



Please contact Mr. Cockington (Junior School) or Mr. Laffin (Senior School) for further information.

## 1 ALTERATIONS

Sections 6.4-6.6, 7.1, 7.7, 11.1, 11.3, 14.1, 16.1-16.4, 17.7 and 19.1 have been altered (usually slightly) since the Version 1. Please note that, in accordance with evolving industry practice, the School no longer requires visitors to the Uniform Shop (Section 7.7) or our Canteen staff and volunteers to wear masks (Section 11.3 in Version 1).

## 2 INTRODUCTION

Throughout periods of 2020, all independent schools, including Blue Mountains Grammar School, were required to operate under the same COVID-19 guidelines as NSW Department of Education and Training schools. Towards the end of 2020, independent schools were permitted to return to their own risk assessment practices, informed by advice from various government sources and the Association of Independent Schools. NSW Health, the Association of Independent Schools and the NSW Department of Education and Training regularly release updated COVID-19 advice, the spirit of which we will endeavour to follow in the interest of community safety. This information sheet outlines the approach Blue Mountains Grammar School will take to managing the ongoing risks associated with COVID-19.

## 3 HYPERLINKED MENU

Use the embedded hyperlinks to find and navigate through content that is relevant to you and your family.

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## 4 PERSONAL HYGIENE

- 4.1 All persons are expected to undertake appropriate hand hygiene at all times
- 4.2 All persons are requested to cough or sneeze into their elbow.
- 4.3 Wearing of masks will not be required, but is permitted, on campus. In deciding whether or not to wear a mask, all persons will be encouraged to consider the needs of those with hearing or auditory processing difficulties and the other impacts the wearing of a mask may have on their capacity to engage with and participate in our community. Staff considering wearing a mask should speak with the Business Manager or their Head of School.

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## 5 COVID SYMPTOMS

- 5.1 All persons are to stay home if they have even the mildest cold or flu symptoms and be tested for COVID-19. Prior to returning to School (or upon their return) staff and students are required to provide a copy of their negative COVID-19 Test to one of our Receptionists. Staff documentation will be palced on file.
- 5.2 Students or staff presenting with ANY cold or flu symptoms will be immediately sent to sickbay and sent home. Where students or staff provide a copy of a negative COVID-19 Test but continue to present with symptoms (e.g. where an individual experiences hay fever), they may be required to wear a mask.

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## 6 SOCIAL DISTANCING

- 6.1 All persons are expected to avoid close personal contact (such as hugging and shaking hands).
- 6.2 Social distancing is not required between students within the same cohort.
- 6.3 All adults are asked to maintain a 1.5m social distance at all times.



- 6.4 Outdoor adult gatherings will not exceed 50 persons.
- 6.5 Indoor adult gatherings will not exceed a total of 30 persons regardless of room size.
- 6.6 The School will apply the 2 square metre rule to indoor adult gatherings. This means that for all gatherings permissible under Section 6.4 and 6.5 above, the maximum number of persons permitted is half the number of square metres of floor space in the room.

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## **7 ATTENDANCE ON CAMPUS**

- 7.1 Parents of Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Years 1 and 2 students are welcome to attend Campus in order to drop off to classes and pick up children as necessary. Parents, however, are encouraged to Kiss and Drop.
- 7.2 Parents of Year 7 students and new students in other Senior School years are welcome during Week 1 to attend Campus in order drop off students to Coorah Lawn or pick them up from the same location. Parents who drive their children are encouraged thereafter to use the School roundabout for drop off and pick up.
- 7.3 The School requests that parents avoid coming on Campus during School hours unless necessary, or unless they have a booked meeting with a member of staff. Should Senior School parents attend the Campus, they are requested to check in at Coorah Reception in the first instance. Junior School parents may check in at the Reception Desk of the relevant Junior School Campus.
- 7.4 Parents will be welcome to attend after-hours events on Campus in accordance with COVID-19 Safety Plans. For planning purposes, we will require parents to RSVP early. Once numbers are established, we will decide on a COVID-safe approach to the organisation of the event and communicate specifically with those who have indicated they will attend.
- 7.5 Please note that Parent-Teacher Evenings will operate via Zoom in Term 1.
- 7.6 Should parents identify students as being at a higher than average risk of COVID-19 transmission and choose to have them continue to learn at home, they are asked to provide the School with a medical certificate stating that this is the case and specifying the time period to which this applies. Students will then be listed as Learning Online rather than Absent in the School's attendance records.
- 7.7 Uniform Shop visitors will no longer be asked to wear masks. Parents are however, asked to park in the Chapel Car Park rather than at the Roundabout in order to manage general safety in the area. If the Chapel Car Park is full, please consider the Sports Centre Car Park or the parking available outside the School gates near Pitt Park.
- 7.8 Casual teachers, contractors, practicum students, external coaches and tutors, and parent volunteers will be welcomed on site and at School events for essential activities. Please note the requirement to complete the School's COVID-Safe Declaration Form and adhere to the School's COVID-19 Safety Plan as a condition of participation.

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## **8 CLASSROOM HYGIENE**

- 8.1 Physical distancing of students is not required under Government guidelines.
- 8.2 At the beginning of each lesson, students will sanitise their hands. We will continue to supply hand sanitiser in all learning spaces, but students are welcome to bring their own should they prefer to do so.
- 8.3 All frequently touched surfaces such as desks, equipment and the tops of chairs will be disinfected BOTH at the beginning and at the conclusion of all classes in the Senior School, and at the beginning and conclusion of each day in the Junior School.
- 8.4 The School Cleaning Team will continue to provide a higher than usual level of sanitisation of all surfaces each evening after the school day concludes.

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## **9 VACCINATIONS**

- 9.1 While we continue to wait and hope that a safe vaccine for COVID-19 will soon be available, it is important that we continue our normal vaccination program protecting children and young people from other diseases.
- 9.2 Information in relation to the NSW Health Vaccination Program will be provided to families in due course.

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## 10 TRANSPORT

- 10.1 Senior School students taking public transport (whether trains or public buses) are required to wear masks and to comply with any and all requests from staff and other sign-posted advice. Junior School students are not required to wear masks. All students are asked to be conscious of social distancing and personal hygiene while using public transport and should sanitise their hands before and after using public transport.
- 10.2 Senior School students making use of the School's own fleet of buses are required to wear masks. Junior School students will not be required to wear masks.

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## 11 SEPARATION OF COHORTS

- 11.1 We will continue to keep students within their relevant cohorts/stages for the majority of the time to limit the number of potential close contacts in the event of an infection. In the Junior School, students will be deemed to be one cohort. Students in the Senior School will be isolated within their Stages (Years 7/8, 9/10 and 11/12).
- 11.2 Due to the specialist nature of academic subjects, it is not always possible to isolate Stages within one set of classrooms. Students studying Science, for example, must have access to Science Laboratories in order to facilitate the outstanding learning they deserve.
- 11.3 With the risks of transmission recognised as being lower outdoors, we will no longer be separating cohorts in the playground. Our arrangements for inclement weather are as follows.
  - 11.3.1 Year 12 may access the Bartlett Building, while Year 11 may access the MacLaurin Building.
  - 11.3.2 Year 10 may use the Pitt-Owen Building while Year 9 access Art and Design Foyer.
  - 11.3.3 Year 8 and Year 7 may access the Short Building.
- 11.4 The Sports Centre will be open for all Senior School students at Lunch times on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Students wishing to use the Weights Gym may now do so on a strictly rostered basis at Lunch time on Fridays by appointment with the PDHPE staff and in accordance with the COVID Safety Plan.
- 11.5 The Senior School Library will remain open for all students, although they will be requested to remain in signposted areas. Where students access specialist support services such as Learning Enrichment and Tutoring, staff will move to the relevant area of the Library so that students may stay in their designated area.

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## 12 EATING AND DRINKING

- 12.1 School bubblers may be used however, students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles with their name clearly marked and may re-fill them at various locations around the School.
- 12.2 Students are not to share food and drinks.
- 12.3 All Senior School students will have access to the Canteen. In order to avoid over-crowding, however, only those students intending to purchase food and drinks at the Canteen are permitted to wait in Canteen lines. All other students are asked to remain out of this area. Where they forget, staff will ask them to move away.

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## 13 ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Blue Mountains Grammar School teachers have made a great deal of progress in their ability to provide outstanding online learning this year. We have implemented Google Classrooms in every Department across the Senior School and Stage 3, and Class Dojo elsewhere in the Junior School. The Teachers of the Senior School were also able to provide Zoom access for most lessons. Whilst teachers are focused on face-to-face learning they are not able to provide the same level of experience for students who are isolated at home.

- 13.1 Senior School students learning from home as a result of COVID-19 isolation will continue to be able to access all appropriate lessons through Zoom and will find lesson information on the Portal and (an increasing proportion of) Google Classrooms.
- 13.2 The provision of online learning for Junior School students in isolation, and what that constitutes, will be determined by the age and capability of the students concerned. Teachers will consult with the Head of Junior School as necessary.

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## 14 EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

- 14.1 All aspects of the School's academic calendar will operate as normal in 2021, including Senior School examinations and assessments.
- 14.2 Should individual examinations or assessment tasks be modified to adjust to COVID-safe guidelines, students and parents will be notified well in advance and a no-disadvantage test applied.

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## 15 LARGE GATHERINGS

- 15.1 Assemblies will continue as normal in the Junior School.
- 15.2 Senior School Assemblies and House Meetings may resume with appropriate social distancing and separation of cohorts.
- 15.3 Year Group (or Stage) Meetings will continue to take place in person as necessary.
- 15.4 Students will attend Chapel within their Stages as normal.
- 15.5 Community singing will not be permitted indoors, however, appropriately distanced musical performances will be permitted.

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## 16 SPORT

Sport is crucial to both the physical and social development of young people, as well as being a key part of our life as a school community. Subject to updated guidelines inter-school and even inter-regional sport will continue in 2021.

- 16.1 Our three School sports carnivals will be permitted in 2021, subject to COVID-19 Safety Plans.
- 16.2 Our Head of Sport, Mrs. Harris will communicate our approach to Senior School inter-school sport.
- 16.3 Individual Masters in Charge (MICs) will meet with their teams and provide further information as necessary.
- 16.4 Please note that two parents per child will be permitted to attend outdoors Saturday Sport, maintaining strict social distancing and avoiding mixing with parents from other schools. One parent per child will be permitted to attend indoors Saturday Sport.

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## 17 MUSIC AND DRAMA

Music plays an important role in the lives of many of our students. In order to manage the safety of our community, the following guidelines will apply.

- 17.1 Singing is now permitted where the following conditions are met:
  - 17.1.1 Solo singing is permitted with 5m social distance to any accompanists and audience.
  - 17.1.2 Group performance indoors is permitted for a maximum of five people where they all face the same direction (i.e. not facing each other) and where they maintain 1.5m social distance from each other and 5m social distance from any audience.
  - 17.1.3 Group performance outdoors is permitted for any number of singers where they all face the same direction (i.e. not facing each other) and where they maintain 1.5m social distance from each other and 5m social distance from any audience.
  - 17.1.4 Audience members may now sing outdoors, but all audience members in the Senior School must wear a mask while doing so. Singing by audience members indoors continues to be prohibited.
- 17.2 Non-reeded woodwind instruments such as flutes, piccolos or recorders will now be permitted with 3m social distance from each other and any audience.
- 17.3 All other woodwind instruments are permitted with 1.5m social distance from each other and any audience.
- 17.4 All brass instruments such as trumpets, trombones and French horns, and all other string and percussion instruments, may continue to be played with appropriate cleaning and hygiene measures.
- 17.5 Peripatetic Teachers will be permitted to continue lessons for BMGS students as per the statements above. Students from outside the BMGS community will not be permitted to attend the Campus.
- 17.6 Students may now participate freely in group performances in Drama, although students should remain in cohorts where possible.



- 17.7 Where performances of either Music or Drama are to take place, the total number of attendees (including students, staff and visitors) must not exceed thirty persons for all indoor performances, appropriate social distancing must be ensured and visitors will be asked to leave the venue promptly at the conclusion of performances.

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## **18 OTHER EXTRA/CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

All our normal Extra/Co-Curricular Activities will continue to operate, with provisions made to keep students in different Stages separate.

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## **19 EXCURSIONS AND INCURSIONS**

- 19.1 The School will undertake excursions with appropriate COVID-Safety planning. We will continue to monitor health advice, however, are unlikely to approve excursions to areas presenting higher levels of risk e.g. public places with large crowds. All external excursion venues will be asked to provide a venue-specific COVID-19 Safety Plan at the time of booking.
- 19.2 Wilderness Education day trips and outdoor learning will continue as normal.
- 19.3 Incursions will continue as normal. Educators visiting the School will be required to complete the Schools COVID-Safe Declaration Form and adhere to the School's COVID-19 Safety Plan as a condition of their attendance on Campus.
- 19.4 Where appropriate, parent helpers will be invited to attend excursions as volunteers.
- 19.5 Inter-state and international excursions will remain on hold until further notice.

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## **20 CAMPS**

For many adults who were fortunate enough to attend schools such as Blue Mountains Grammar, camps are the source of some of our most cherished and long-lasting memories of our time at school. Camps will continue as planned in 2021. Closer to the relevant date, camp staff will distribute specific information to students and parents and will conduct Camp Briefings to ensure students understand COVID-Safety measures and are otherwise ready to head out on their adventures.

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## **21 STAFF MEETINGS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

- 21.1 In 2021, Staff Meetings will be conducted face to face with appropriate social distancing.
- 21.2 At Blue Mountains Grammar staff are encouraged to engage in on ongoing professional learning throughout their careers. Staff attending external professional development will be asked to engage in online/Zoomed options where possible, and to comply carefully with the requirements of the COVID-19 Safety Plans of external provider's in all circumstances.

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