

## Latest COVID 19 Updates from the Department of Education

In accordance with [advice from NSW Health](#)[External link](#), parents and carers are reminded **NOT** to send children to school if they are unwell, even if they have the mildest flu-like symptoms.

NSW Health has 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](#)[External link](#).

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

Students who do not undertake a COVID-19 test result will not be permitted to return to school for a 10 day period. Additionally, they must be symptom-free for at least 3 days prior to returning to school.

Students who have seasonal allergic rhinitis or another condition that presents similarly to flu-like symptoms are still required to get tested for COVID-19 and return a negative test result. Where their symptoms continue beyond 10 days, students should provide documentation from their GP confirming their symptoms are typical for their condition. If the student develops new or changed symptoms, they should get tested for COVID-19. Find more information about [COVID-19 symptoms](#)[External link](#).

COVID-19 testing for students with complex health or disability may be challenging. In these situations, schools will ask the parent or carer to have their child assessed by their medical practitioner. Where a medical practitioner determines that a COVID-19 test is not required, documentation must be provided to the school to confirm that the student does not have symptoms that warrant a COVID-19 test. The certificate must also indicate that the student is able 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.

## School activities and school site usage

### What's changed

The following activities can now proceed for Term 4:

- Saturday School of Community Languages will return to face-to-face learning.

- Interschool activities
- Singing and chanting with strict restrictions
- Playing wind instruments with strict restrictions
- School formals, dances and graduations with a COVID-19 Safety Plan
- Excursions and day camps with strict restrictions
- Kindergarten orientation
- Year 7 transition to high school.

Continue reading for further information.

NSW Health has published [updated advice for schools](#)[External link](#) as we commence Term 4.

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 can now take place.
- Only providers that are essential to the delivery of curriculum can continue to provide services and programs until further notice.
- Parents and carers and other non-essential visitors are not allowed on the school site unless volunteering for educational purposes.
- Singing and other chanting activities can take place as a solo or in a small group as long as participants are 5 metres away from other people and 1.5 metres away from one another. Groups of up to 5 people can include students from different year groups.
- Musical instruments activities can proceed. Students playing non-reeded woodwind instruments such as flutes and recorders should be positioned so that they can maintain a physical distance of 1.5 metres from all persons (including other members of the musical group). They must also maintain a minimum 3 metres space between the direction of airflow from their instruments and other performers.
- Singing and band rehearsals and performances should take place outside or in well ventilated indoor spaces.
- School formals, dances, graduation or other social events are permitted provided they meet strict [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#)[External link](#) requirements.
- The [Saturday School of Community Languages](#)[External link](#) will return to face-to-face-learning in Term 4.
- The [Community Languages Schools Program](#) will return to face-to-face learning from Term 4. Contact your community languages teacher for more information.

### **Activities and site usage that can take place**

- Students can use the school library.
- Students can engage in sporting activities.
- School sporting events and activities held within the school site during school hours must not involve spectators including parents and carers. The only exception is when there is an explicit request from the school to support the delivery of curriculum.
- Parent volunteers to support educational purposes are welcome for scheduled activities such as reading groups and kitchen garden programs.

- School sporting events and activities held outside of the school site during hours will need to follow the [COVID-19 Safety PlanExternal link](#) of the venue or organiser.
- Canteens and uniform shops can open at the principal's discretion.
- All VET work placement, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and work experience for students can proceed subject of availability of placement, appropriate risk assessments and an employer [COVID-19 Safety PlanExternal link](#). For any VET work placements that can't proceed please see [the NESAWebsiteExternal link](#).
- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships can recommence once the relevant workplaces are back in operation and a [COVID-19 Safety PlanExternal link](#) is in place.
- Trade Training Centres can operate on school sites with a [COVID-19 Safety PlanExternal link](#) in place.
- School assemblies must be limited to 15 minutes with 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 or external providers can provide activities that support delivery of curriculum (e.g. music tutors, sport skills development programs, science demonstrations, drama tutors, Healthy Harold).
- Essential activities such as NSW Health partnerships including mobile dental vans and vaccinations can proceed.
- Excursions and day field trips within NSW (e.g. DoE Environmental Education Centres and sport and recreation facilities, trips to the local river to collect water samples) can occur from Term 4.
- Overnight activities can occur from Term 4 in accordance with strict COVID safe requirements. Providers should follow NSW Health recommendations and use the resources available on the NSW Government website for [Caravan parks and camping groundsExternal link](#) or [hotels and accommodation \(including backpackers, hostels and dormitory style accommodation\)External link](#) and to complete the most appropriate COVID Safety Plan for their business.
- Kindergarten orientation in Term 4
- Year 7 transition to high school in Term 4 after 12 November.
- TAFE students can attend face to face (refer to the [TAFE websiteExternal link](#) for further information).
- School photos can continue.
- Department of Community and Justice services and programs can continue.
- School or community run playgroups
- Community use agreements involving adult attendance must have a COVID-19 Safety Plan in place.
- [SRE/SEE lessons](#) can occur within restrictions.
- Work experience for students can occur with a [COVID-19 Safety PlanExternal link](#) 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.

## **Year 6 and Year 10 formals and graduations**

Schools can plan for Year 6 formals and graduations provided they occur in a COVID-safe way and they must follow the Year 12 advice for formals and graduations. Schools that are part of a K-12 educational setting should plan for their events to be held from 12 November 2020.

Year 10 formals and graduations can proceed from 12 November 2020 in line with current Term 4 advice for Year 12 formals and graduations.

## **Virtual celebrations toolkit**

Schools will also have the option to have online gatherings through the [Virtual Celebrations Toolkit](#). This toolkit has been developed to support schools in planning events and celebrations that do not require all participants, including parents and carers to be on the school site. These events can be planned now.

Schools will also have the option and are encouraged to live-stream these events held within the school to selected families and friends as a way of sharing their major milestone.

## **End-of-year celebrations**

Advice regarding all other end-of-year assemblies and graduations are currently still under review. Further information will be provided later in Term 4.

## **Activities on hold**

The following events will continue to be reconsidered in Term 4. For now, these events must remain on hold.

- Interstate excursions
- International excursions (cancelled until further notice)
- Face-to-face professional learning for staff
- Parent and carer attendance at assemblies and other school events
- School-based activities that involve large gathering of adults. These include parent/community gatherings such as parent functions, working bees, fundraisers, school barbecues, large parent information evenings and large on-site cultural events.

## **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.

## **Opportunity Class test update**

Opportunity class testings for 2021 has been rescheduled to 18 November 2020. Refer to the [OC updates page](#) for the latest information.

## **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.

## 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 2 report before the end Term 4 2020 as part of the regular reporting process.

## 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](#).

## Transport

Bus services to and from schools are scheduled to run as normal. For travel advice to and from school, refer to [Transport for NSW External link](#).