



Duke School COVID-19 Response Guide



Fall 2022

Duke School will rely on CDC guidance, particularly [CDC’s Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) for COVID-19 Response and decision-making, in consult with the school’s Clinical Analyst Group and the Leadership Team. Our protocols also grow out of significant discussion internally, and with peer schools, close examinations of public health data, extensive on-campus observation, and deep experience gathered since March 2020. We are grateful for the ongoing support, understanding, and cooperation of our entire community.

COVID-19 Community Levels and Associated Prevention Strategies

Duke School will align with the CDC [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) and the mitigation measures recommended by the CDC for each color code/level of transmission spread of COVID-19:

Green	Yellow	Orange
Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines.	If you are at high risk for severe illness, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions	Wear a mask indoors in public.
Get tested if you have symptoms.	Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines.	Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines.
	Get tested if you have symptoms.	Get tested if you have symptoms.
		Additional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe disease.

Duke School will also consider the incidence of COVID-19 on campus or data such as student and faculty/staff vaccination rates (currently at 96%) to inform our decision-making. Additional community-level indicators that we may consider are pediatric hospitalizations, results from [wastewater surveillance](#), or other local information.

Vaccination

For COVID-19, [staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations](#) is the leading public health strategy to prevent severe disease. Duke School will continue to require COVID-19 vaccination for employees this year. [Duke School recommends vaccination for students, Preschool through Eighth Grade.](#)

Staying at Home When Sick

If your child has symptoms of any infectious diseases, including COVID-19, [influenza](#), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and gastrointestinal infections, have them stay home and get tested for COVID-19. The CDC states that people at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 who test positive should consult a healthcare provider immediately for possible treatment, even if their symptoms are mild.

Testing

Surveillance Testing: Duke School will offer a weekly, voluntary COVID-19 PCR testing program in partnership with MAKO Medical Laboratories. Nichelle Watkins, our School Nurse, will send details and directions for opting into this voluntary testing program before the start of school.

Rapid Antigen Testing: If your child is exposed to COVID-19 off campus and is asymptomatic, you should test your child five days after exposure. If you would like the school to test your child, notify our School Nurse, [Nichelle Watkins](#).

Masking

Duke School will align with the CDC [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) and the mitigation measures recommended by the CDC for each color code/level of transmission spread of COVID-19.

- **Orange (high)**: When the Community Transmission Level is high/orange for Durham County, the CDC recommends indoor masking in public places, including schools. Duke School recommends masking indoors at this level.
- **Yellow (medium)** and **Green (low)**: When the Community Transmission Level is medium or low, the CDC makes no recommendation about masking.

Duke School will continue to respect and support the decisions individuals and families make for their individual risk circumstances.

The CDC states that wearing a [well-fitting mask](#) consistently and correctly reduces the [risk of spreading the virus](#) that causes COVID-19. N95s or KN95 masks continue to be the preferred form of masking. For more information about masks, please visit [Types of Masks and Respirators](#).

Exceptions

- Per CDC guidelines, anyone with known exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask for ten (10) days from exposure.
- Any individual with a recent COVID-19 diagnosis must wear a mask for five (5) days following the completion of isolation.

Duke School will follow all public health mandates and emergency orders from the State of North Carolina, Durham County, and the City of Durham. In addition, we will implement all mitigation measures required by public health authorities, including required masking or other criteria as directed by a public health agency in the event of localized clusters or in response to changing community conditions.

COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation

[Quarantine](#) is used to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by keeping people who have been in [close contact](#) with someone with COVID-19 apart from others. Recommendations for close contacts to quarantine, wear a well-fitting mask, and get tested will vary depending on vaccination status and history of prior COVID-19 infection. Follow the CDC guidance for [COVID-19 Quarantine](#).

[Isolation](#) separates people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 from those without COVID-19. People in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. Everyone who has presumed or confirmed COVID-19 should stay home and isolate from other people for at least five (5) full days (day 0 is the first day of symptoms or the date of the positive viral test for asymptomatic persons). They should wear a mask when around others at home and in public for an additional five (5) days. People confirmed to have COVID-19 or showing symptoms of COVID-19 need to isolate regardless of vaccination status.

The CDC has developed a helpful calculator to assist individuals in calculating isolation and quarantine times. Use the [CDC Calculator](#) to calculate isolation and quarantine times. Additionally, the Duke School Health Office will distribute a "worksheet" email in response to inquiries from families to help clarify isolation/quarantine periods.

Return to School Guidelines after Household Positive Test

If a household member tests positive and a student or employee is [asymptomatic and vaccinated](#), the individual may attend school if they wear a mask for the duration of the exposure period as outlined by the CDC. If a student or employee is [asymptomatic and unvaccinated](#), the individual should isolate for five (5) days, and test on the fifth day. If the individual tests positive on the fifth day, they must isolate an additional five (5) days. The individual must wear a mask at school for five (5) days upon their return to school.

If a household member tests positive, Duke School recommends testing, masking, and distancing for all household members during the infectious period. If a household member is symptomatic or develops symptoms during the exposure period, seek testing and, based on results, follow CDC guidelines for isolation and quarantine.

Informing the School and Communication from the School

Parents must immediately notify the school nurse, [Nichelle Watkins](#) when their child tests positive. If an individual tests positive and has been at school 48 hours before the positive test, Duke School Health Office will send an informational notice to the impacted class. Duke School will maintain a COVID-19 report by grade level, providing this information through Dragon Connect.

Considerations for Activities including Athletics, Field Trips, Dining, and Gatherings

Dining: When the County Transmission Level for Durham County is orange, we will eat outside. In the instance of inclement weather, students will eat indoors, with additional mitigation measures in place like distancing and dining quietly.

Indoor Sports: Due to the increased and forceful exhalation that occurs during physical activity, some sports can put persons at increased risk for getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. The CDC recommends masking in such instances when the County Transmission Level is orange.

Transportation: Individuals in cars or buses will wear masks to and from athletic events and field trips.

Overnight Fieldtrips: We will share specific guidelines and protocols in advance of overnight field trips, including testing requirements, what to do in the event of a positive case for your child, and other recommendations and requirements for the particular trip.

Large Gatherings: When Community Transmission Levels are Orange, we will require that individuals wear masks in some larger groups and indoor settings - such as all-division meetings. We will communicate expectations on a case-by-case basis.

Hand Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette, and the Environment

We will continue to encourage responsible behaviors, including covering our coughs, practicing good hand hygiene, and other appropriate public health measures regardless of COVID-19 transmission levels. Duke School will maintain HVAC improvements established at the beginning of the pandemic.

Strategy for Outbreaks

If Duke School experiences a COVID-19 [outbreak](#), we will add prevention strategies regardless of the COVID-19 Community Level, which may include more stringent testing, masking, or distancing measures.