

COVID-smart measures for schools

Information for **teachers and staff**



Keeping NSW schools open will enable our staff to guide each student according to their unique needs and abilities. The following measures will help keep our schools safe and open.



WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS

- If you display any symptoms, even mild, you must not attend school and should take a PCR test (nose and throat swab) or rapid antigen test (RAT) as soon as possible.
- If symptoms continue you should stay at home and take another rapid antigen test in 24 hours or have a PCR test.



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.
- 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 and get a negative result before attending school at the start of term 1. Your 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.
- Schools are not required to keep records of who picks up a rapid antigen test.



COVID-19 POSITIVE CASES

- If there is a positive case in a class, year or other grouping, the other students 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 the risk of transmission. Please open doors and windows where possible.
- All learning spaces in public schools have been checked to ensure appropriate levels of ventilation and air purifiers have been provided where needed.
- In areas such as staff rooms, staff are reminded to maintain both social distancing of 1 person per 4m², and appropriate levels of natural ventilation.
- 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

- Teachers and other staff are asked to respect the rules at their school to help keep the community safe, and ensure the appropriate supervision and continuity of learning for students.
- Schools will do everything they can to maintain continuity of face-to-face learning on site. Plans are in place to increase the pool of casual staff available to support schools.
- Schools will need to make localised staffing decisions to ensure appropriate supervision can be maintained.
- Contingency plans for staff shortages will include casual staff, teachers from nearby schools, retired teachers, student teachers as well as other staff, and combining classes.



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 education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families

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