

Return to School- Term 1 2022- **UPDATE- 1/2/22**

Dear Families

DET has released the Operations Guide based on the advice given by the Victorian Government and the Chief Health Officer's latest advice. Please read the following information carefully.

Key Dates

- We welcome all Year 1-6 students onsite on Tuesday 1 February and Foundation students from Thursday 3 February.

Attendance at School

- All unwell staff and students **must** not attend school. Parents are requested to inform via Operoo if their child is not attending school as per normal school policy.
- All students are expected to attend school unless they are formally registered as being home-schooled. Parent preference is not an approved absence reason.
- Huntingdale Primary School is not expected to provide remote learning where parents elect to keep their child at home.
- The school will only continue to provide remote and flexible learning in a small number of cases, where a student tests positive to COVID-19 and it has been approved by the principal, commensurate with DET Policy.

Students, staff and families arriving from overseas

- There are additional requirements in place for students and families who arrive from overseas (both returning local students and international students).
- Refer to [Victorian Border Crossing Order 2022 \(No. 3\)](#) for current requirements.
- **Currently for students it is a minimum 7 days that they can't attend school when arriving from overseas**
- If the individual is over the age of 18 and has a medical exemption from vaccination, they must not attend a Victorian school or boarding school for 14 days following arrival from overseas.

Rapid Antigen Testing

- Free rapid antigen tests will be available for the first 4 weeks of Term 1 2022.
 - Twice-a-week testing will be strongly recommended for both students and staff.
 - DET have supplied the tests to our school – you do not need to buy your own.
 - One kit will be given for Weeks 1 and 2. Another kit will be distributed to be used for Week 3 and 4. We will let you know when these have arrived.
 - One test kit will be given per student. If a kit is lost, we cannot replace it. Please only use these kits for your children.
 - Students and staff will do the tests at home; they only need to report their result if it is COVID-positive. They must report a COVID-positive result to:
 - the school by phone or the [RA Test Portal](#); this is so the school can support them, record that they will be absent while in 7-day isolation, and let the rest of the school community know there has been a positive case onsite and that they should monitor for symptoms
 - the Department of Health via the [COVID-19 Positive Rapid Antigen Test Self-Reporting Form](#) or call centre on [1800 675 398](#).
- Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19, have completed their 7-day isolation period and are subsequently asymptomatic do not need to undertake surveillance testing for 30 days.

Management of suspected cases of COVID-19 in schools

A 'suspected' or 'symptomatic' case means a person who displays any [COVID-19 symptoms](#).

As soon as practicable after becoming aware of a suspected case in a staff member or student – and if that person has attended onsite while displaying symptoms, or 48 hours before they developed symptoms – the principal must take the following actions.

1. Let the person know they need to follow guidelines in the [Testing Requirements for Contacts and Exposed Persons](#). If applicable, the affected person/s should follow the COVID-19 RAT procedure, which recommends a symptomatic person in a workplace takes a COVID-19 test.
2. If the symptomatic person is confirmed to have COVID-19, the principal must follow the steps under the below section, *Management of confirmed cases and household contacts at school*.

Management of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in schools

1. Parents/carers should complete the [RA Test portal](#) if a student tests positive to COVID-19 (via a PCR or rapid antigen test). Where a parent/carer informs the school by phone or written notification, the school will complete the reporting process.
2. Students who report a positive result must isolate for seven days and not attend school during that period.
3. Where a student is a household contact of a positive case (that is, they have spent more than four hours with someone who has COVID-19 inside a house, accommodation, or care facility) they must inform the school and isolate for seven days and not attend school during that period.
4. Principals must notify the school community when a student or staff member has (or multiple students or staff members) have returned a positive COVID-19 test result and had attended the school. The notification should include:
 - Dates of attendance
 - Affected group/cohort/year levels
 - Any relevant extracurricular activities
5. Ensure that staff or students refrain from returning to school if they remain symptomatic, unless it is known that their symptoms are caused by an underlying health condition or medication.

In the event of multiple positive cases at a school, the Department of Health (DH) will work with the relevant regional office to determine the most appropriate response and any additional actions that should be taken.

Any decision to move to remote and flexible learning can only be used as a last resort and must be approved by the Regional Director or their delegate

School Activities and Visitors

- Visitors are able to attend school grounds. They must be vaccinated (see vaccination policy), maintain social distancing and practice hygiene measures. **All visitors must check in at the school office.**
- Additional helpers, including, Japanese and parent volunteers, will be kept to a minimum and are only allowed to attend if this has been prearranged with the school. They must be vaccinated, maintain social distancing and practice hygiene measures. **They must check in at the school office.**
- We ask that any parents/carers wishing to discuss any matters with a staff member to either email, make a phone call or video conference. Face-to face meetings will only occur if absolutely necessary.
- Parents must not visit classrooms before or after school at this time unless it has been prearranged with the teacher. They must use the QR code system to sign in at the school building.
- Parents should only visit the school office if necessary. Telephone calls or emails can be used to communicate. Payments can be done electronically via QKR and BPAY. Only one person can enter the office at a time.
- Excursions, incursions, swimming and interschool sport activities can occur. We will need to consider current levels of COVID-related absences with staff as these may impact on our ability to conduct activities.
- School assembly will be conducted via WebEx.
- Some other outdoor activities such as Kelly Sports will be able to recommence.

- Outdoor, non-contact physical activity is permitted. Indoor and contact activities are not allowed. Year level sports activities can commence, outdoors only.
- Music and Visual Arts lessons can go ahead. Music lessons involving singing are encouraged to be done outdoors where possible. Mixed group activities that are usually indoors (e.g. Student Leadership Council, Taiko and Ukulele) will not recommence at this stage.
- The school can conduct tours but must ensure density limits and social distancing are adhered to.
- The library will be open for class groups to use (not at lunchtimes). Students will need to sanitise before and after they leave the library.
- The school will minimise mixing of classes and year levels. Buddy activities will not happen at this time and sport activities must be done in whole class groups.

Team Kids

- Team Kids will be open as per normal following COVID-safe rules.
- Families must book their children into this service as Team Kids has specific staff/space ratios which they must adhere to.

School arrival and departure

- We are not implementing staggered starts to school as we have multiple entry points.
- Students should arrive at school by 8.45am ready for a 9.00am start.
- We ask parents/carers to observe physical distancing measures by not congregating in areas inside or around the school, including Grange Street, Germain Street, Clarendon Avenue and the school car park.
- Parents can drop and collect their children at the basketball court or the Clarendon Street entrance. Parents must leave immediately once their child is at school.
- At the end of the day, we ask that parents don't enter the school grounds before 3.15pm.
- Students who attend 'Team Kids' can drop off their child as per normal. In the afternoon session students will meet at the flagpole to see the leaders. Families must book their children into this service as Team Kids has specific staff/space ratios which they must adhere to.
- Please don't be late to collect your children. We are minimizing students in the office area and are unable to guarantee a place at Team Kids as this should be booked in advance.

Early departures

- Parents wishing to pick up their children early from school must phone the office ahead of time so we can arrange your child to be ready at the ramp near the office.

COVID Safe Practices

Ventilation

- Staff and students will use of outdoor learning areas wherever possible and practical, weather permitting.
- The school will take steps to increase fresh air flow into indoor spaces possible. For example,
 - Keep all windows and doors open as much as possible.
 - Use fans to create airflow
 - Setting air conditioning units to use external air rather than recycling, where possible.
 - Using the air purifier units (model Samsung AX7500)

Students can wear jackets inside if they are cold.

Vaccinations- Staff

- All staff are required to be triple vaccinated (DET to confirm date) unless a medical exemption applies.

Vaccinations- Visitors

- As per DET policy, the school will be required to collect, record and hold vaccination information for visitors and volunteers working at Huntingdale Primary School who will or may be in close proximity to children, students or staff. This includes volunteers (e.g., parent helpers) who work at the school. They must provide vaccination information to the school office when attending onsite. If they are unable to provide evidence of vaccination, they must be directed to leave the school.
- Visitors and volunteers performing work on school sites (both inside and outdoors) are required to have received three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine by 25 February 2022 if they became fully vaccinated on or before 25 October 2021. For those that became fully vaccinated after 25 October 2021, the deadline is 15 March 2022, or have a valid medical exception.
- This requirement applies to:
 - a person contracted to work at an education facility and who will or may be in close proximity to children, students or staff, whether or not engaged by the education operator including casual relief teachers, NDIS providers and auditors (but does not include delivery personnel).
 - Department staff who attend an education facility (such as allied health personnel)
 - Staff of any other entity who attends an education facility
 - Volunteers that attend an education facility and that work in close proximity to children, students or staff (including parent helpers)
 - Students on placements at an education facility.
- Getting vaccinated is the best way to be protected from and prevent the spread of COVID-19. All students aged 5-12 years are able to get vaccinated as soon as possible. To book a vaccination appointment go to coronavirus.vic.gov.au.
- Please refer to the vaccination policy

Vital COVID Safe Steps

Face Masks

- School staff will be required to always wear masks indoors when not actively teaching or communicating with students. Masks are not compulsory for teachers and staff outdoors.
- Students in Grade 3 and above must wear a face mask indoors at school and at Team Kids, unless a lawful exception applies. Students must wear face masks even if vaccinated. Students are not required to wear masks outside.
- When attending outdoor school camps and excursions, face masks are not mandatory, unless physical distancing cannot be maintained. Face masks must continue to be worn when indoors on camps and excursions.
- Everyone over 8 years old must wear a face mask when travelling to and from school on public transport, taxis or ride share vehicles.
- Visitors to schools aged 8 and above must wear a face mask in all indoor spaces, unless a lawful exception applies.
- Students in Prep to Grade 2 are strongly recommended to wear a face mask indoors at school and at Team Kids.
- A face mask must cover the nose and mouth. Face shields, scarves or bandanas do not meet these requirements.
- There are [lawful reasons for not wearing a face mask](#), including for staff and students who are unable to wear a face mask due to the nature of their disability, medical or a mental health condition.
- Parent/carers of a student/s who meet the criteria for an exception must provide their approval in writing for their child/ren to not wear a mask to the school. Please email the school at huntingdale.ps@education.vic.gov.au with your child's name and class and the reason for the exemption. The school will confirm the exemption with you. We will let the class teachers know of the exemption.
- There is no requirement for a letter for a medical exception for not wearing a face mask from a medical practitioner

Hygiene

- All staff, students and visitors to schools should undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet.
- Washing with soap and water is preferable.
- Hand sanitiser is available at entry points to classrooms.
- Sharing of food is not permitted.
- The use non-contact greetings (not shaking hands, hugging or kissing) is a must.

- Strict hand hygiene should be followed before and after use of shared classroom equipment as well as wiping down items where appropriate.

Social Distancing

- All adults must practise physical distancing 1.5m between themselves
- Density limits of one person per four square metres apply to areas such as staff lunchrooms and areas accessed by the public, such as reception areas. Only one visitor is allowed in the office at any one time.

Wellbeing

- Please contact your child's teachers or Assistant Principal Naomi Mori-Hanazono if you need support for your child.
- Chaplain Susan Hanger is also available.
- There are a number of mental health support, resources and advice are available for families.



We look forward to a smooth transition back to school. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Ruth Biddle

Principal