

PSA bulletin: NSW Schools COVID-19 guidelines for Term 3 2021

As you will be aware Greater Sydney, Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Wollongong, and Shellharbour local government areas have been issued Stay at Home Orders from 26 June 2021, initially scheduled until 9 July.

On 7 July 2021 the NSW government extended the lockdown arrangements a further week until 16 July which coincides with week one of NSW Schools Term 3. On 8 July PSA officers were briefed by the Department of Education on the guidelines to operate for the commencement of Term 3.

You can access the Department advice for school-based staff [HERE](#).

On Monday 12 July Staff Development Day (SDD) Greater Sydney Schools should undertake all planned professional development virtually. For the rest of the week, students will be learning from home.

In schools outside Greater Sydney, members are advised to contact their school for an update on the professional development arrangements in place for the SDD. For the rest of the week pupils will return to school-based learning.

The PSA recommends all members read the COVID-19 advice for school-based staff or the COVID-safe plan for your school before returning to work.

NSW Health and the Department of Education have introduced a revised framework for COVID response which includes Levels 1 to 4.

Major changes to previous COVID arrangements - Week 1, Term 3

Greater Sydney – Level 4

(Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Wollongong and Shellharbour)

- Majority of students learning from home
- Mandatory masks for staff not working from home
- Students in year 7 and above attending school must also wear a mask
- Mandatory QR code sign in process for all staff and visitors
- Non-essential visitors restricted from school site

Outside Greater Sydney – Level 2

- Masks recommended indoors for all staff
- Masks recommended for students in year 7 and above
- Physical distancing - certain activities modified - level 3 & 4 – reduced mingling between student and year cohorts and restrictions on activities



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- Mandatory QR code sign in process for all staff and visitors
- Non-essential visitors restricted from school site

There are exemptions across all levels that may apply. Review COVID advice for school based staff for more information [HERE](#).

The Department has advised additional supplies of masks are currently being dispatched to schools.

Members should read “COVID-19 leave and arrangements” [HERE](#).

These are consistent with previous advice within Schools COVID-19 bulletin sent to members in April 2020. For clarification of how COVID Special Leave applies, refresh your knowledge by re-reading that bulletin [HERE](#).

In relation to reporting cases of COVID-19, attending school, school operations, school activities, first aid and infection control, hygiene and cleaning, staff health and wellbeing, planning for student learning, preschool management all members are advised to read the advice to school based staff [HERE](#).

PSA campaign for vaccine prioritisation

The PSA has taken action on behalf of members to ensure those who wish to be vaccinated are prioritised in a co-ordinated way. Disappointingly the Department has been unable to achieve prioritising vaccination of school-based staff, despite the fact that you work in close proximity to children, many of whom have health conditions or disabilities that could make them vulnerable. As well, your own safety is paramount.

The PSA recommends members contact their State and Federal members to secure their support in having the Commonwealth prioritise all school-based staff for vaccination.

CYBER attack on the Department of Education IT systems

The Secretary advised the PSA on 8 July that external sources had attacked the Department’s IT systems. The Department is confident payroll and ERN records are secure. All other areas are subject to investigation by the relevant authorities. It is expected that employee access to the Department’s portal will be restored prior to Monday 12 July 2021.

Please monitor media and the Department of Education website, which has not been affected, for details.

You can help your colleagues stay safe, protected and supported with the PSA!

Do you know someone who is not a member? Now more than ever it is important to be a member of the PSA. You can support the work of the union and delegates to get better outcomes for everyone just by asking your colleagues to JOIN at www.psa.asn.au/join.





9 July 2021

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PSA staff are here to help

If you are impacted by changes to your contract, have been advised you are no longer needed as students aren't at school, need advice on the application of Special Leave or Work Health and Safety then you should contact the PSA.

Member Support Centre - 1300 772 679.

