

Term Two 2020 COVID – 19 Arrangements

Family Factsheet and Frequently Asked Questions

As Tasmania is continuing to see a low number of COVID-19 cases and a positive response to physical distancing measures, changes have been made to the arrangements for CET schools in Term Two 2020 to allow students to return to school in a phased approach.

The gradual return to school is based on managing the numbers of students who will begin to commute on a daily basis. This plan, laid out by the Minister for Education, The Hon Jeremy Rockliff, is based on acceptable levels of student movement.

The following information is provided to assist parents and carers.

What are the new arrangements and when do they take effect?

- From **Monday 25 May 2020**, all Catholic Education Tasmania primary school students (K-6) and all students in Years 11 and 12, will return to school.
- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis our consistent message has been that our schools are safe, and as essential services are open to any students from any grades who attend on the day. This continues to be our message.
- By agreement with the Minister for Education, Catholic colleges may elect for their years 7-10 students to return at a suitable time between Monday 25 May 2020 and Tuesday 9 June 2020. Each school community will be advised when this is to happen. Given the comparatively small number of 7-10 students enrolled in Catholic schools and colleges, this has been assessed as acceptable.
- Secondary students (Years 7-10) who can be supported with the learning@home model will continue to engage with it until their return to school based learning.
- All students from Years 7-10 are required to return to school by Tuesday 9 June 2020.

Is it expected that all primary students and those in Year 11 and Year 12 attend school from Monday 25 May 2020?

- Yes. Schools will resume regular teaching and learning for students in these year levels as part of the phased return to school.
- It is acknowledged that some parents may still wish to keep their children home from school due to concerns about COVID-19 and due to student health concerns. In these cases, parents and carers remain responsible for their children. This includes ensuring their children stay at home and continue their learning by accessing material such as those provided for parents on the learning@home website.
- As is currently the case, parents will be required to communicate with the school about their child's absence from school. This includes when a parent chooses to keep their child at home due to concerns about COVID-19 as well as when a child is ill. When you contact the school with this information you may also wish to discuss any support you may need to assist you with your child's learning at home.
- Parents and carers of students with health support needs are encouraged to consult their health practitioner when deciding if their child should attend school.

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Why are only limited grade levels of students returning to school?

- As part of the easing of restrictions applied under the COVID-19 response, schools will commence a phased return to regular schooling.
- We want to take the earliest possible action to allow students to resume on-site learning and students in their senior years (Years 11 and 12) have been identified as one of the first cohorts to return back to school. We know that the senior years of schooling are important as young adults make decisions about the pathways they will take after school.
- The learning@home platform identified some difficulties with engaging students from the Early childhood areas and it is for this reason the primary grades are resuming on Monday 25 May 2020.
- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis our consistent message has been that our schools are safe places and when we closed schools it was not because they were not safe, it was a response to Public Health advice around the movement of people and the spreading of the virus.

What will happen with students 7–10?

- By agreement with the Minister for Education, Catholic colleges may elect for their Years 7-10 students to return at a suitable time between Monday 25 May 2020 and Tuesday 9 June 2020. Each school community will be advised when this is to happen. Given the comparatively small number of 7-10 students enrolled in Catholic schools and colleges, this has been assessed as acceptable.
- Students from 7-10 will return to school by Tuesday 9 June 2020.
- There will be a time in the transition process where the learning@home platform will cease to be supported by the classroom teacher and where parents continue to keep their children at home they will become fully responsible for the supervision and direction of the learning@home program. Schools will communicate well before this process changes. A parent portal will be available from Monday 25 May 2020.

Is it safe for students to attend school?

- The decision to return to school for these year levels is informed by [advice](#) provided by the Australian Health Principal Protection Committee (AHPPC) and discussions with Tasmanian Health Department about a phased return to regular schooling.
- Schools are identified as safe places for students and present low risk in relation to the spread of COVID-19.
- The following measures will continue to be in place in schools:
 - students and staff who are unwell must not attend school,
 - physical distancing of 1.5 metres is required by all adults,
 - adults must not gather in and around school grounds, car parks, school gates and outside classrooms,
 - parents should use stop, drop and go or similar facilities rather than walking their children into school,
 - students will engage in regular effective handwashing and hygiene protocols, including regularly washing hands with soap and water or using hand sanitizer and covering coughs and sneezes,

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- cleaning of high-touch surfaces such as light switches and door handles,
- technology such as video conferencing used for gatherings, meetings and assemblies,
- school swimming pools remain closed and excursions, camps, trips and interschool activities are postponed at this time.

Has this decision to transition students back to school been supported by health advice?

- Yes. Tasmania's Chief Health Officer has provided advice and been involved in the decision making which has enabled CET to make this decision.
- The Chief Health Officer has agreed that the phased return to school over several weeks, will provide critical time for schools to develop and implement arrangements to ensure the transition can be made safely for teachers, support staff, parents and carers and students.

Will schools need to change routines or operations with some students returning?

- Schools will continue to actively manage routines and protocols in and around the school site. Social distancing measures remain in place and it is important that schools continue to practice these measures.
- While the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee advises that physical distancing is not required for students, schools may implement additional strategies including:
 - using larger, alternative locations or classrooms within the school
 - designating drop-off/pick-up points for parents in spacious areas
 - making use of outdoor learning spaces
 - staggering lunch breaks, start and finish times and other activities to reduce the volume of movement.
- Schools will continue to manage timetable arrangements locally. Changes are likely to be made to previous schedules as school staff deliver both home-based learning and on-site delivery. Schools will communicate with parents regarding any changes to their usual routines.

Are camps, excursions, school concerts and musicals able to proceed?

- No. At this time, it is not planned for these activities to resume during Term Two given the social nature of these events. These restrictions will be reviewed in light of ongoing health advice.

Will Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services be available?

- Outside school hours care (OSHC) services will continue to operate before and after school care where there is demand. This will include on-site OSHC or other services off site that cater for school age children, such as long day care or family day care. Parents are encouraged to contact their local OSHC provider to confirm arrangements.

Will canteens be operating at schools?

- Schools canteen providers will advise parents of local canteen operating arrangements.

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What are schools doing to ensure the health and hygiene of students on site?

- Schools will continue to ensure high standards of health and hygiene are practiced on site. Schools will continue to promote handwashing and hand hygiene and will use additional cleaning allocations to clean high use touch points in and around the school.

Is there anything that parents and carers can do to assist?

- Whilst social and physical distancing protocols have been reduced for students, they continue to apply to adults in a school setting. We can all help to restrict the spread of COVID-19 by adhering to these protocols.
- Schools will be taking action to limit the number of non-essential adults entering schools as well as implementing new procedures where required to limit the amount of adult to adult contact in and around schools.
- This may mean different arrangements for pick-up and drop-off, on-line meetings between parents and staff rather than face-to-face and different staff room arrangements for staff. Individual schools will make the appropriate arrangements for their community.
- Parents can help by minimising the need to enter the school, not gathering inside or outside schools, working with school staff and with new protocols or ways of working in and around the school.
- Parents can also assist by ensuring their child stays away from school if they are showing any signs or symptoms of illness.

What will happen if my child's teacher is unwell or a vulnerable worker?

- Schools will manage staffing allocations as they normally do. If a teacher is unwell or unable to attend school due to their own health reasons, principals will make staff adjustments or engage relief staff as required.

Will there be access to support for student well-being?

- Yes. School staff will continue to be alert to the needs of students as we return to school. If parents are particularly concerned about their child's wellbeing they should contact their school.

Will my child still be able to access school transport arrangements?

- Yes. Normal school transport arrangements will continue to apply for all school students.
- Social distancing guidelines will be followed on school buses (where practical), at bus interchange locations, and at other shared transport services.
- Transport operators will ensure that buses and surface touch points are cleaned according to COVID-19 cleaning and disinfection recommendations.

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Are there changes to assessment and reporting?

- Assessment and reporting for Term Two will be adjusted by schools to reflect the nature of learning over this time. If you require more information regarding assessment and reporting for your child, please speak to your child's teacher. For 2020, Catholic Education Tasmania will commence the mid-year reporting process at the beginning of Term Three with adjusted reports to be released to parents, guardians or caregivers on or before Friday 28 August 2020. These abbreviated reports will provide a comprehensive snapshot of student learning up until the end of Term Two. There will be an opportunity for parents, guardians or caregivers to meet with the child's teacher(s) to discuss the report. Schools may wish to use videoconferencing for this purpose.

What will happen in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19?

- The Tasmanian Health Department has established protocols if a confirmed case is identified in a school. CET follows the advice of the Tasmanian Health Department, if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a school community, the school may need to temporarily close to allow time for public health authorities to conduct contact tracing and deep cleaning to be undertaken, to ensure the safety of staff and students prior to reopening.
- Please note as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, plans are subject to change.