



COVID-19 Guidelines

BEGINNING OF SCHOOL

First Day of School

- Grades K-12: Classes begin Tuesday, August 25, at 8:30 a.m.

Campus Guests and Student Drop-Off

- For the safety of students and staff, parents should remain in the car while staff guide children from the designated drop off zones to their classrooms. Teachers will begin taking temperatures at 8:15 a.m. and admitting students into their classrooms.
- Individual conferences with teachers or administrators are available in person or online by request.
- The September chapel assemblies in the auditorium for grades K-6 have been canceled, and future assemblies and concerts will be decided at a later date.



GENERAL GUIDELINES

Family Monitoring and Screening

- Every family must perform a daily self-screening before coming to school. (See Appendix A for COVID-19 Screening Tool.)
- Parents must agree to keep all students home who display cold and flu-like symptoms.
- Visitors must pass a symptom screening at the school office before being admitted to the remainder of the school.
- Individuals with two or more COVID symptoms (cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion, diarrhea, etc.) that are not otherwise explained, may not return to school until 72 hours have passed since recovery (defined as resolution of fever without the use of medications and/or improvement in symptoms listed above).

Waiver Form

- Parents/guardians will need to complete and sign a COVID-19 waiver for each child that attends Valley Christian Academy releasing VCA of any liability in regard to COVID-19.
- Parents and employees must also complete a Health Screening Agreement at the beginning of the school year.

Temperature Checks

- Thermometers—each family should purchase and utilize a thermometer for temperature checks every morning before entering schools. VCA recommends having one in your vehicle.
- Upon arrival, each student and staff member will have his/her temperature checked daily. Elementary teachers will also check temperatures of students before lunch time.
- If a student exhibits symptoms at school, the parent or guardian will be notified

Social Distancing

- A school setting does not lend itself to continual social distancing, but students will be physically separated to the maximum extent possible throughout the day.
- Non-essential furniture and equipment are being removed from the classrooms to allow for appropriate social distancing.
- Teachers will eliminate face-to-face seating to the greatest extent possible. This applies mostly to kindergarten where the classrooms will have desks instead of tables.



- Student desks will be adjusted to have the maximum amount of space possible between them.
- Teachers will be vigilant in training students to keep distance from one another during transitions.
- Teachers will maintain assigned seating with only periodic changes each quarter or semester.
- When possible, teachers in grades 7-12 will change classrooms so students may remain at the same seat and in the same room. Students will spend most of the school day interacting only with students in their student group or pod: (7-8) and (9-12). By limiting their exposure to a smaller number of students, the chance of infection is reduced.
- At the elementary level, students will spend the school day interacting only with students in their pods: (K, 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6).

Health and Safety Education

- Valley Christian Academy will provide training and education for all staff prior to the start of school.
- VCA will provide school-wide resources to educate and train students to maintain appropriate health and safety practices.
- Teachers will train their students on proper hand-washing and general good hygiene practices.

Distance Education

- In the case that a pod of students or the whole student body must temporarily learn from home, teachers will be prepared to provide rigorous education virtually using the Google Classroom, Zoom, and other applications and supplementary materials.

Building and Facilities

- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned daily.
- A commercial cleaning company has been retained to provide professional cleaning daily.
- Classroom ventilation will be increased by opening doors and windows.
- Lunch tables will be used only once a day. Students from different pods will not use the same lunch tables during the day.



- Students will have frequent designated times to wash their hands, and hand sanitizer is widely distributed throughout the classrooms and encouraged for use.
- To limit drinking fountain use and the germs associated with them, students are encouraged to bring water bottles to remain hydrated in the school. The drinking fountains on the elementary campus are being repurposed as handwashing stations.
- Sharing of items (i.e. chalk, pens, pencils, etc.) will be limited as much as possible.
- Interior hallways will be one-way. Signage will show students which direction for entrance and exit from interior hallways.
- Computer lab equipment will be cleaned after each use.

Face Coverings

- Elementary students from K-2nd grade will not be required to wear masks or cloth face coverings. Students and employees in 3rd-12th grades will be required to wear a mask or cloth face covering while in the classroom, while in interior hallways, and at other times when social distancing is not possible unless exempt for medical reasons.
- Face coverings may be removed when outdoors if maintaining social distancing.
- Students who cannot wear face coverings may consider distance education.

Positive COVID-19 Case

- Mandatory reporting: If a student, faculty, or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the school office must be notified as soon as possible.
- A COVID-positive student, faculty, or staff member may not return to school until 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared (or 10 days from the positive test if asymptomatic) AND at least 72 hours have passed since recovery (defined as resolution of fever without the use of medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms).
- COVID-19 is a reportable communicable disease, therefore, VCA will notify the California Department of Health in Santa Barbara County anytime there is a known case.
- In the event of a positive case within the school, we will respond quickly. The school office will contact the local health department for guidance regarding possible closure, cleaning, and parental notification. Custodial staff will be informed so that impacted areas can be thoroughly disinfected.
- Parents of students in the affected class will also be notified. Personal identity of positive COVID-19 cases will be protected.
- If an individual in one's home tests positive for COVID-19, students or employees in the household should also stay home (i.e., self-quarantine) for a minimum of 14 days.



- Valley Christian Academy prioritizes on-campus instruction; however, VCA remains ready to transition to online learning for the pod or cohort of students affected by a COVID case.

Contact with Positive Case

- To prevent spread, those who were in close proximity to that student or staff member in the previous two weeks will be required to quarantine at home. While students are at home, VCA will make video streaming available so that students do not fall behind in their studies. Students who participate daily in their video streaming and complete the assigned work will be counted present. Students who do not participate during their quarantine will receive excused absences for illness and may be required to make up the work when they return. No refunds are provided for missed days.
- Students, faculty, or staff who have been identified as having been exposed to the virus will be required to quarantine for 14 days.

COVID Positive Case at School

- To prevent spread, those who were in close proximity to that student or staff member in the previous two weeks will be required to quarantine at home. While students are at home, VCA will make video streaming available so that students do not fall behind in their studies. Students who participate daily in their video streaming and complete the assigned work will be counted present. Students who do not participate during their quarantine will receive excused absences for illness and may be required to make up the work when they return. No refunds are provided for missed days.
- Students, faculty, or staff who have been identified as having been exposed to the virus will be required to quarantine for 14 days. See Appendix B for information about returning to school.
- Up-to-date information on testing locations will be made available for all families and staff to ensure access to rapid testing when needed.



ELEMENTARY

Cohorts or Pods

- The elementary will be divided up into student groups called pods or cohorts. The pods are as follows: Kindergarten, 1st-2nd, 3rd-4th, and 5th-6th.
- The pods will remain distanced from each other throughout the day as much as possible including during recess time, lunch time, and special pullout classes.
- If a student or teacher in the pod has a positive COVID test, only the pod will be affected with quarantine.

Early School Care

- Early school care will be provided from 7:15-8:15 a.m. The cost is \$10 per child per day for early school care, and the student limit is 20 students in order for the school to provide the appropriate supervision.
- Early school care supervisors will keep students separated according to their cohort or pod.
- Parents who need to utilize early school care should contact the school office to make the arrangements.

Recess

- Elementary students will have morning recess and lunch recess according to their pod groups. At lunch recess, two pods will be at recess at the same time but will be separated during the overlap recess time.
- Elementary students will not be required to wear masks or face coverings during recess.
- Students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after recess.

Lunch

- Classes will eat outside and in their classrooms depending on the weather. The class groups will spread out on a rotating basis to avoid intermingling with different student groups and to ensure distancing.
- Lunch tables will not be used more than once by multiple pods during a given school day.
- The café menu will change to mostly pre-packaged items but a hot meal will be available each day. Café workers will wear gloves and masks.
- Purchases at the café will be cashless. Every student who purchases food must use a lunch card. Lunch cards can be purchased from the school office for \$20. Mrs. Evans will send a notification home if a student's lunch card balance is low.



- Food purchased from the café will be delivered to the classes.

Elementary Specials

- Physical education, music, and computers will continue to be offered to the elementary with modifications for social distancing and sanitization.
- Students will not be singing in music class.
- Computer classes will be limited in size to allow for social distancing in the computer lab. Keyboards and mice will be sanitized after each class.
- Students will not be required to wear masks or face coverings during physical education.

After School Care

- After school care will not be provided. Please pick up your child between 3:00 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. Parents should stay in their cars and wait for the teacher to bring the child to the car.

Alternate Schooling Option

- While we have done our best to keep students, teachers, and staff safe, we cannot control everything. If returning to school is not the right decision for your family, we recommend elementary students enrolling in ABeka Academy to receive Christian education from qualified teachers via streaming or DVD. Go to abeka.com for more information.



SECONDARY

Drop Off

- Students may be dropped off by parents between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

Band and Choir

- Valley Christian Academy will not offer band or choir to start the year.
- Miss Braswell will be in contact with band students to share this year's band music and to encourage them to practice the musical pieces each week.

Lockers

- Junior high and high school students will not use lockers to begin the school year.

Temperature Checks

- Homeroom teachers will check students' temperatures before they may enter their classrooms.

Pods

- Secondary students will be divided into two pods or student groups: junior high (7th-8th) and high school (9th-12th).
- The pods will not intermingle or use the same classroom during the day.
- The junior high pod will meet for class mostly in the auditorium and youth room. The high school pod will meet in the normal classrooms.

Lunch

- Classes will eat outside and in their classrooms depending on the weather. The pods will have separate eating and recreation areas during lunch time.
- The café menu will change to mostly pre-packaged items, but a hot lunch option will be available each day. Stay tuned for a more detailed menu.
- All purchases including snacks from the café must be cashless by using lunch cards. Parents may purchase a lunch card for their students at the school office.

Bible Classes

- Bible classes will be separated according to pods and their respective room assignments.

Electives and Physical Education

- Elective classes and physical education will not be offered to start the year in order to avoid intermingling of students from different pods.



Help Class

- Help class will officially be from 2:15-3:00. Students may stay in help class until 3:15.
- Students will be assigned specific help classrooms during last hour.

After School Care

- Parents of junior high and high school students may pick up their students between 3:00 p.m. and 3:20 p.m.

Athletics

- Valley Christian Academy will be in a self-imposed dead period for the two weeks leading up to the start of school (August 11-25) with no athletic activities happening on campus.
- CIF has postponed the first contest date of fall sports until December. Volleyball and football games will begin in December or January. Basketball, baseball, and softball seasons will start in March.
- Once the school year starts, VCA will offer small group athletic activities outside that emphasize fundamentals in a variety of sports from 3:15-4:15. Students from different pods will not participate in the same athletic group. Schedule details will be shared when school starts.
- Valley Christian will follow county health guidelines regarding the use of the gymnasium and the weight room.

Distance Education for Secondary Students

- While we have done our best to keep students, teachers, and staff safe, we cannot control everything. We understand that some families may not be comfortable with their children returning on August 25. Distance learning may be an option for secondary students.
- Candidacy for Distance Learning: Due to the independent nature of distance learning, interested students must be good candidates for this remote model. Candidacy is shown by a history of academic excellence, strong executive functioning skills, and recommendations from teachers. Families may also indicate a health or medical reason for their decision to remain in a remote capacity.
- Candidates must agree to be present (remotely) during synchronous (live) instruction which will take place during normal school hours and class periods.
- Parents must agree to serve as proctors when required.
- Regular tuition rates apply.
- Interested families should contact the school administrator [cmaples@vcalions.com].



- Secondary students excluded from school for illness or COVID policies may temporarily use the VCA distance learning option.

Appendix A: COVID-19 Screening Tool

COVID-19 Screening for Parents

Every morning before you send your child to school please check the following:

- 1** Your student does **NOT** have a fever greater than 100.4 degrees (*may be lower based on your school's policy*) OR lower if your child is not feeling well.
- 2** Other signs of illness such as:
 -  CONGESTION OR RUNNY NOSE
 -  FEVER 100.4*
*or school board policy if threshold is lower
 -  COUGH
 -  SHORTNESS OF BREATH OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING
 -  DIARRHEA
 -  HEADACHE
 -  NAUSEA OR VOMITING
 -  SORE THROAT
 -  MUSCLE PAIN AND FATIGUE
 -  CHILLS
 -  NEW LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL
- 3** Were you in close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with anyone confirmed with COVID-19 within the last two weeks?
 - ➔ If the answer is **YES** to any of the questions, **DO NOT** send your student to school. Instead, begin quarantine of your child and contact your healthcare provider. Strongly consider COVID-19 testing.

Updated: 7/8/20 



Appendix B: When a student or faculty/staff member can return to school.

Individual	Return to school
Fever of 100.4° F or greater, or two or more COVID symptoms (cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion, diarrhea, etc.) that are not otherwise explained.	May return to school after 72 hours have passed since recovery (defined as resolution of fever without the use of medications and/or improvement in symptoms).
Low-grade fever below 100.4° F without other COVID related symptoms, OR alternate diagnosis (strep, etc.) as determined by a medical provider.	May return to school after 24 hours have passed since recovery.
COVID positive, symptomatic	May return to school after 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND at least 72 hours have passed since recovery.
COVID positive, asymptomatic	May return to school after 10 days have passed since the positive test. If the individual develops symptoms, the 10-day isolation period restarts (see above).
Family member or close contact with confirmed COVID-19	May return to school after a 14-day quarantine after contact with the COVID-19 positive person.

Developed by the Valley Christian Academy COVID Re-opening Task Force using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), AACS (American Association of Christian Schools), AACS affiliated state association, and other professional organizations.