

COVID-smart measures for schools

Information for **parents and students**



Being together in a classroom is the most effective way for students to learn and grow. Since COVID-19 remains a relatively mild illness for most children, we're committed to return to school safely in 2022. We will support this through the following measures.



WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS

- If your child is unwell, even with mild symptoms you must keep them home and get them tested. If they display any symptoms they should take a PCR test (nose and throat swab) or rapid antigen test (RAT).
- If symptoms continue your child should not come to school, even if they get a negative rapid antigen test result. Your child may return when they get a negative PCR test result and have no symptoms.



VACCINATIONS

- All staff on school sites must be fully vaccinated.
- We strongly encourage all students and their families to get vaccinated. Children aged 5 to 11 can now get vaccinated. Parents are encouraged to book their child in for a vaccination at the first available opportunity.
- Once eligible, all adults are encouraged to get booster shots.



TESTING

Before the start of term 1

- Rapid antigen tests will be provided to all staff and students through their schools. Schools will inform their local communities on how these kits can be collected.
- All staff and students are asked to take a rapid antigen test twice a week and get a negative result before attending school. Your child's school will provide advice on when tests should be taken.

At the start of term 1

- For the first 4 weeks, students and staff should take a rapid antigen test **twice a week on the morning before attending school**. Test kits will continue to be supplied by schools.
- Students who are household close contacts must isolate at home for 7 days.



COVID-19 POSITIVE CASES

- If your child has no symptoms and there is a positive case in their class, year or other grouping, they can continue to attend school in line with NSW Health advice.
- Staff and students who get a positive rapid antigen test result must register it on service.nsw.gov.au or the **Service NSW app** as soon as possible.
- Staff and students who receive a positive rapid antigen or PCR test result must tell their school as soon as possible, and follow NSW Health advice.
- Schools will regularly communicate to parents about the presence and impact of COVID-19 in their community. Parents should expect to be provided with details of any impacted year groups or cohorts.



VENTILATION

- Fresh air is the most effective form of ventilation to minimise risk of transmission. Where natural ventilation is limited, schools will consider alternatives, such as air purifiers.
- Using outdoor spaces will continue to be encouraged.



MASKS

- All primary and secondary school staff will be required to wear masks indoors.
- No vented masks or cloth masks should be worn. If required, surgical masks will be available at schools.
- Secondary school students are required to wear masks.
- Primary school students are strongly recommended to wear well-fitted masks indoors.



ACTIVITIES

- COVID-19 will be considered in all risk assessments. Guidance will be provided to schools on applying appropriate safeguards across a range of activities.
- Parents will be made aware of the risk of exposure and will need to give their permission for participation in extra-curricular, out of school hours or off-site activities



STUDENT COHORTING

- Schools will continue using cohort arrangements and consider staggered drop-off and pick ups, break times, playground and canteen access.
- Depending on the school, cohort size and timetables, cohorts may be based on classes, years or stages.



VISITORS

- Visitors on school sites should be kept to a minimum to support essential school activities or student needs. Visitors will be required to wear a mask indoors and will be encouraged to wear a mask outdoors if they cannot maintain physical distancing.
- Schools are advised to allow a maximum of 2 parents or carers per student onto school grounds for Kindergarten orientation or Year 7 transition.



KEEPING SCHOOLS OPEN

- Parents are asked to respect the rules at their child's school to help keep the community safe.
- Schools will do everything they can to maintain continuity of face-to-face learning including the use of more casual staff.
- Schools will need to make localised staffing decisions to ensure appropriate supervision can be maintained.
- Schools will not be able to guarantee particular staff for any cohort and students may not have their regular teacher for a class.



LEARNING FROM HOME

- We will continue to monitor the situation and where face-to-face learning is not possible, learning from home options will be supported for short periods.

For more info, visit nsw.gov.au/covid-19

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring school operations continue while prioritising the safety and wellbeing of students and school staff.