

## Self-Quarantine/School Absence Policy

**\*\* subject to change \*\***

Last Updated 1/17/2023\*

The following policy covers students, aides, teachers, TROs, and anyone else seeking to enter BNS's facilities.

***BNS requires that students are vaccinated against COVID-19. It is strongly recommended that all adults, and all eligible children, receive a COVID-19 vaccination and booster as appropriate given current recommendations and in consultation with their doctor(s). Adults and children who are not vaccinated may be required to follow different policies with regard to their involvement and participation at BNS.***

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### GENERAL ILLNESS POLICY

In addition to this usual info, see info below regarding COVID-19 symptoms and community responsibility.

The Blacksburg New School has adopted the following policy regarding illness for students attending the school. It is important to the overall health of the school community that EVERY family follow these guidelines:

A student having a fever of one hundred (100 F) degrees or greater must be picked up from school immediately. *The student may not return to BNS until they have been without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.*

Any student with chicken pox may not attend school for at least 5 school days. All blisters must be "scabbed over" prior to the student's return.

**\*UPDATES: 10/26/22:** removed broken VA Dept. Health infographic link; **1/17/2023:** changed return to school policy following new COVID symptoms to include option for antigen or PCR testing.

If a student has more than one episode of diarrhea or vomiting, they should not attend school until 24 hours after last episode.

A signed note from a physician stating that a student is well (non-contagious) and can return to BNS prior to the timelines stated above will be honored.

If a teacher determines that the student should not be in school, and a parent cannot be reached, then someone designated as an emergency contact is required to take the student home. In case of a serious accident, the student will be taken to the hospital emergency room and the parents will be notified immediately. Other illnesses for which a student may be asked to leave school for a period of time include, but are not limited to: head lice, "pink-eye," or impetigo.

Parents are asked to inform the school within 24 hours, if their child or any member of the immediate household has developed any reportable communicable disease (as defined by the State Board of Health; [www.vdh.state.va.us](http://www.vdh.state.va.us); "Reportable Disease List").

[http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2018/11/Reportable\\_Disease\\_List.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2018/11/Reportable_Disease_List.pdf)

## COVID-19 SICK POLICY

It is important that we keep our school safe for its students and teachers.

Please see the school's website "COVID page": [www.blacksburgnewschool.org/covidplans](http://www.blacksburgnewschool.org/covidplans)

Click "Self-Quarantine and Absences" button to see the latest school policies regarding symptoms to watch out for and stay-home recommendations.

Given the existing and ongoing multiple layers of risk mitigation already in place at BNS, the high BNS vaccination (100% students and teachers) & booster adoption rates, and with the additional layers of precautions being added as described below, the following procedures will guide our response to possible and known COVID cases:

Individuals experiencing new COVID-like symptoms from an unknown cause should take an antigen or PCR test at the first sign of symptoms and stay home at least 24 hours. Symptoms include:

- 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

Individuals with a negative test (1<sup>st</sup> antigen or PCR) and improved symptoms may then return 24 hours after symptom onset wearing a well-fitted mask.

Individuals may stop masking at school when they are symptom free **and** either:

- a second antigen test taken 48 hours after the first antigen test is negative, or
- upon receiving a negative PCR result.

If the second antigen test (taken 48 hours the first antigen test) or the PCR test comes back positive, individuals will follow [CDC's COVID guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html) for isolation following a positive COVID test. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html>; last updated Aug 2022)

If new fever, vomiting, or diarrhea occurs at any point the school's general illness policy should be followed: individuals should not return to school until 24 hours after their last vomiting or diarrhea episode or until they have been without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Families and teachers should continue to remain vigilant outside BNS and continue to report symptoms, illness, and exposures by emailing the school's COVID contacts using the email: [COVID@new-school.org](mailto:COVID@new-school.org).

**By bringing their child to school, parents are indicating that the above-listed symptoms have been assessed and that the child is free from all of them.**

### **ADDITIONAL COVID PRACTICES**

If there is a positive case of COVID-19, the classroom will be deep cleaned. Contact tracing may be performed by the Health Department.

Plan for Student/Teacher who becomes symptomatic while at school:

- Move symptomatic individual(s) to the conference room next to the front door or outside area if available.
- Ensure symptomatic individual remains masked (as able if no respiratory difficulties)
- Teacher (or support individual) should wear mask, face shield, gown, and gloves.
- If breathing medication such as albuterol is required, only inhaler with spacer should be utilized. (Nebulizers are considered an aerosol-generating procedure).
- Increase ventilation as able in the conference room by opening windows or other available strategies. (Adjoining doors should be closed).
- Symptomatic individual should leave the school as quickly as possible (e.g. home with parent or emergency services).

- After symptomatic individual leaves, the room should be sterilized with the UV-cleaning light and room should remain unused until complete air turnover occurs (30 minutes).
- Clean surfaces that the symptomatic individual touched in their classroom/throughout the school.
- School COVID contacts, Molly Lucier ([mollycavewmn@gmail.com](mailto:mollycavewmn@gmail.com)) or TJ Stone ([tjstonebns@gmail.com](mailto:tjstonebns@gmail.com)), will email symptomatic individual's classroom of possible exposure to an ill individual.
- Recommendation for all members of the household to leave the school to minimize possible infections.