

27 August 2021

RETURN TO SCHOOL UPDATE

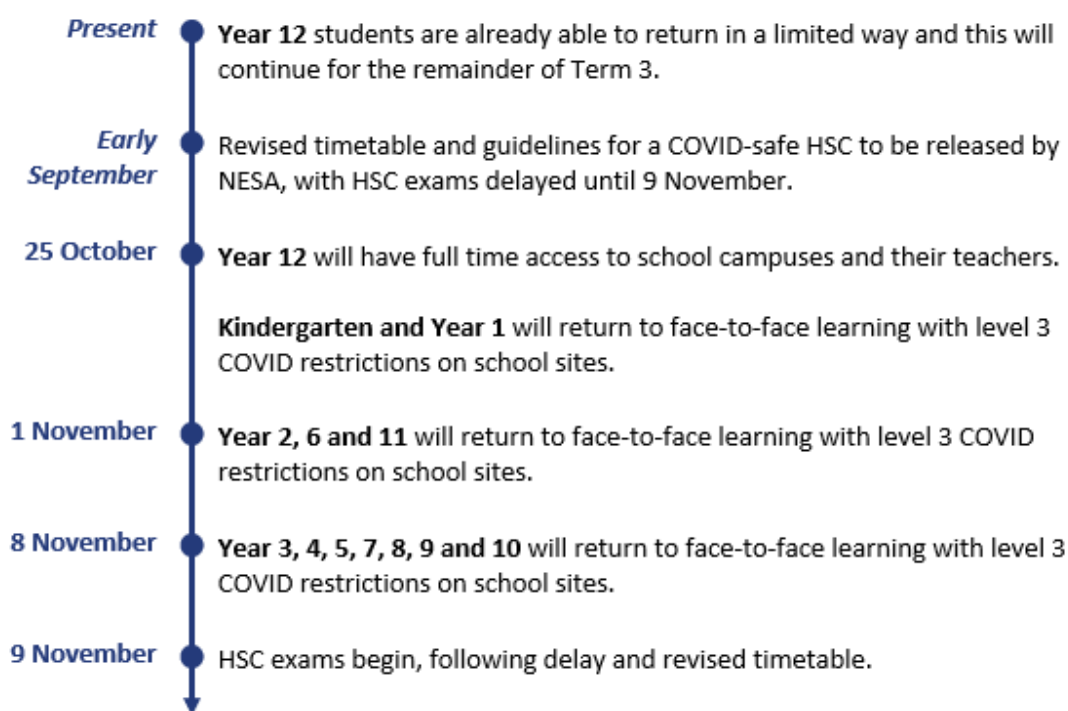
Dear Parents and Carers,

Earlier today, the Premier and the Minister for Education announced a detailed plan for the safe return to face-to-face schooling.

We would like to provide an update from Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) on our plan for the return to school and outline details of the additional support CSBB will continue to provide through Home-Based Learning (HBL).

Proposed return to school roadmap

Timeline for return to face-to-face learning



*Proposed Timeline provided by CSNSW

The above timeline was created based on the roadmap provided by the NSW Government which outlines the planned approach to returning to face to face learning. The commencement of the return of students on October 25 is dependent on vaccination

rates reaching at least 70 per cent. In addition, the Government plans to mandate through a public health order the vaccination of all school staff. Further the returns are conditional upon the number of community transmissions in each LGA.

If stay at home orders are lifted in any part of the State prior to October 25, it is possible that some schools may return to face to face earlier. CSBB will monitor the situation in individual LGAs and offer a return to school that is compliant with the public health orders and consistent with our local communities.

Changes to HSC

The start of the HSC has been delayed; it will now begin on 9 November. NESAs will provide an updated HSC timetable in September. Marking of HSC exam papers will continue into mid-January and the final date for the release of marks will be determined in the next few weeks. Universities have reassured students that this will not impact on University admissions for 2022.

Extra Support for Teaching, Learning and Wellbeing

At this challenging time, CSBB are fully focused on supporting families through HBL. We are conscious of the difficulties that students, families and staff are experiencing during this extended period of HBL. We have conducted a desk top review of recent reports and studies to inform and shape HBL to better support families and students throughout this period and created the infographic attached.

Recently CSBB announced additional support for families through HBL+. The aim of HBL+ is to support a variety of learning and wellbeing initiatives such as:

- the employment of additional teachers to support vulnerable students and small group learning;
- diocesan-wide software licensing to improve accessibility for students;
- additional resources for teachers to ensure continuity of learning and wellbeing.

We genuinely appreciate the tremendous work you, our families, are doing in the current HBL environment. The feedback we are receiving from our schools highlights the importance of your considerable efforts. We also deeply value the manner in which our teachers have adapted and aligned their efforts towards the HBL platform.

Our commitment will not stop on the return to school. We are preparing and planning for the return to school for all students. We will have extra resources in place to support the wellbeing and learning for our students. Targeted literacy, numeracy and wellbeing support will be in place for those who need it most.

Your Principal will provide further information on the HBL+ initiatives at your school.

Fee Relief

Once again, we recognise this is a challenging time for each of our families. If you need financial help to get through this difficult time, please contact our Fee Liaison Team on 9847 0728 or email schoolfees@dbb.catholic.edu.au. It's easy to apply and all applications are treated with complete privacy.

We are very grateful for your continuing support and patience as we navigate through these difficult times. Know that you continue to be in our prayers and that we are here to support you as we move through these challenging times together.

Yours Sincerely,



Danny Casey
Director of Schools

Challenges, opportunities and lessons learned from extended remote learning during COVID-19



A desktop review of recent reports and studies to support future decisions by Catholic Schools Broken Bay.

Flexible and innovative approaches



- Quality teaching matters
- A balance between routine and flexibility engages students and gives a positive experience during remote learning

Shifts in practice

- Shorter instruction blocks
- Sharper assessment and feedback
- Not merely replicating 'a day in the classroom'
- Younger students require a higher level of support for their learning



Focus on learning and wellbeing

- Ensuring continuity of learning and continuity of wellbeing
- Focus on what students need to learn, are learning and can learn in remote learning
- Plan for a balance across the day and week
- Remember the joy of learning



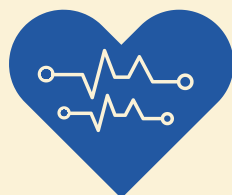
Assessment

- Exploring appropriate ways of assessing in a remote learning environment
- Challenges of monitoring progress, particularly in the early years



Wellbeing and social development

- Monitoring student wellbeing
- Recognising the need for play and recreational breaks
- Valuing friendships
- Showing appreciation of attributes such as connectedness, empathy, kindness
- Activating student voice and agency



Vulnerable and at risk students

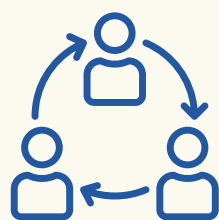
- Pre-existing conditions add challenges and risks that impact on learning
- Monitoring of student engagement and wellbeing
- Giving priority to students requiring the most support for learning and wellbeing
- Programs are designed to assist students to access the learning



Student collaboration and connectedness

Structuring opportunities for:

- Collaboration between students
- Interactions with peers and teachers
- Social and learning connections



Teacher wellbeing

- Teacher workload
- Managing their own health and wellbeing
- Managing their own parental and carer responsibilities
- Connectedness, professional isolation



Technology

- Access to devices and connectivity
- Skill and confidence level



Parents and caregivers

- An increase in communication between school and home
- A blurring of roles and responsibilities between school and home
- Importance of empathy and recognition of the range of home environments and contexts
- A reminder that the role of parents is to be parents

