

COVID-19 Student-Parent Handbook Insert
Norwell Middle School
2020-2021

For the hybrid model to be safe and successful, it is imperative that staff members, students, and families continue to follow the social distancing guidelines set by the Governor outside of school hours and on weekends. In person learning is dependent on the Norwell school community following the guidelines with regularity, in order to keep the positivity rate low. We must continue to support one another in adhering to these guidelines and we ask that families emphasize the importance of these procedures through discussion with their student(s).

Note: The sections of this COVID-19 Handbook Insert supersedes sections of the Student-Parent Handbook for 2020-2021 until rescinded.

Procedures:

NPS Health Protocol for COVID-19

Prior to attending school, staff and families must complete the COVID-19 Pass located on the district and school websites (link). Staff and students must have a COVID-19 clearance approved for school pass to attend. Each school will provide information on how the approved clearance pass is processed. This is a daily reminder for families to only send their children to school when they are cleared.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves.

- Fever (over 100.0° Fahrenheit), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

Scenarios for when staff and students should remain home and notification processes.

Situation	Response	Requirement to Return to School	Notifications
Child/Staff member displays symptom(s) of COVID-19 in school	School nurse is called to assess the student in the current location, if necessary the nurse will accompany the student to the medical waiting room for further assessment.	If student is sent home due to COVID-19 concerns a note from Health Care Provider is required indicating the individual does not have COVID-19 (Testing must have been done and results back as negative)	If symptoms result in positive test School Community as directed by the Norwell Board of Health (protect individuals privacy)
Child/Staff member displays symptom(s) of COVID-19	Child/Staff member remains out of school and consults with their PCP	Note from Health Care Provider is required indicating the individual does not have COVID-19 (Testing must have been done and results back as negative)	None
Child/Staff member test POSITIVE for COVID-19, but is asymptomatic	Isolation of Positive individual Investigate when symptoms began and when the person was in school Identify close contacts over the 2 days before the positive test Consult with Norwell Board of Health	10 days have passed since their positive test Has not developed any symptoms Clearance from the Norwell Board of Health or from the city/town that the individual resides	School Community as directed by the Norwell Board of Health (protect individuals privacy) Norwell Board of Health
Child/Staff member test positive for COVID-19 , or is diagnosed by Health Care Provider as having COVID-19	Isolation of Positive individual Investigate when symptoms began and when the person was in school Identify close contacts over the 2 days before the positive test Consult with Norwell Board	At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared AND Fever free (below 100 degrees) without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours AND improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath)	School Community as directed by the Norwell Board of Health (protect individuals privacy) Norwell Board of Health

	of Health	Clearance from the Norwell Board of Health or from the city/town that the individual resides	
Child/Staff member exposed to COVID-19, NO positive COVID-19 test	Quarantine of individual Monitor symptoms (including temperature) at home Consult with the Norwell Board of Health	Excluded from NPS for 14 days from the date of the last exposure with the infectious person Clearance from the Norwell Board of Health or from the city/town that the individual resides	School Community as directed by the Norwell Board of Health (protect individuals privacy) Norwell Board of Health
Child/Staff member exposed, remains asymptomatic or tests negative for COVID-19	Quarantine of individual Monitor symptoms (including temperature) at home Consult with the Norwell Board of Health	Excluded from NPS for 14 days from the date of the last exposure with the infectious person Clearance from the Norwell Board of Health or from the city/town that the individual resides	School Community as directed by the Norwell Board of Health (protect individuals privacy) Norwell Board of Health

Quarantine

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been *exposed* to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Isolation

Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are *sick* with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it’s safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).

A “**Close Contact**” is defined by the CDC and updated by DESE and DPH 8/19/20 as only those who have been within 6 feet of distance of the individual for at least 15 minutes, while the person was infectious. The infectious period begins 2 days prior to symptom onset. If someone is asymptomatic, the infectious period is considered to begin 2 days prior to the collection of their positive test. While previous guidance stated that all students in an elementary classroom would be defined as close contacts, this new guidance provides a narrower definition of a close contact which mirrors DPH guidance.

Mask Policy:

In accordance with School Committee policy, a mask or face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, while attending offsite school-sponsored activities, and on school transportation while at or within the six foot social distancing recommendations. If a mask is deemed to be inappropriate, the student will be given a disposable mask to wear in its place and instructed to refrain from the use of the inappropriate mask moving forward. It is the expectation of Norwell Public Schools that families ensure that their child arrives at school and/or boards the bus with a mask or face covering. A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse.

Face masks or face coverings will not be required during designated times for eating or drinking when six foot social distancing is observed, nor when outdoors or during mask breaks when six foot social distancing is met or exceeded.

The district will supply disposable face coverings for students of families in need and in other instances of necessity.

If a student is in violation of this policy, and is not exempt by agreed upon exception, the student may not board a school bus, nor will the student be allowed in the school building, nor remain in the building for in-person learning, nor attend any offsite school-sponsored activity until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors are required to comply with this policy upon entering the school buildings and on school grounds.

Visitor Policy:

Visitors will be limited from entering the school building except for contracted service providers and those deemed necessary by building administration. In order to keep our students and faculty safe, visitors are permitted to enter the building **by appointment only**.

Visitors who have an appointment will:

- Complete the COVID -19 Pass located on School Websites
- Enter and exit **only** through the front entrance of the school
- Be briefed on school COVID-19 policies and school protocols
- Be asked to verify that they are symptom free
- Are required to wear an adequate face covering
- Will apply hand sanitizer upon entry

- Maintain social distancing guidelines while in the building

A visitor log will be maintained by the school's office staff for 30 calendar days and will include the date of visit, contact phone number, arrival/departure times, and the areas visited within the building if applicable.

Remote Learning Guidelines:

During remote learning sessions the following guidelines will be in effect:

- Students will be encouraged to have their video on in whole class sessions, but may have a school photo (or another appropriate personal photo) displayed if uncomfortable with live video.
- The expectation is all are present at all times during a live lesson.
- Students will have their video on in small groups and one to one sessions.
- Students will have their first and last name as identifiers when in a live session.
- Students will have blank backgrounds or the environment they are in, students with distracting backgrounds will be asked to remove them.
- Students will set up a work space and commit to a location for the entire session. The work space should have all materials needed set up and ready for use.
- Attendance is expected at all sessions. Staff will take attendance (via survey/question).
- Recording of live lessons is prohibited.
- Students will abide by microphone etiquette that their teachers have outlined.

Norwell Middle School Guidelines:

Attendance

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. Students are expected to be in their first period class at 7:25 a.m. Students who arrive after 10:40 a.m. or are dismissed before 10:40 a.m. will be marked absent for the day.

During a hybrid schedule when students are scheduled to be at home or a full remote schedule when students are at home, there are still expectations for student engagement in learning opportunities, work completion, and attendance in online conferences when required. Students who do not meet the required expectations for engagement will be marked absent.

If a student will be absent from school or will not be able to meet expectations for student engagement during a scheduled at-home day during a hybrid schedule or full remote schedule, a parent or guardian needs to report the absence to the office by 7:15 a.m.

The only absences excused by the school will be those necessitated by school-sponsored field trips, court appearances, family bereavement, or for medical reasons documented by a medical professional. In

instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

If the absence is due to a communicable disease, a doctor's certificate is to be brought to school the day the student returns. If a student must be dismissed because of an emergency, you may come to the school office to pick him/her up. If an absence or dismissal is due to COVID-19 symptoms, please refer to the NPS Health Protocol (COVID-19) guidance for specific procedures.

School vacations are scheduled in advance throughout the year. Generally, we do not expect that students will be absent for vacations when school is in session. The principal must be contacted in advance of any extended absences. Teachers are not required to provide work prior to a student's absence. It is the student's responsibility to make up schoolwork that is missed due to an absence. Students may be required to stay for late night in order to complete work and assessments missing due to absences.

Attendance data is maintained and reported to the state for accountability measures. Chronically absent students are monitored at the school and state level. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year (equivalent to 18 days a year, 2 days every month) for any reason including excused and unexcused absences.

Each Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Arrival to School

The building will be open to students at 7:15 a.m. each school day. Students who walk to school or who are transported privately should not exit their car prior to 7:15 a.m. as we are unable to provide supervision prior to 7:15 a.m. and students cannot congregate in the building. Students will be required to be wearing a mask before entering the building. Students will enter the building through the entrance closest to their first period class and will follow the assigned path directly to their first period classroom. Students will not be permitted to wait in the lobby area or in the hallways.

Entrances

Students transported privately will enter through the main entrance by the cafetorium unless their first period class is in the exploratory wing or an Eighth Grade Blue Team classroom, in which case these students should enter by the Main Street entrance.

Students transported by bus will enter through the main bus entrance unless their first period class is in the exploratory wing, an Eighth Grade Blue Team classroom, a Seventh Grade Green Team classroom, a Sixth Grade Orange Team classroom, or the gymnasium.

- Students whose first period class is in the exploratory wing or an Eighth Grade Blue Team classroom will enter by the Main Street entrance.
- Students whose first period class is in a Seventh Grade Green Team classroom or a Sixth Grade Orange Team classroom will enter through the field side entrance.
- Students whose first period class is in the gymnasium will enter through the gym entrance.
- All other students transported by bus will enter through the main bus entrance.

Dismissal

Students will be dismissed from their classrooms by announcement. Students will exit the building using the closest exit to their classroom.

Exits

Students transported privately will exit through the main entrance by the cafetorium unless their last period class is in the exploratory wing or an Eighth Grade Blue Team classroom, in which case these students should exit by the Main Street entrance.

Students transported by bus will exit through the main bus entrance unless their last period class is in the exploratory wing, an Eighth Grade Blue Team classroom, a Seventh Grade Green Team classroom, a Sixth Grade Orange Team classroom, or the gymnasium.

- Students whose last period class is in the exploratory wing or an Eighth Grade Blue Team classroom will exit by the Main Street entrance.
- Students whose first period class is in a Seventh Grade Green Team classroom or a Sixth Grade Orange Team classroom will exit through the field side door.
- Students whose first period class is in the gymnasium will exit through the gym door.
- All other students transported by bus will exit through the main bus doorway in the lobby.

Social Distancing (Including Hallways and Bathrooms)

Students will be asked to maintain a social distance of six feet to the fullest extent possible throughout the course of the school day. Students will walk down the right side of the hallways (i.e. switching classes, traveling to the bathroom or the nurse, going to lunch) and use the right side of stairwells. Students will not be permitted to linger in the hallways. Lockers will not be used to limit students need to be in the hallways, and students will be allowed to use backpacks to carry their belongings with them. Procedures will be established to limit the number of students in hallways and the bathroom during classes including sign out procedures specifying time and designated location to assist with contact tracing if needed. No more than one student may leave a classroom at one time unless the reason involves the main office, guidance office, or nurse. Signage will be posted outside of the bathroom identifying maximum occupancy. Students will spend their time at school in their classrooms as much as possible unless they are traveling outdoors for outdoor learning, mask breaks, or lunch.

Assigned Seating

Students will be assigned a seat in each of their classrooms and will remain in that assigned seat for the course of the school year unless the classroom teacher or principal determines there is a reason to re-assign students' seats.

Students will be assigned a seat in the cafetorium during their lunch period and will have that assigned seat for the course of the school year unless there is a reason as determined by the principal that seats need to be re-assigned.

Students who are permitted bus riders will be assigned a specific seat on the bus for the duration of the school year (which will be detailed in Aspen) unless the principal determines there is a reason to re-assign a student's seat. If necessary, two siblings will be seated next to each other. Students' seats will be staggered, alternating between window seat and aisle seat for each row.

Cafeteria Procedures

The cafeteria is set up with desks and chairs spaced at a minimum of 6 feet apart so masks can be removed for eating. Students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner and go directly to their assigned seats and will not remove masks until at their assigned seat. Seats will be numbered and students will be assigned seats based on their team and classes. Students will need to complete a form before 9 a.m. indicating their lunch choices and/or if they brought their lunch from home. Cafeteria staff will place ordered lunches, drinks, and snacks on the students assigned desk so as to eliminate students standing in line for items. If a student needs something, they must raise their hand for cafeteria staff or lunchroom monitors to ask what they need. Students should not leave their assigned seat without permission and they must have their mask on. The cafeteria will be monitored by administration, teachers, and aides to ensure compliance to safety protocols. Cafeteria and custodial staff will help coordinate trash pick up from desks so students do not need to leave their seats to dispose of their trash. Students will be dismissed from the cafeteria in an orderly fashion. Cafeteria and custodial staff will clean desks between lunches.

Forgotten Items

Individuals will not be allowed to enter the building to provide students with items that they may have forgotten at home. If the item is something that the student needs for class (i.e. iPad, homework, textbook), the student should let the teacher know and provisions will try to be made to support the student's learning without the forgotten item. If a student forgets their lunch, the student should let the office know and the cafeteria will provide a lunch for the student.