

COVID-safe schools plan 2023

KEEP IT

COVID
safe

Last update: January 2023. This plan is regularly reviewed to keep up to date and comply with Public Health advice.

While this plan has been developed for schools, the COVID-safe measures are practical and can be applied at any Department for Education, Children and Young People site.

COVID-safe measures

All Department for Education, Children and Young People sites are maintaining COVID-safe measures. These measures include encouraging COVID-safe behaviours, maintaining safe sites, engaging with families, managing risks related to activities on sites, school travel and vulnerable students.



Behaviours

Hygiene

- Do not come to school if unwell – this applies to staff, students and visitors.
- Staff, students and visitors are asked to follow all COVID-safe behaviours, particularly as they apply to their personal circumstances.
- Keep your hands clean by using soap and water or hand sanitiser.

Face masks

- All students, staff and visitors are supported to wear masks should they choose to.
- Consider wearing a face mask indoors where you cannot physically distance from others.

Testing

- If you feel unwell, then test.
- Rapid antigen tests (RATs) are available in schools for students and staff.
- Maintain a supply of RATs in your home in case you become unwell.

Vaccination

- Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines helps protect you from severe illness due to COVID-19.
- Staff, students and visitors are encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and influenza (the flu).



Safe sites

Supporting COVID-safe behaviours

- Hand sanitiser is available at all sites.
- Face masks are readily available on site for anyone to use.

Ventilation

- Spaces are well-ventilated through natural airflow where possible.
- Other mechanical equipment is also used to promote airflow and improve ventilation.
- Schools will take advantage of outdoor learning opportunities.

Cleaning

- Frequent cleaning is undertaken, particularly on high-touch surfaces.



Family engagement

- Families and volunteers are welcome in schools, for indoor and outdoor activities and events, as long as they do not have symptoms, practise COVID-safe behaviours and follow any school advice.

- Events and activities include engaging in parent-teacher meetings, Launching into Learning, school assemblies, musical and drama productions, prize evenings and attending sporting events.
- Schools may need to implement additional risk mitigations for events and activities to minimise the risk of COVID-19, such as limiting the number of attendees or requiring physical distancing.
- When COVID-19 cases in a class increase more than expected, families will be communicated with. This is important to help support vulnerable family members.

Activities



- All school activities can occur as long as the risks associated with COVID-19 are managed. This includes excursions (day and overnight), school camps, fairs and carnivals, productions, assemblies and prize nights.
- Activities should encourage COVID-safe behaviours and factor in the COVID-19 risk in the community at that time.
- Depending on the level of risk of the activity or in the community, additional consideration may be required to ensure spaces are well-ventilated, face masks are readily available, physical distancing is supported and the numbers of participants are limited.
- Staff can come together for staff meetings or professional development with COVID-safe measures in place to manage risks. All staff are to practise COVID-safe behaviours. This includes not attending the workplace when experiencing symptoms.
- Intrastate travel, including overnight excursions and camps, can go ahead with appropriate Department approval and a risk mitigation plan.



Interstate and international travel for school groups

- Interstate travel can go ahead from Term 1 with a comprehensive risk assessment and contingency plan in place.
- International travel for school groups can recommence from Term 2, 2023. Overseas travel is subject to a robust risk assessment and contingency plan.
- Department approval must be sought for interstate and international travel.
- Considerations for travelling must be revised prior to departure to ensure the risk assessment remains up to date.



Vulnerable students

- All Tasmanians have a role to protect the vulnerable. By following COVID-safe behaviours and staying home when unwell, you help protect vulnerable students from the impacts of COVID-19.
- School staff wear masks when working closely with students known to be medically vulnerable to COVID-19.
- Staff do not provide direct support to students medically vulnerable to COVID-19 for at least seven days from testing positive to COVID-19.
- Staff who are close contacts undertake additional testing and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) if they are to work with students medically vulnerable to COVID-19.

For any enquiries related to this plan, please email COVID19Support@decyp.tas.gov.au.