choose to do so, they may provide a container of non-perishable special treats for the homeroom teacher to have on hand.

We encourage parents of children both with and without food allergies to rely on the Health Office as a vital resource as we work together in partnership to protect all of our children—in this instance, ensuring that food items entering classrooms and other spaces are safe for all students in the group for which the food items are intended. Parents of children with food restrictions should note those restrictions in Magnus.

Accidents and Emergencies Accidents during the school day are treated with simple first-aid procedures when appropriate. In cases of severe injury or illness, 911 will be called immediately and the parent notified. Staff at St. Patrick's are not permitted to transport any child for medical care. All decisions about emergency treatment of the child will be left up to the 911 response team and the emergency room physician.

Administration of Medications at School When it is necessary for a child to take medications during school hours, parents must observe the following procedures:

- Complete a Permission for the Administration of Medication Form, available online through the student's Magnus Health Portal. All medication should be in the original pharmacy-labeled container and given to the nurse for safe storage.
- Complete an Over-the-Counter Medication Permission Form, available online through the student's Magnus Health Portal. **Over-the-Counter Medication Permission Forms are valid for 365 days from the date of the actual physician's signature. No over-the-counter medication will be administered without a completed form that includes a physician's signature.**
- Coordinate procedures with the school nurse in the case of medication to be administered over an extended period of time.
- Observe the stipulation that school personnel will not administer the first dose of any medication or administer any other medication without appropriate authorization from the parent and physician. **Narcotics or medications containing narcotics, such as codeine, will not be administered at school. Students requiring narcotics or medications containing narcotics should not be in attendance at school.**

Administration of Medications on Overnight Field Trips For Upper School students participating in overnight field trips, any prescription medication to be administered during the trip must be submitted in the original pharmacy-labeled container specifying medication and dose to be administered. Any over-the-counter medications must also be submitted in the original package with the company's dosing instructions listed on the package. **No loose or unlabeled medications will be administered.** An overnight field trip medication form will be sent home prior to each trip and must be completed and returned by the parent or guardian for each student.

Health Screenings Students are checked periodically for head lice during the school year. Regular surveillance at home can help prevent the spread of cases of head lice. If your child contracts head lice, please notify the school nurse so that other students may be monitored, as indicated. **St. Patrick's does not exclude students with nits from the classroom. However, students may not remain in school with an active head lice infestation. Following appropriate treatment, including the removal of head lice, students may return to school after being cleared by the school nurse.** The school nurse is available to help educate parents and other caregivers about evidence-based treatment options and to assist in monitoring students for signs of reinfestation.

As a service to parents, the school schedules vision screening of all Nursery School, Grade 2, and Grade 4 students, and hearing screening of all children in PK and Kindergarten, all new students in Grades 1 to 6, and other students referred by their teachers or parents. Parents are notified if any irregularity is detected in any of the screenings so that they may arrange further testing.

Emergency Closing

- **In the event of inclement weather that forces a change in normal school routines—either a school closing or a delayed opening—St. Patrick's will notify families in multiple ways, all of which we will strive to complete by 6:15 am.**
 - **We post our plans on our website and on our voicemail greeting at 202-342-2805.**
 - **Parents for whom we have current email addresses and telephone numbers will receive an email and an automated voice message alerting them to the school closing or delayed opening. Parents who have opted out of telephone calls for weather-related school closings or delayed openings will receive emails and text messages alerting them to any such changes.**
 - **We also rely on five local television stations—Channels 4, 5, 7, 9, and cable News Channel 8—and a local radio station—WTOP 103.5 FM—to convey St. Patrick's plans on days with inclement weather.**
- **If St. Patrick's has a delayed opening, St. Patrick's will begin classes at 10:00 am and begin receiving students at 9:30 am.**
- **If St. Patrick's has a delayed opening on a Friday, school will not open for students in the Nursery School (Nursery and PK), except for students enrolled in Extended Day. Those Nursery and PK students may begin arriving at 9:30 am. However, St. Patrick's will begin classes at 10:00 am for students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 and begin receiving students at 9:30 am.**
- **In all instances, parents can confirm St. Patrick's opening plans on our website and on the voicemail greeting at 202-342-2805.**
- **St. Patrick's will strive to remain open once the school day has started. Should that become unwise or impossible, we will notify parents with an automated voice message, by email, and on our website. Parents must be sure to maintain current home, office, cell, and emergency numbers and email addresses by logging in to the website and updating their profiles.**
- **In the case of an emergency or other unscheduled early dismissal, parents should report to the School Office or other designated location—not directly to the classroom—to pick up children. School personnel will coordinate the orderly dismissal of students to parents.**