

Briarcrest Christian School's COVID-19 FAQ and the School Year 2021-2022

***INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

(Revised 2/14/22)

It is our intention to be on campus again this school year. With this goal in mind, we are attempting to minimize risks to the extent feasible and reasonable. The following guidelines will assist you in doing your part during this challenging time.

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. With that said, research from the CDC and others, has found that while children can be infected with COVID-19 and some severe outcomes have been reported in children, relatively few children with this virus are hospitalized or have severe symptoms. At BCS, we are attempting to provide a more normal environment for our students as we begin this school year. We are using mitigating strategies, realizing that it is not possible to eliminate risks completely. We will have cases and some individuals will be quarantined.

We will monitor the virus, current trends, and our school community. We have four RN's who serve in three full-time positions. They will be instrumental in assisting with contact tracing, quarantines, and answering your questions. We have a team of doctors and other professionals who will be helping us assess our progress. Please know that our desire is normalcy and we are beginning with a less-restrictive plan. *Should we need to adjust our strategies, we will communicate quickly and effectively.*

The current variant is generally described as mild and has cold-like to flu-like symptoms. However, it is highly transmissible. We have revised our guidelines to limit student quarantines.

What are the health and hygiene practices that will be followed?

- Students, faculty and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds frequently during the school day. We have multiple locations for handwashing and provide anti-bacterial soap. We will have a video of proper handwashing and other effective hygiene strategies on the BCS Health Services page on our website.
- When handwashing is not possible, we have hand-sanitizer stations located throughout the school that contain at least 60% alcohol sanitizing solution.
- Students, faculty, staff and visitors should be encouraged to cover coughs, sneezes, etc. with a tissue, and when finished, to dispose of it properly and wash their hands.
- We will use an electrostatic sprayer with an approved disinfectant throughout the campus.
- HEPA filters will be used in our classrooms as a health/mitigation strategy.

Are faculty and students required to have a COVID-19 Health Screening daily?

- All faculty and staff are required to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms prior to coming to work each morning. Taking your temperature and asking the questions are required for the self-assessment.

- Parents will conduct the COVID-19 self-screening for their student(s) each morning. Taking your child's temperature and asking the questions are required for the assessment. *We all need to minimize risks for one another, and this should become part of our morning routine.*
 - Have you had a fever in the last 24 hours?
 - Have you taken medicine to reduce your fever in the last 24 hours?
 - Have you been in close contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or sore throat?
 - Have you had a new loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
 - Are you awaiting test results for COVID-19?
- If you answer "YES" to any of the questions, you must stay home.

How are high-risk contacts determined?

- We are no longer contact tracing.

What will happen if a student gets sick during the school day?

- Students in each division have access to an RN on campus each day. Should a student become ill at school, he/she will be assessed immediately for COVID-19 symptoms. Should a student have symptoms, he/she will be taken to an isolation room. Our isolation rooms are equipped with negative pressure. It is imperative that the student be picked up within 30 minutes. Our BCS nurse will provide information of the assessment, and you will be advised to contact your pediatrician. You will need to contact the BCS nurse with the information you gained from the doctor for determining your child's re-admittance to school. Different situations may have different facts, and we will work through these on an individual basis.

How will it be handled when a student has a confirmed case of COVID-19 with symptoms?

- The student should have already shifted to remote learning, as he/she would have most likely been awaiting test results. Please communicate the test result to the principal and continue remote learning until the student meets the following criteria as defined by the CDC:
 - Isolate for 5 days and, if asymptomatic at that time, one may leave isolation on Day 6 and return to school. A mask should be worn for an additional 5 days.
 - If symptomatic after 5 days, one remains quarantined for the full 10 days.
- The classroom(s) will be cleaned thoroughly.

How will it be handled when a member of a household is being tested for COVID-19 and it is not a mandated test related to the person's employment?

- If a member of a household is being tested for COVID-19, due to a high-risk exposure, symptoms, or the suspicion of having contracted the virus, the student(s) in the home will need to remain at home pending test results.

How will it be handled when a student has a confirmed case of COVID-19 with no symptoms?

- If a student continues to have no symptoms, he/she may return to school after 5 days from the date the test was administered. On Day 6, the student may return to school and wear a mask for an additional 5 days. If the student develops symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance in the question above.

How will it be communicated when a student has a confirmed case of COVID-19?

- We are no longer sending emails about confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Do fully vaccinated individuals have to quarantine from a high-risk exposure?

**Please note that the definition for fully vaccinated has changed per the CDC and TDOH. One is still considered to have immunity if they are boosted, had a documented case in the past 90 days or are less than 6 months from their second mRNA dose of or within 2 months of the J&J vaccine.

- For people who are unvaccinated or *are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not boosted*, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by masking for an additional 5 days.
- Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure.
 - The above-mentioned groups may test after 5 days of the exposure and with a negative COVID test return without masking. Home testing is allowed. One may return to school without testing and mask for 5 additional days if he/she is symptom free.
- The new CDC and TDOH guidelines for fully vaccinated individuals recommend masking for 10 days after a high-risk exposure.

How will it be handled when a student with a member of his/her household has a confirmed case of COVID-19?

- If a member of your household has a confirmed case of COVID-19, please call your principal. The student will shift to remote learning. (Fully vaccinated/boosted individuals and those who tested positive for COVID-19 in the last three months are not subject to quarantine.) If the affected family member is completely isolating, the student may return to school 5 days from the last contact/exposure if no symptoms and wear a mask for the remaining 5 days. If a student is exhibiting symptoms, please consult your pediatrician. If the contact cannot separate from the case in the home, he/she should get tested 5 days after the case has completed his/her isolation. With a negative test, the contact may return to school, monitor for symptoms, and wear a mask for an additional 5 days.

How will it be handled when a student is quarantined and not fully vaccinated?

- If a student has been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, please call your principal. The student will shift to remote learning. The student may return to school 5 days from the last contact/exposure with a negative test as long as the student has no symptoms.
 - If a student develops symptoms during quarantine, please call the school nurse to receive instructions on isolating and a revised return date to school.
 - Self-testing is acceptable.

How will it be handled when a student has a possible case of COVID-19?

- If a student has a symptom(s), please call your pediatrician for guidance. *If there is no other diagnosed reason for the symptoms*, the student will need to shift to remote learning, unless he/she meets the criteria for not quarantining. Please call the principal to let him or her know of the situation.

How will re-admission to school be handled when a student had the symptoms below?

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| • Symptoms | Re-Admission |
| ○ Fever | 48 hours |
| ○ Shortness of breath (not asthma related) | 7 days after with a negative test/10 days/school nurse approval/pediatrician's note |
| ○ Cough and/or sore throat (not asthma related) | 7 days after with a negative test/10 days/school nurse approval/pediatrician's note |

How will the above policies on how to handle COVID-19 apply to faculty and staff?

- The applicable COVID-19 protocols will be followed for faculty and staff.

Will the school be using special air filtration systems in the classrooms?

- BCS has HEPA filters in each classroom. These filters help clean the air and will be used as a mitigation strategy in our classrooms.

What is physical distancing at school?

- We are not contact tracing and physical distancing is no longer implemented at school.

How will absences that exceed the maximum amount be handled?

- Principals will work through absences that exceed the maximum amount on a case by case basis.

Will faculty and students be required to wear masks?

- Masks are optional at BCS.

What are the different learning plans at BCS should the need arise for an alternative approach?

- While our goal is to be on campus full-time, we have the capability of moving to a remote learning option or hybrid learning option. We will be utilizing Microsoft Teams for “live” or synchronous learning for 5th-12th grade. Our SK-4th grade students will have some “live” or synchronous learning coupled with teacher webpages and asynchronous learning.
- We have the availability of technology for all SK-4th grade classrooms. Our students will be well-versed in technology, but only as a resource and support of our curriculum. Should an alternative plan to education be necessary, our 5th-12th graders already have devices. SK-4th grade students will be assigned a device from BCS.
- While it is our goal for **all students** to remain on campus, in person, full-time, we have been told that our two, three and four-year old classrooms may remain open under the Tennessee Department of Education Emergency Childcare unless otherwise instructed by a governmental directive. It is our hope that the Tennessee Department of Education would extend this to include all elementary students, as we know that many of our elementary families depend on their students being in school to allow parents to work.

Will students be allowed to bring water bottles?

- Yes. Water bottle refill stations are located throughout the school and students may have their water bottles in class.

Will water fountains be open?

- Yes.

Will students be allowed to use lockers?

- Yes.

Will hallway traffic be one way only?

- No. Hallway traffic will be normal.

Where will our students be eating lunch, attending activity period (6-12) and chapel?

- Students will have regular seating in the normal areas for these activities.

Will FLIK be serving lunch and how do I order for my student?

- FLIK will be serving lunch in the cafeteria. Please see the information on the BCS webpage for further details. Students may bring their own lunches and snacks.

Will visitors, other than essential ones, be allowed in the building?

- We will have parents in the building this year.

Will we have athletics?

- We will participate in athletics. High school athletics are subject to TSSAA and the availability of leagues, etc.

How will Band and Choir class be handled?

- We will be using HEPA filters.

How will PTF meetings be handled?

- PTF meetings will be held in person.

Will we have class retreats for applicable grades?

- Yes. We will enjoy the fellowship with one another and hold our “beginning of the year retreats” as usual. Should you choose to hold your student out of a retreat, we respect your decision.

Will we have class parties?

- We will have class parties for applicable grades.

Will we have field trips?

- Yes. We will have field trips for applicable grades, clubs, etc.

Will seniors be able to have senior lunch out and senior lunch in?

- Yes. We will have senior lunch out and senior lunch in.