



## Keeping schools COVID-Safe

New NSW Health advice to keep our students and staff safe, inside and outside the school gates.

# A guide to NSW school students for Term 3

Last updated 17 August 2020

We're working closely with the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), NSW Health and other agencies to ensure our schools continue to operate in the safest ways possible during the COVID environment.

### **Schools are operating full time while actively following health advice.**

Schools continue to be safe, and operations are in line with Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and NSW Health advice. All students should be learning on campus unless they are unwell or have a medical certificate to support their absence.

The activities that are permitted at school will be conducted in a way that is safe and appropriate in the current environment. Those that remain on hold will be reviewed during the term and will recommence when appropriate based on health and other relevant advice.

## Latest COVID-19 case locations in NSW

Check the [Latest COVID-19 case locations in NSW](#)<sup>External link</sup> and follow the recommended actions if you have been in a location where there have been confirmed cases of COVID-19. We encourage members of the community to monitor this site. Please follow the relevant health advice if you have been at any of the locations at the specified dates and times.

The locations along with the times and dates of when the cases were identified can be found on the [NSW COVID-19 website](#)<sup>External link</sup>.

## School attendance

Students should be at school unless:

- they have a medical certificate which states that they are unable to return to school due to an ongoing medical condition and the expected timeframe
- they are currently unwell.

In accordance with advice from NSW Health, parents and carers are reminded **NOT** to send children to school if they are unwell, even if they have the mildest flu-like symptoms. Schools will make arrangements for students who present as unwell or have flu-like symptoms to be sent home.

NSW Health have requested that schools encourage anyone who is unwell or has even mild flu-like symptoms, to arrange to be tested through their local medical practitioner or one of the [COVID-19 clinics](#)<sup>External link</sup>.

Students and staff with flu-like symptoms will need to provide a copy of a negative COVID-19 test result before being permitted to return to school.

Schools are not required to conduct widespread temperature screening or mandate the wearing of a mask.

All schools will be vigilant when implementing infection control, physical distancing and personal hygiene protocols to protect the health and safety of students and staff. Schools will promote the need to follow good hygiene practices such as:

- regularly washing hands
- avoiding sharing drinks or food
- coughing or sneezing into your elbow, or a tissue which should be discarded immediately
- filling water bottles from bubblers rather than using the bubbler directly.

All students and staff who reside in or have visited Victoria must have a [permit to enter NSW](#)<sup>External link</sup> and are required to comply with health restrictions relevant to their permit which may include the need to complete the 14 day self-isolation period commencing the last day they were in Victoria.

## School activities/school site usage

Additional safety measures for school activities have been put in place to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools for the remainder of Term 3.

The following principles underpin these measures:

- Where possible, students will stay within their relevant cohort group (i.e. class, year group, or stage) for all learning activities within their school in order to limit close contacts to the relevant student cohort.
- Interschool activities must remain within the local community or zone. This applies to all interschool sport and physical activities, curriculum activities, arts activities and extra-curricular activities organised or sponsored by the school. Schools must not travel outside of their local community area. Metropolitan schools cannot travel outside their local area or to regional areas. Regional areas cannot travel into metropolitan areas or other regional areas. Find your school's [sport zone](#).
- Only providers that are essential to the delivery of curriculum can continue to provide services and programs until further notice.
- Parents/carers and other non-essential visitors are not allowed on the school site.
- All group singing (choirs) and/or other chanting activities, as well as the use of wind instruments in group settings, are not permitted. Special arrangements are in place for HSC students.
- Year 11 and 12 students completing HSC subjects may continue to attend classes/activities relating to subjects only available on other campuses. All other students including Year 11 students not completing an HSC subject are not to attend other campuses for the remainder of Term 3. TAFE and other Vet programs may continue.
- School formals, dances, graduation or other social events are not permitted. Schools may hold a Year 12 assembly at school without parents to recognise the completion of school. Schools may consider delaying events until later in the year.

### Activities/site usage that can take place

- Use the school library
- Engage in sporting activities within restrictions
- Canteens and uniform shops can open at the principal's discretion

- All VET work placements can proceed subject to the availability of placement, appropriate risk assessments, and a COVID-19 Safety Plan must be in place. For any that can't proceed, refer to [the NESA website](#)[External linke](#).
- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships can recommence once the relevant workplaces are back in operation and a COVID-19 Safety Plan is in place.
- Trade Training Centres can operate on school sites with a COVID-19 Safety Plan in place
- School assemblies (limited to 15 minutes and no external visitors)
- Students may attend other schools for essential curriculum related reasons or placements (e.g. auditions or placement tests)
- Hydrotherapy pools can be used
- Incursions/external providers can provide activities that support delivery of curriculum (e.g. music tutors, sport skills development programs, science demonstrations, drama tutors, Healthy Harold)
- Day field trips to outdoor locations with no physical distancing requirements can take place (e.g. DoE Environmental Education Centres and sport and recreation facilities, trips to the local river to collect water samples)
- Face-to-face TAFE attendance (see TAFE website for further information)
- School photos
- Department of Community and Justice services and programs
- Community use agreements involving adult attendance must have a COVID Safe Plan in place
- SRE/SEE lessons within restrictions
- Work experience for students with a COVID Safe Plan in place
- P&C meetings and events must be on-line only
- Parent/teacher meetings will be online unless involving serious matters that require face to face discussion.

### **Activities on hold for Term 3**

The following events will be reconsidered in Term 3. For now, these events must remain on hold.

- Kindergarten orientation
- Year 7 orientation has been delayed until Term 4
- School camps
- Excursions (other than field trips explained above)
- Interstate excursions
- International excursions (cancelled until further notice)
- All students (except year 12 students) attending classes/activities relating to subjects only available on other campuses
- School or community-run playgroups
- Face-to-face professional learning for staff. Refer to the [Physical distancing guidelines](#).
- Parent and carer attendance at assemblies and other school events
- Parent and carer volunteers – e.g. parent reading helpers (note: canteen and uniform shop volunteers are permitted)
- School-based activities that involve large gathering of adults. These include parent/community gatherings such as parent functions, working bees, fundraisers, school BBQs, large parent information evenings, and large on-site cultural events
- Interschool sport, drama, debating and other events that are not within the local community or zone including gala days and regional sporting carnivals.
- Certain large arts and sports events are cancelled or delayed. Many large-scale arts events and sports tournaments rely upon feeder activities and have long-lead-time organisational arrangements. As a consequence, a number of annual activities are planned to be delayed or cancelled ([refer to Impacts on arts and sports events programs](#))

### **Activities that are cancelled**

- Certain large arts and sports events are cancelled or delayed because they require feeder activities and have long lead time organisational arrangements. Please speak to your schools if you would like to know more.
- International excursions are cancelled until further notice.

# Physical distancing

Physical distancing of students in schools is not required under the AHPPC guidelines.

All teachers, support staff and parents must maintain physical distance from each other (1.5m).

Parents should ensure school pick up and drop off arrangements enable them to physically distance from one another and from staff.

## Tightened NSW-Victoria border restrictions

The amended Public Health Order changes will have an impact on students and staff traveling across the NSW-Victorian border.

From 7 August, the border restrictions will be tightened further with the border zone defined to townships along the Murray River including Mildura, Wodonga and Echuca.

Under the updated Public Health Order, any person who already has a valid day school visitor permit will continue to be able to use this permit for 14 days, until midnight on Friday 21 August. This permit will expire after Friday 21 August.

From Friday 21 August, for people living *outside* the border zone in Victoria, permits will only be considered for the following persons:

- Students who attend special purpose schools. Students attending a School for Specific Purposes will be eligible for a special permit through the [NSW Government website](#) External link.
- HSC students and HSC teachers. The department has commenced the process for seeking an exemption for HSC students and essential HSC teachers with NSW Health and will advise relevant families of arrangements prior to 21 August 2020.

Please note that Victorian residents who reside outside of the border zone will not be able to enter NSW to attend school unless they obtain an exemption.

Any student or staff member currently residing *inside* the [Border Zone](#) External link will be able to continue crossing the border to attend school or work as long as they stay within the Border Zone.

All students and staff not eligible for a border permit will be supported with remote learning and working through the [online learning hub](#) until they are able to return to work or learn on campus.

Victorian border zone residents authorised to enter and remain in NSW for a permitted purpose with a valid border permit are not allowed to travel outside of the NSW border zone. They must also not enter NSW if they have travelled outside of the Victorian border zone within the previous 14 days.

All border zone residents must self-isolate for 14 days if they have travelled outside the border zone upon re-entering NSW unless their border permit specifies otherwise. If they entered Victoria other than for a permitted purpose, they must also self-isolate.

The NSW border changes will also require all people entering NSW from Victoria who do not reside in the border zone to arrive through Sydney Airport. Staff members will be subject to mandatory hotel quarantine. The following requirements will apply to students:

- They will be required to enter through Sydney Airport.
- Students will need to be collected by a parent or guardian at Sydney Airport.
- They must travel directly to their usual residence in NSW using private transport.
- They must complete a 14 day quarantine period at home.
- If they start to feel unwell or have flu-like symptoms, NSW Health advised that they arrange to be tested through their local medical practitioner or one of the COVID-19 clinics.
- They will be subject to regular follow-up and will be required to provide a signed self-isolation declaration and return a negative test result prior to leaving self-isolation.

Details of the current advice for people who have recently visited Victoria can be found on the [NSW Health border restrictions website](#)External link.

Schools will communicate with families and will facilitate learning continuity relevant to student needs.

We encourage parents to monitor local circumstances regularly as things may change in the coming days or weeks.

For more details about the border zone restrictions, refer to the NSW Government's [Apply for a COVID-19 NSW border entry](#)External link page.

## School cleaning and hygiene supplies

Your school will continue to receive additional cleaning in line with the AHPPC guidelines and advice from NSW Health. Target areas include high-touch areas and other hard surfaces, door handles, lockers, light switches and handrails in stairways and movement areas. There will also be additional cleaning of toilets and bubblers and topping up of supplies like soap.

Your school has received supplies of soap, hand sanitiser, toilet paper, paper towels, disinfectant wipes and personal protective equipment. The school is able to order more as needed.

### Essential hygiene supplies

To support NSW schools during COVID-19 and help keep them safe, we've secured and dispatched a range of products including soap, hand sanitiser, toilet paper, disinfectant wipes and personal protective equipment.

Standard packs of hygiene products continue to be dispatched to schools. The packs include liquid soap, hand sanitiser, paper towels, surface spray, disinfectant wipes. Quantities are calculated on the number of habitable spaces at each school. Schools can continue to request supplies through the School Supplies email address.

## Reporting and assessment

You will receive your child's semester 1 report before the end of August (Week 6, Term 3).

This will be a simplified version of the report you normally receive. Schools are encouraged to discuss your child's progress with you before the written report is issued.

## Responding to COVID-19 cases

There is a clear plan in place for schools to respond to any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our schools. We are working closely with NSW Health and will communicate with parents if a situation arises. Read more about our [Response protocols for COVID-19 cases](#).

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