



COVID-19 Return to School Policy

Mount Pleasant Road Primary School

A. **Purpose:**

- A.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline how our school will be managing risk relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) during key interactions between students, parents and staff during the return to school in Term 4, 2020.
- A.2. Mount Pleasant Road Primary School is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment for our students and staff. We ask for the whole school community to follow this policy to enable us to provide the safest possible environment during this time. We all have a role to play in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Victoria.

B. **Background:**

- B.1. Mount Pleasant Road Primary School is following the advice from the Department of Education and Training including, [Health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the context of COVID-19](#) which can be found on the Department's Coronavirus (COVID-19) website.

C. **Scope**

- C.1. This policy applies to everyone in the Mount Pleasant Road Primary School community. This includes all members of staff (principals, teachers and education support staff), all parents/carers who interact with the school and all students. It also includes visitors to the school.

D. **Requirements:**

D.1. **Attendance on-site**

The Department of Education and Training (DET) advises that:

Perhaps the most important action school communities can take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), is to ensure that any unwell staff, children and young people remain at home.

Staff or students most at risk of severe illness should individually assess appropriateness for onsite attendance at this time with support from their medical practitioner.

As the main risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, it is important that visitors to school grounds are limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations.

Plans for return attendance:

1. All students will return to school from **Monday 12th October**
2. A staggered schedule for the beginning and end of the day will commence from Monday 12th October. Students in Foundation to Grade 2 will commence school at 9:00am and be dismissed at 3:30pm. Students in Years 3-6 will commence school at 8:45am and be dismissed at 3:15pm. Supervision in the courtyard will be provided for students who have siblings across the staggered start and end times.
3. All students will be expected to attend school as normal from Monday 12th October. This means if you choose to keep your child/children home after the return to on-site schooling, we can no longer

support their learning from home. This does not apply to children who need to be absent for health or medical reasons. For those families, please contact us so we can make an appropriate plan.

4. This same approach is being taken by all government schools in Victoria. To support the health and wellbeing of all our students and staff, our school will continue an enhanced cleaning routine and will encourage frequent hand washing.

This means that at our school:

- All unwell staff and students **must** stay home.
- Parents/carers of students with complex medical needs (including those with compromised immune systems), should seek advice from the student's medical practitioner to support decision-making about whether on-site education is suitable, noting that this advice may change depending on the status of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Victoria. This is in line with the [DET Health Care Needs](#) policy.
- Visitors to school grounds will be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, specialist curriculum programs, maintenance workers).
- Additional staff, including parent volunteers, are not permitted onsite at this time. Activities dependent on and involving parents such as PMP and parent classroom helpers are cancelled until further notice.
- Mount Pleasant Road Primary School's preferred method of communication with parents is via email through the Sentral Parent Portal. We ask that any parents/carers wishing to discuss any matters further with a staff member to first use the options of either email, a phone call or video call. If a face-to face meeting is needed, it must be organised through the office, and it must meet the physical distancing requirements of 1.5m between adults.
- All interschool activities that involve onsite attendance by students from other schools will either take place virtually or will be cancelled.
- School assemblies, excursions, camps, ICE, Junior Rotations and other non-essential large gatherings will be postponed, cancelled or conducted virtually for Term 4.

E. School Reporting

The Department of Education and Training has recently adjusted the expectations around student reporting for Semester 2 in recognition of the continued disruption caused by COVID-19. While Mount Pleasant Road Primary School has continued to deliver a teaching and learning program and monitor the learning of each student, we have adjusted our usual program to reflect the recent period of remote and flexible delivery. Mount Pleasant Road Primary School will therefore provide a simplified written report for the parent/carer of each student enrolled at the school for Semester 2, 2020 focusing on what progress has been made and what has been achieved by each child.

Reports will include:

- a description of the areas of the Victorian Curriculum Foundation to Level 10 taught;
- a comment on student participation and engagement in the learning program offered;
- for English and Mathematics:
 - student achievement information;
 - progress shown from the last time these curriculum areas were reported on;
 - A-E progression points will be allocated
- for all other curriculum areas taught including specialist subjects:
 - a short comment on progress and achievement across the Semester

F. School arrival and departure

DET advises that:

As the main risk of introducing coronavirus (COVID-19) to the school environment is from adults, close proximity between adult members of the school community should be avoided, particularly during school drop-off and pick-up.

This means that at our school:

- We ask staff and parents/carers to observe physical distancing measures by not congregating in areas inside or around the school and wearing a face mask during drop-off and pick-up
- We ask parents/carers to come alone when dropping off and picking up their child from school
- Signage to support all hygiene measures, adult physical distancing and entry and exit points will be available.
- Parents/carers should maintain 1.5m physical distancing, wear face masks and not linger at the drop off or pick up areas.
- Parents should only enter the school grounds when absolutely essential to do so and must notify the school by phone or email beforehand.
- All greetings should be non-contact.
- To minimise interaction of students and adults within the school and at entry and exit points:

Kindergarten

- Kinder students enter/exit through Hall door off Mount Pleasant Road.

Foundation to Grade 2 - 9:00am - 3:30pm

- Foundation students in FD and FH will enter and exit through the school reception
- Foundation students in FJ and FG will enter and exit through the gates next to Staff Car Park 2 on Mount Pleasant Road (next to senior playground)
- Students in Year 1/2 K, P & H enter through Staff Car Park 1 and line up with their class on the Junior Basketball courts. Year 1/2 BR, E, O & W enter through double gates on Eugenia Street onto the oval and line up on the Senior basketball court. Parents are permitted on the school oval only.

Years 3-6 - 8:45am - 3:15pm

- Year 3/4 students enter through the gate next to Staff Car Park 2 on Mount Pleasant Road (next to senior playground)
- Year 5/6 students enter through Eugenia Street double gates onto the oval
- Older siblings will need to escort their younger sibling to the courtyard when they arrive in the morning where they will be supervised by a teacher. At the end of the day older siblings will be supervised in the courtyard until 3:30pm where they will exit with their younger sibling.

G. Hygiene

DET advises that:

Everyone can protect themselves and prevent the spread of coronavirus by continuing effective hand hygiene.

At our school:

- All staff and students will undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet. This will be directed or supervised by staff where required. Students wash or sanitise hands:
 1. On entry to class.
 2. Before eating snack.
 3. After recess break when entering class.
 4. Before eating lunch
 5. After lunch break when entering class
- Where soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitiser will be made available.
- Students must bring their own named water bottles to school for use (and refilling). It is recommended that students do not drink directly from drinking fountains. At this time these will be cordoned off.
- Staff and students are reminded to clean their devices regularly before bringing them to school. The Mount Pleasant Road Primary School's Mobile Phones policy remains in place.
- Sharing of food is not permitted by students.

- Mandatory temperature testing on arrival to school will not be required in Term 4

H. Specific arrangements for teaching and learning environments and break times

DET advises that:

Maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 metres will not always be practical in education settings. Physical distancing is most important between adults.

Reducing mixing between different cohorts year levels is recommended as a precautionary measure to minimise risk of spread of transmission and aid containment in the rare event of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) on site.

At our school we will:

- keep windows and doors open to promote fresh air flow indoors as deemed practical.
- ensure students and staff largely remain in the same classroom areas where possible rather than moving for particular classes from room to room except for specialist classes.
- ensure staff maintain physical distancing as much as practical when working in a classroom or office together.
- ensure staff wear face masks at school when required (teachers and education support staff are not required to wear face masks while teaching, but may wish to do so).
- students who are aged 12 or over by Year 6 who are attending primary school are not required to wear face masks at school

I. School offices and staff facilities

DET advises that:

As the greatest risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, close proximity between staff will be avoided where possible and especially in offices and staff rooms.

At our school we will:

- Spread staff workstations out as much as possible and limit the number of staff in offices, relocating staff to other spaces (e.g. library or unused classrooms)
- Remind staff to maintain physical distancing from each other as much as possible in the reception, staff room and offices, in line with other workplaces across Victoria.

J. Cleaning and facilities management

DET advises that:

Environmental cleaning, coupled with regular hand hygiene, remains important to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.

At our school:

- We will continue the extension of routine environmental cleaning, including progressive cleaning throughout the day to ensure that risks of transmission are reduced for high-touch services. See Department information about [Access to cleaning supplies and services](#).
- All classrooms have been issued with cleaning materials for tables to be cleaned during the day and high contact points eg. door handles disinfected.
- Careful consideration, including cleaning in between classes, will be given when using shared items or equipment e.g.: shared iPads, robots, class sets of teaching and learning materials, musical instruments, etc. at this time.
- We will be practising hand hygiene immediately before and after the use of shared equipment.

K. Sport and recreation

DET advises that:

In line with community advice, reasonable precautions are still advised to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission in the context of sport and recreation.

- Playground equipment can be used. However, students will be directed to practise hand hygiene before and after use.
- Cleaning of playground equipment and grab rails will be carried out each day.
- Wherever possible, outdoor facilities will be used for physical education and recreational play.
- Hand hygiene will be practised before and after use of any sporting equipment.

L. Provision of routine care and first aid

DET advises that:

Physical distancing is not practical when providing direct care. In this situation standard precautions, including hand hygiene, are important for infection control.

At our school:

- Standard precautions as per DET [Infectious Diseases policy](#) and our Administer First Aid Policy will be followed when providing first aid. For example, we will use gloves and an apron when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances.
- Hand hygiene will be practised before and after performing routine care or first aid.
- Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), for example face masks, is not required to provide routine care or first aid for students who are well, unless such precautions are usually adopted in the routine care of an individual student.

M. Management of an unwell student or staff member

DET advises that:

It is important that any staff member or student who becomes unwell while at school returns home. While it is unlikely that a staff member or student who is unwell with flu-like symptoms will have coronavirus (COVID-19) there are some sensible steps schools can take while a student awaits collection by a parent or carer as a precaution.

This means that at our school:

- Staff and students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough or sore throat, will be isolated in an appropriate space with suitable supervision and collected by a parent/carer as soon as possible. Urgent medical attention will be sought where needed. Unwell students will not be permitted to travel home unsupervised.
- Where staff or students are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus, we will ensure hand hygiene, physical distancing and (where possible) use of a face mask. See DET [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).
- If a staff member is unsure whether a student is unwell in the first instance we will contact the parent/carer to discuss any concerns about the health status of the student, and we will take a precautionary approach, requesting the parent/carer to collect their child if concerns remain. A trained staff member may take the temperature of the student, using a contactless thermometer, where appropriate, to support decision-making. Gloves will be worn for the purpose of taking a temperature.
- Staff or students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) should be encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps. A medical certificate is not required to return to school after a period of illness, however staff and students should not return until symptoms resolve.
- If a student spreads droplets (for example by sneezing, coughing or vomiting), surfaces will be immediately cleaned with disinfectant.

N. Managing a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

DET has comprehensive procedures in place with the Department of Health and Human Services to manage suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in schools.

- We will contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160 to discuss what to do next if a student or staff member:
 - is a confirmed case
 - has been in close contact with a confirmed case
- We will inform the Department by making an [IRIS incident alert](#).
- DHHS defines ‘close contact’ as someone who has either:
 - had at least 15 minutes of face-to-face contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)
 - shared a closed space for more than two hours with someone who is a confirmed case.

O. Further information and resources

- [DET Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website](#):
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/Pages/coronavirus-advice-schools.aspx>
- [DHHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website](#):
 - <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>
- [DET Infectious Diseases Policy](#):
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/infectiousdiseases.aspx>
- [DET Health Care Needs Policy](#)
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/healthcareneeds.aspx>
- Department of Education and Training COVID-19 Advice Line – 1800 338 663
- Department of Health and Human Services Coronavirus hotline – 1800 675 398 (24 hours, 7 days a week)

P. Review

This policy was last updated on 5th October and will be in place during Term 4, 2020.