

# School Operating Guidelines

## Baseline Settings

### ADVICE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS & CARE SERVICES

Effective Term 3

Schools are safe and open for learning. Keeping our schools open and providing face-to-face learning to students is important to their learning, social and emotional development, and physical and mental wellbeing. These guidelines have been developed for schools as we learn to live with COVID-19. If conditions change the Chief Health Officer will advise CEWA to adjust settings



## Testing & isolation protocols

Students and staff who are symptomatic must stay home and test for COVID-19.

Refer to the WA Government's [testing and isolation protocols](#) for details on testing and isolation requirements for students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 or been identified as close contacts.



## Close contact

A close contact is defined as:

- A household member or intimate partner of a person with COVID-19 who has had contact with them during their infectious period.
- Someone who has had close personal interaction with a person with COVID-19 during their infectious period where:
  - they spent greater than 4 hours of cumulative contact with them in any 24-hour period in a residential setting (for instance a home or accommodation facility);
  - masks have been removed by both people during the period of contact.
- Someone who is directed by WA Health that they are a close contact.
- Asymptomatic close contacts are not required to isolate but do have to follow testing and mask wearing requirements.
- If a person has recovered from COVID-19 they will not be identified as a close contact for 4 weeks (28 days).

Parent and caregivers are instructed to inform the school of their child's COVID-19 positive result via the COVID-19 Self-Reporting Portal.

COVID-19 positive persons must remain home until well and free of symptoms. Parents / caregivers must be reminded to also report their child's positive RAT to WA Health.



## Vaccination requirement

Effective from 12:01am on 10 June 2022, staff working at a school site and visitors including parents and carers who regularly visit (volunteers/ third party providers/ contractors) are no longer required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to enter school premises.

The vaccination mandate continues to apply to workers in healthcare settings and some private industries. Schools coordinating student work placements in these settings should work with employers to meet the vaccination requirement of their sites.



## School attendance

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) encourages all students and staff who are well to attend school, including those with health conditions, unless COVID-19 positive. Please refer to previous advice regarding codes for absences.

Schools must provide work for students who need to stay home due to isolation requirements (COVID-19 positive students and symptomatic household contacts only). Schools are not required to provide work to students who are being kept at home by a parent when there is no COVID-19 positive case.



## School activities

- School activities during school hours, offsite and onsite, must promote and practise good hygiene principles.
- The following activities may take place without restriction:
  - Band, choir and orchestra rehearsals and performances
  - Whole school and year level assemblies

- Sporting programs
- Professional learning activities and conferences
- Inter-school activities and workshops
- School balls
- Schools hosting international students
- Excursion and offsite events can resume in accordance with venue-based requirements.
- Proof of vaccination for venue entry has been removed, excluding high risk settings.
- Schools must consider the COVID-19 Safety Plan of third party providers, to ensure continued risk mitigation.



## Offsite activities

Before approval for offsite activities is made, as part of the excursion risk assessment documents, ensure the business or venue has an up-to-date COVID-19 Safety Plan that it continues to implement.

- Activities must adhere to any additional public health and social measures in place.
- Excursion providers and external staff associated with excursions **are not** required to be vaccinated unless otherwise mandated.



## Camps

School camps are permitted from Term 2.

- Staff/students are not required to show evidence (photo) of a negative RAT to participate in a school camp.
- Staff and students who are close contacts should not attend camps until they are no longer a close contact.
- Permission should be sought from parents for staff to administer a RAT to students, in the event that a student becomes symptomatic during the camp.
- A child who becomes symptomatic while on camp is not required to take a RAT where evidence has been provided of their previous COVID-19 infection (within 4 weeks).
- Students who become COVID-19 positive while on camp must be collected by their parent immediately.
- Camps involving long distance travel must have a detailed risk and mitigation plan including an outline of how COVID-19 positive students and/or staff will isolate and return home.
- Schools should refer to the School Camp COVID-19 Risk Assessment Checklist 2022 when planning for a camp.



## Student Travel

### Interstate travel

- Principals are permitted to plan and undertake interstate school tours.
- As part of this planning schools are advised to:
  - book airfares/ accommodation with flexible cancellation policies.
  - identify appropriate duty of care protocols for staff and students who test positive to COVID-19 whilst away.
  - have plans in place to secure suitable accommodation for staff and students needing to isolate due to testing positive COVID-19.
  - allocate additional staff to attend the excursion as well as staff on stand-by to travel interstate in the event that contingency staff are needed (to support duty of care/ supervision ratios as a result of COVID-19 impacting the group).
- Schools must also consult the relevant airport/ airline websites for COVID-19 travel requirements as well as the testing and entry requirements for the state or territory they are traveling to.
- Students who are close contacts should not be permitted to travel on the school tour.
- If a student is identified as a close contact while interstate, they may remain on the tour, provided they remain asymptomatic and follow close contact protocols of WA as a minimum, in addition to the requirements of the destination state/ territory.

### International travel

- Planning for international travel may commence, however approval must be sought from the Executive Director / Deputy Executive Director.
- International travel, at this time, should be for opportunities that are not available in Australia and/or where the educational benefits are significant in comparison to similar opportunities in Australia.
- A notice of intention for international travel should be made at least 6 months prior to the tour via [this form](#).
- Schools must consult the Australian Government's Smartraveller website for up-to-date COVID-19 travelsafety advice.
- Schools must undertake a systematic risk assessment, analysis and risk mitigation process to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those in attendance.

- Schools should book airfares and accommodation with flexible cancellation policies. Consideration must also be given to the duty of care for staff and students who test positive to COVID-19 whilst away and are unable to return home including suitable accommodation.
- Contingency staff should be on standby and ready to travel, if needed.
- Schools must consult the relevant COVID-19 public health and social measures, travel restrictions and entry requirements of the country being traveled to.
- Regardless of destination, staff and students will comply with WA Health testing and isolation requirements as a minimum standard when overseas.
- Catholic Church Insurance is the preferred insurer for international tours.



## Staff Travel

- Interstate and international travel is unrestricted for CEWA staff during their prescribed holiday periods.
- Interstate travel is permitted for CEWA staff if it is in line with core business.
- CEWA Staff traveling internationally for school related purposes must gain approval from the Executive Director / Deputy Executive Director by completing [this form](#).



## School canteens

School canteens can open, and parents and community volunteers can continue to assist in school canteens.

- Regular cleaning is undertaken.
- Schools should review and update as needed their school risk assessment procedures to include COVID-safe principles.
- School canteens are encouraged to maintain a COVID-19 Safety Plan.



## Health and hygiene

Arrangements to continue to reduce direct contact, enhance personal hygiene practices, and strengthen cleaning regimes in schools and care services, are to be encouraged.

Each person has a responsibility to protect themselves and others. This is achieved through the ongoing promotion of the following good hygiene principles and practices:

- staff, students and parents must stay home when sick or symptomatic.
- masks are recommended to protect self and others where physical distancing is not possible
- avoiding unnecessary physical contact and physical greetings (e.g. handshakes, hugs);
- covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, using a flexed elbow or tissue;
- disposing of tissues appropriately;
- washing hands regularly for 20 seconds with soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitiser, including prior to meal breaks; and
- posters and visible messaging regarding handwashing and cough-sneeze hygiene should be displayed.



## Masks

The indoor mask mandate is no longer in place however staff and students are strongly encouraged to wear a face mask when inside or where physical distancing is not possible.

Masks are required for staff and students (Year 7 and over) in the following situations:

- when on public transport, passenger transport (include school bus services) and ride share.
- if identified as an asymptomatic close contact when attending school.
- in remote Aboriginal communities, if required.



## Ventilation

- Use fresh air and well-ventilated spaces where possible.



## Cleaning for all schools and care services

- Cleaning guidelines are based on, and continuously reviewed in line with, advice from WA Health.
- Cleaning of high-touch surfaces, including classrooms, meeting rooms and washroom / toilets should be maintained on a daily basis.
- Playgrounds and play equipment should be cleaned once a week.
  - Hand hygiene before and after use of equipment should be encouraged.
- Schools and care services are to ensure water bubblers have good water pressure, handles are cleaned daily and students do not make

contact with the water bubblers with their mouths or water bottles.

- Bin waste removal after school daily.
- Computer keyboards and mice, printers, photocopiers and telephones cleaned once a day.
- High-use equipment (e.g. sporting gear) to be cleaned after use.



## Visitors on school and care services sites

All visitors must comply with the health and hygiene conditions previously outlined for staff.

- Schools will continue to display signage regarding COVID-19 safe practices.
- All visitors will sign in, according to the school's protocol.
- In accordance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005, schools are required to take reasonable steps to facilitate the provision of support services, such as therapy.
- When considering use of school facilities and resources, principals consider their duty of care of students and staff. These considerations continue alongside COVID-19 practices such as:
  - suitability of, and access to, the facilities to be used;
  - cleaning of all facilities used for meetings
  - cleaning of equipment used for the purposes of therapy; and
  - use of PPE and good hygiene practices.
- Where modifications are required to the existing provision of services, schools must consult with parents about these modifications and limit the disruption caused by the modification.
- Principals should continue to liaise with providers to ensure understanding of, and compliance with CEWA policies and processes.
- Families may be referred to the NDIS COVID support line on 1800 800 110.

### Third Party user - facility access

- Groups using school facilities under a third party agreement including community and non-community use, outside of school hours care, school uniform shop and canteen, and playgroups are included in this category and can continue to operate on school sites.



## Parents / caregivers

Parents and caregivers are permitted on school sites and in classrooms in order to:

- Support school services (canteen / uniform shop).
- Attend both year level and whole school assemblies, sports / drama / music and special infrequent events.
- Drop off / pick up.
- Morning reading / activities or to volunteer in classroom activities.
- Attend parent teacher conferences.



## Work placement

- Schools should conduct work placement risk assessments to ensure employers comply with WA COVID-19 Health guidelines.
- Students are not required to be vaccinated, unless they are on a work placement where they will need to comply with the requirements of that workplace.
- Student work placements, simulated work placements and work experience will be required to follow any public health restrictions applicable to their work placement site.



## Medically vulnerable and immunocompromised

### Students

- As per AHPPC Guidelines, with COVID-19 safety planning and procedures in place and health systems ready to quickly identify and respond to cases, schools remain safe.
- Ensure documented plans for immunocompromised students are managed in accordance with their needs for students who cannot attend school due to them, or a family member, having an immune compromised medical condition during COVID-19.
- Immunocompromised students will be supported through remote learning plans to ensure continuity of learning if required.

### Staff

- Employees who are medically vulnerable or immunocompromised should develop with their medical practitioner a COVID-19 action plan outlining the required controls for their safe return to work.

- If it is unsafe to return to work, alternative arrangements may be supported. Consultation with Employee Relations should take place in this circumstance.



## Travel to remote Aboriginal communities

Effective from 15 June, restrictions to remote Aboriginal communities will ease, however some communities may choose to apply their own restrictions.

Schools considering travel to remote communities are encouraged to liaise with the school in question and Mr Gerard Tonti- Filippini.



## School bus services

- Maintain clear communication with bus operators to support safety and continuity in their service.
- Mask wearing remains in place for travel on public transport (exemptions apply in line with Directions). Staff and students are personally responsible for the provision of masks.
- Schools should be aware that school buses are unable to transport students when they have symptoms or if they are supposed to be isolating.