



Return to full-time face-to-face learning guidelines

In line with health advice, schools are operating full time, and many additional activities are now able to recommence

Information has been updated as at 11 June 2020.



Schools are safe and open for full time face to face learning

All schools have returned to full-time on-campus learning. With updated health advice and changes to state and national restrictions, schools are able to recommence the majority of school-based activities from either 15 June 2020 or the start of Term 3 (20 July 2020). A limited number of activities remain under consideration (see below for the full list of dates and activities).

The following principles underpin these guidelines:

- Schools continue to be safe and operations are in line with AHPPC and NSW Health guidelines.
- All students should be learning on-campus unless they are unwell or have a medical certificate to support their absence.
- Existing infection control protocols at schools, and new health and safety measures put in place will help maintain the health and safety of students and staff.
- All activities permitted at school are safe and appropriate in a living with COVID-19 environment.



School activities/ school site usage

The majority of school-based activities can recommence, as long as the following measures are observed:

- all visitors and external to school providers must adhere to relevant hygiene, distancing and safety [protocols](#)
- principals (as site managers) may continue to restrict, limit or prohibit activities if deemed to be contrary to the advice of the day, and may escalate any issues or concerns to their Director, Educational Leadership
- external providers are required to demonstrate compliance with health and safety [requirements](#)

- non-essential adults are still not permitted on school grounds or at school events – this includes parents/carers unless specifically approved by the principal.

Guidance for community use and visitors to the school

Principals must ensure that all users of school facilities and visitors to the school site are aware of the distancing, health and hygiene measures required by the school, and receive written confirmation of this understanding. Please familiarise yourself with the [guidelines here](#) where you can also download the relevant acknowledgement form and ensure it is signed by each user and visitor.

Parents/carers who need to be on site for canteen or uniform shop purposes or for important face-to-face meetings will also need to sign the [visitor acknowledgement form](#).



Safety and hygiene

No physical distancing requirements for students

Physical distancing of children in schools is not required by the latest AHPPC guidelines. Research has shown limited transmission risk associated with school children in the school environment.

Physical distancing requirements remain for adults

All adults must maintain [physical distance](#) from each other (1.5m) including teachers and support staff, and parents.

Schools should limit the number of staff in common staffrooms or in large staff meetings, and avoid shared items as much as possible.

Staff should exercise good hygiene and cleanliness around staff spaces and shared usage areas.

Non-essential visitors to schools should not be allowed.

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

Hygiene measures

Normal [infection control](#) and hygiene measures should be followed. These include encouraging regular washing of hands and cleaning of musical instruments, learning and sporting equipment between uses.

Students should continue to bring water bottles from home to fill at water bubblers rather than drink directly from the bubbler.



School activities return and timeline

Activities already allowed

- [Library access](#) ensuring supervisors/staff maintain physical distancing
- Canteen and uniform shops staffed by volunteers
- Face-to-face parent/teacher meetings that are essential (eg to discuss disciplinary or other welfare matters)
- [School sporting activities](#) on site (non-contact skills development at this point)
- Use of external sporting grounds (where available)
- Year 11 and 12 students attending classes/activities relating to subjects only available on other campuses
- Schools may engage an external provider to deliver the White Card training in line with the external provider guidelines provided above, and only where essential (NEW)



- Trade Training Centres
- Allied health providers, wellbeing and case management professionals (including NDIS suppliers)
- Final year teaching practicum students
- Construction and maintenance providers
- Community use operators necessary for continuity of education such as Community Languages Classes
- All curricular and extra-curricular programs or services delivered by NSW Department of Education staff are able to recommence including targeted school support programs delivered by School Services, itinerant support staff and other department employees.

Activities allowed from Monday 15 June 2020

- All Department of Community and Justice activities including:
 - external counselling services
 - domestic and family violence services
 - family support services
 - targeted early intervention programs
 - youth engagement support programs
 - Men's Sheds
 - supported playgroups
- School assemblies (limited to 15 minutes and no external visitors)
- [Choirs and performing arts](#) (within school setting only at this point, no inter-school activities)
- Incursions/external adult providers to support delivery of curriculum (e.g. music tutors, sport skills development programs, science demonstrations, drama tutors, Healthy Harold). Must maintain distancing and hygiene requirements.
- Students may attend other schools for essential curriculum related reasons or placements (e.g. auditions or placement tests)
- Activities using hydrotherapy pools (including external pools in line with the providers' guidelines)
- Day field trips to outdoor locations with no physical distancing requirements (e.g. DoE

Environmental Education Centres and sport and recreation facilities, trips to local river to collect water samples)

- Face to face TAFE attendance in line with TAFE schedule
- Community use activities used by students such as dance classes, and student sport skills development related activities outside of school hours with limited adult attendance (curriculum and extra-curriculum purposes)
- Community use activities on weekends involving adult attendance (complying with relevant guidelines) not essential to continuity of education
- School photos (although no group staff photos).

Activities allowed from beginning of Term 3

- All school sport and activities including competitions aligned with current health advice (including those activities run by external organisations)
- Inter-school student events and competitions (choirs, sport, debating, public speaking, performing arts, Selective Sports High School trials etc)
- Incursions not already permitted involving external adult providers maintaining distancing and hygiene aligned with the health advice of the day (eg school banking talks, sport promotions etc – not directly curriculum related)
- SRE/SEE volunteers
- P&C meetings – strong preference for on-line where possible
- Parent/teacher meetings – where these need to take place – strong preference for on-line where possible unless involving serious matters that require face to face discussion
- Parent/carer school pick up and drop off – arrangements should continue at the school's discretion taking into consideration adult physical distancing requirements. Parents/carers should not be on school grounds or at school events without principal's permission.
- Share Our Space
- [Official visitors and dignitaries](#) (consistent with current protocols)

- Staff meetings can be held taking into account physical distancing and maximum numbers in a space according to current health guidelines, or use on-line technology
- Professional learning for teachers can recommence with preference for using on-line technology. Professional development at external venues can continue in line with the venue's requirements to abide by current guidelines. Professional development can occur on site as long as physical distancing is maintained.
- Work experience for students
- Practicum teaching for tertiary education students
- VET work placements can proceed subject to the availability of placement and appropriate risk assessments. For any that can't proceed, please see [the NESAs website](#)
- School based apprenticeships and traineeships can recommence once the relevant workplaces are back in operation
- Community use activities involving general adult attendance (such as community markets) at which the organiser remains responsible for compliance with distancing and hygiene requirements aligned with the health advice of the day.

Activities under consideration from Term 3

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

- School camps
- Excursions (other than field trips explained above)
- Parent attendance at assemblies and other school events (e.g. graduation ceremonies or student speech events)
- Group photos for staff

- Parent volunteers – e.g. parent reading helpers (note: canteen and uniform shop volunteers are permitted)
- Interstate excursions
- School based activities that involve large gathering of adults are not permitted at this time. These include parent/community gatherings such as parent functions, working bees, fundraisers, school BBQs, large parent information evenings, and large on-site cultural events. These large gatherings and the following activities will continue to be reviewed and assessed based on AHPPC and NSW Health advice and may be permitted at a later date.

Cancelled or delayed

- Additionally 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 ([see list here](#))
- International excursions are cancelled until further notice.

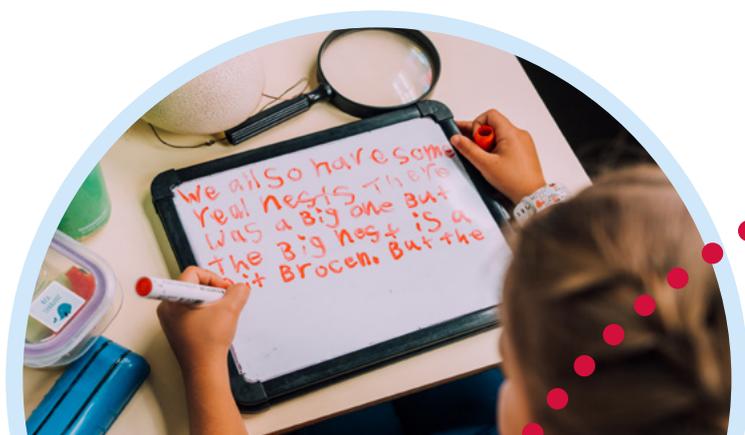


Attendance and roll marking

All students should be either:

- at school
- at home because they are currently unwell
- at home because they have a medical certificate which states that they are unable to return to school due to an ongoing medical condition (or in limited cases where a family member has an ongoing medical condition)

If parents believe that their child has a condition which means it is not safe for them to return to school, they will need to provide a medical



certificate. These are likely to be children with suppressed immune systems or undergoing treatment like chemotherapy.

Please note, students who are residing with a family member in one of the categories identified as being at increased risk, should attend school unless a medical practitioner advises otherwise. The parent or carer should provide written confirmation from the treating health professional that the student is unable to attend school and for what period of time.

If students are away from school because they are unwell, there is no expectation that they complete school work. It is important that unwell students rest.

If students cannot attend school due to a long term illness or underlying health condition, as is current practice, schools will continue to be responsible for providing work for students for the period they are prevented from being at school.

Individual schools should work with parents to determine how to best meet student's needs in these circumstances. Additional support and advice can be found on the [Learning from home hub](#). In limited circumstances, short term enrolment in distance education may be considered.

If a student falls ill while at school, the department's current [first aid procedures](#) apply including contacting the student's parent or carer or emergency contact, to collect the student. Schools should work with families to ensure all emergency contacts are up to date.

Recording absences, medical certificates and case management (new information)

If a student is absent for more than three days without a medical certificate, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and followed up by the school. Please [see here](#) for additional information on attendance coding. In relation to medical certificates, if there is an ongoing pattern of poor attendance and major concerns, under [chapter 16a](#) of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1999, the principal can contact the GP to discuss the matter. Principals will need to provide evidence

of their concern. Please [see here](#) for more information about medical certificates.

If students have not returned to school, a compassionate and common sense approach should be used. Schools should work with the student and their parent/carer to put a plan in place to support their return to school and if needed can apply for support from the Home School Liaison program and Learning and Wellbeing team. Relevant contacts can be found through the [School Services Contact list](#).

Our primary concern is the wellbeing and safety of the students in our care.



Reporting for Semester 1

Reporting for Semester 1, 2020 will occur but with some [amendments to the policy](#). In summary:

Schools may provide a simplified written report to parents/carers about students' learning in Semester 1. Principals will be able to modify their existing report templates/software or develop a new simplified report to accommodate this change.

Reporting to parents/carers should focus on the learning that has taken place so far this year. This will include student's progress and achievements, as well as areas for development. The grading of students using the five point A-E scale is not required. Word descriptors of the five-point achievement scale may be used through teacher comments to provide a consistent language for reporting progress and achievement on the learning students have undertaken.

We encourage schools to engage with parents/carers about students learning as part of the assessment and reporting process. Advice is available for conducting [parent/carer/teacher interviews](#).

The deadline for reports to be provided to parents has been extended to 30 August 2020 (end of Week 6, Term 3).





Assessing students' progress

Schools have been provided with a range of assessment tools, which are available on the [Learning from home hub](#). These provide short, sharp insights into learning progress, to inform teaching plans for students.



Staffing

Guidance on return to work

All school-based staff, including temporary and casual staff, are expected to have [returned to working on-campus](#) unless they fall into one of the following categories in line with AHPPC guidelines:

- people aged 70 years and over
- all people with compromised immune systems
- people aged 65 years and over only with chronic medical conditions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50 with chronic medical conditions.

Normal leave management arrangements will apply. Staff will need to submit the appropriate leave application and supporting documents.

Principals or supervisors will need to consider individual circumstances and school operational needs when approving leave.

Staff members who are pregnant or individuals who live with people in one of the above categories, should have returned to their usual on-campus workplace, or applied for appropriate leave.

To be supported to work remotely staff will need to provide written confirmation of their circumstances to their Principal or workplace manager and agree what work can be performed that will support teaching and learning. If staff are not able to perform work remotely that will support teaching and learning,

they may be required to take special leave at a maximum of 20 days in 2020.

Please note the Employment Guarantee for Casual Teachers ceases at the end of Term 2, 2020.



Cleaning and supplies

Enhanced cleaning

The department requires cleaning to be delivered in line with the AHPPC guidelines and advice from NSW Health. Public Works Advisory manages the whole -of-government cleaning contract and has implemented an enhanced hygienic cleaning process in schools has been implemented in addition to the standard daily clean.

Target areas include high-touch areas and other hard surfaces, door handles, lockers, light switches and handrails in stairways and movement areas. Enhanced cleaning is delivered as part of the daily cleaning of schools.

Schools are now also receiving an additional clean during the day in line with AHPPC guidance. This includes cleaning frequently touched areas in bathrooms after recess, as well as replenishing supplies such as soap and hand towels that are provided by the school. High touch surfaces such as balustrades and handrails in the playground and stairwells are also wiped with disinfectant.

As per normal operational restrictions, a cleaner cannot enter a classroom during school hours and while students are in the classroom. During the day, teachers should encourage students to use disinfectant products to wipe down their own learning spaces after each lesson or learning period.

Schools should contact their local Asset Management team to discuss any issues that arise with cleaning.

This [cleaning regime](#) will remain in place until the end of Term 3, 2020, or until such time as changes in the health advice permit.

Essential school supplies

The department is continuing to dispatch critical supplies to schools to help keep their learning environment safe. The department has dispatched a range of products, including soap, hand sanitiser, toilet paper, paper towels, disinfectant wipes and personal protective equipment.

Schools [can order more hygiene supplies](#) by emailing COVID-19@det.nsw.edu.au.

Reporting suspected COVID-19 cases

All suspected and confirmed cases should be reported to the department's Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523. The school will be provided with advice and support relevant to the circumstances.

Responding to COVID-19 cases

The department has in place [protocols](#) to guide schools through the contact tracing process and communication with the school community. The school may need to be non-operational for a day or two and the school will be thoroughly cleaned prior to on-site learning resuming.

If a school becomes non-operational, the School Infrastructure Asset Management team monitors the cleaning team on site to ensure the clean is thorough. At the end of the clean the Asset Management Director provides the Principal and Director, Educational Leadership with a clearance certificate.



Boarding schools

[Guidelines](#) have been developed to support residential arrangements in boarding schools. The guidelines are aligned with advice from NSW Health and AHPPC recommendations.



Wellbeing

The department has a range of services and programs to support the physical and psychological wellbeing of staff on the [Being Well](#) intranet page.

In addition, the department's [Employee Assistance Program – Supporting You](#) is available for confidential counselling services on 1800 060 650 for permanent staff, and for temporary and casual staff until 30 June.



Early Childhood Education and OOSHC

Early childhood education and care services including out of school hours care play a vital role in our communities. Preschools on Department of Education sites will remain open, operating within the same guidelines as public schools.





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GPO Box 33 Sydney NSW 2001 Australia
T 1300 679 332

