

COVID-19 RETURN TO SCHOOL POLICY

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to outline how our school will be managing risk relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) during key interactions between students, parents and staff during the return to school in Term 2, 2020 and until such time as the Chief Health Officer advises it is no longer required.

Tecoma Primary School is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment for our students and staff. We ask for the whole school community to follow this policy to enable us to provide the safest possible environment during this time. We all have a role to play in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Victoria. This policy is being implemented during the current State of Emergency and beyond.

Background

Tecoma Primary School is following the advice from the Department of Education and Training including, [Health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the context of COVID-19](#) which can be found on the Department's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website](#).

Scope

This policy applies to everyone in the Tecoma Primary School community. This includes all members of staff (principals, teachers and education support staff), School Council members, all parents/carers who interact with the school and all students. It also includes visitors to the school.

Requirements

Attendance on-site

The Department of Education and Training (DET) advises that:

Perhaps the most important action school communities can take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), is to ensure that any unwell staff, children and young people remain at home.

While the risk of transmission of the virus is very low, staff or students most at risk of severe illness should individually assess appropriateness for onsite attendance at this time with support from their medical practitioner.

As the main risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, it is important that visitors to school grounds are limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations. Only parents that MUST enter the school grounds, due to their child needing support, should enter.

This means that at our school:

- All unwell staff and students **must** stay home. We would appreciate it if parents could temperature test their child before coming to school each day and if they have a temperature above normal (37.5°C) then can you please look after all in our community, by not sending your child to school.
- Parents/carers of students with complex medical needs (including those with compromised immune systems), should seek advice from the student's medical practitioner to support decision-making about whether on-site education is suitable, noting that this advice may change depending on the status of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Victoria. This is in line with the [DET Health Care Needs](#) policy.
- Visitors to school grounds will be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, maintenance workers).
- Additional staff, including parent volunteers, will not be attending school or student support programs, such as the Reading Room Program, morning reading, music tuition, until advice from the CHO deems this to be safe. Activities dependent on and involving parents such as daily reading and the Reading Room in the morning are cancelled until further notice.

- We ask that parents or carers who need to contact teachers do so via *School Stream* or via email, hand written note or by phoning the office. Urgent matters should be communicated by phone call.
- All interschool activities that involve onsite attendance by students from other schools, such as inter-school sport will be cancelled until further notice.
- School assemblies, excursions, camps and other non-essential large gatherings will be postponed until further notice.

School arrival and departure

DET advises that:

As the main risk of introducing coronavirus (COVID-19) to the school environment is from adults, close proximity between adult members of the school community should be avoided, particularly during school drop-off and pick-up.

Operations & return details

- Parents should not enter the school buildings at any time unless by prior arrangement with the Principal or Assistant Principal
- We ask parents/carers, if possible, to not enter the yard. In recognising that not all children are independent, designated drop off/pick up areas within the yard for Prep-2 children, have been created. These must be observed at all times.
- Parents of Years 3-6 children, in recognition of their children's age and independence, should not need to enter the school yard. Please coordinate a drop off/pick up point for your child.
- We ask parents/carers to observe social distancing measures by not congregating in areas inside or around the school.

The following arrangements will be in place until further notice:

- Prep-2 students will resume school on May 26th after a pupil-free day on 25th May, when all staff are expected to return to the workplace
- Years 3-6 will continue with Remote Learning from home until they resume on Tuesday 9th June, when all students will be required to return to school.
- In order to enable parental compliance with social distancing requirements, when students return, they will start and end their school day at the following times and enter/exit from the following gates:
- A staggered drop off and pick up will be in place for all students arriving to school:
 - **Surnames beginning with A-J** will need to arrive at school between **8:40-8:50am** each morning and be picked up at **3:20pm** each afternoon.
 - **Surnames beginning with K-Z** will need to arrive at school between **8:50-9:00am** each morning and be picked up at **3:30pm** each afternoon.

DROP OFF (mornings)

- To minimise interaction of students and adults within the school and at entry points, we will have three designated **entry/exit points** for students attending Tecoma Primary School.

Tecoma Primary School staff will be on duty at each entry/exit point to manage these arrangements.

PICK UP (afternoons)

- Pick up will be the most difficult point of the school day in regard to social distancing and all members of the school community will need to be very careful at this time.
- To **minimise** interaction of students and adults within the school and at entry points we ask that parents use a regular and pre-arranged pick up routine for picking up children from school
- **Students are to go straight home after school, and not 'hang around' in the schoolyard.**

TECOMA PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Tecoma Primary School staff will be on duty at each entry/exit point to manage these arrangements.
- Parents who would like to contact teachers after school should do so by phoning the school or using email.

Designated Entry and Exit points

Prep students are to enter either following the **yellow arrows** via the main carpark entry point, the kinder footpath, past the hall or the drop-off bay entry point, and turn left, heading to the designated area near the rotunda. All adults must stay in the area designated for pick up and drop off.

Social distancing by everyone must take place at all times.

All adults are to exit the school using the **Burwood Highway gate** (please note due to the stairs being the exit point we are discouraging parents from bringing prams into the school)

NO DOGS ARE TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE SCHOOL GROUND

Year 1 and 2 students are to enter via the main carpark entry point, the kinder footpath, past the hall or the drop-off bay entry point and are to veer right, and walk past the School Values Pencils to their classrooms following the **blue arrows**. Any adults entering the school grounds must not go past the designated area and must exit the school by walking through the amphitheatre area, so that all traffic is only going one way. These students are to exit the school this way as well.

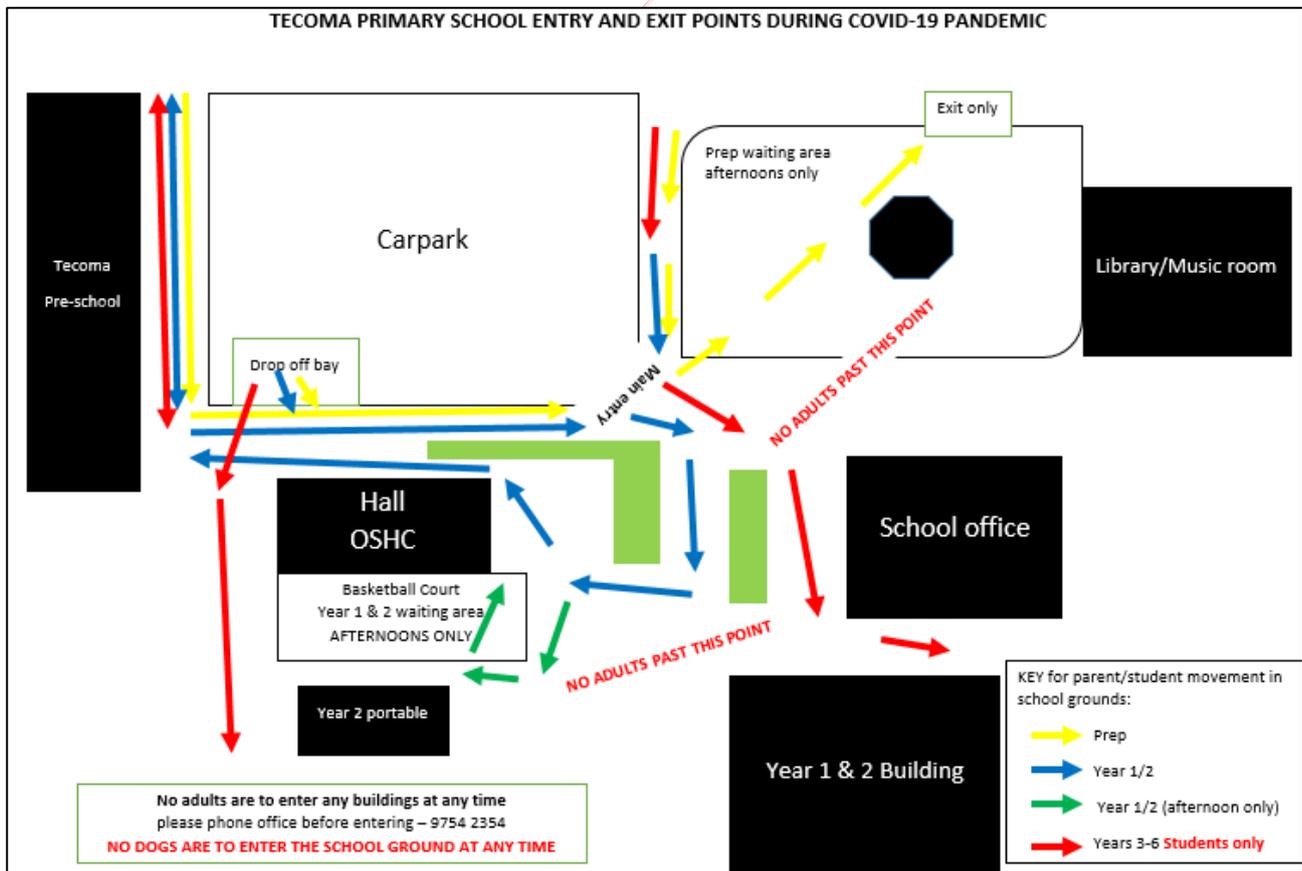
Social distancing by everyone must take place at all times.

NO DOGS ARE TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE SCHOOL GROUND

Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 students are to enter via the driveway, near Tecoma Pre-school and follow the roadway and the **red arrows** around to their classrooms. Alternatively they can enter via the main carpark entry point, the kinder footpath, past the hall or the drop-off bay entry point. These students are to exist the school this way as well.

McNicol Road entry: Students who walk to school via McNicol Road, who enter the school near the train station will need to leave any adults walking with them at the gate and report to their classroom. **No adults are to enter the school through this gateway.**

Families using the school crossing, must at all time obey the crossing instructors and observe and model social distancing requirements.



LATE ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

- Any late arrivals to school will need to be signed in using the following process.
- Late arrival is strongly discouraged due to the need for careful measures at drop off time – however in the event that this does occur the following arrangement should be followed.
 - Parents need to phone the office on their arrival in the carpark to alert the school of their child's late arrival.
 - The child ONLY will need to enter the school office and be signed in, before going to their class.
 - Their teacher will be informed by office staff of their arrival.

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC) ARRANGEMENTS:

Mornings:

- In the morning parents are to text Chris on 0477 725 824 to advise that their child/ren is outside ready to enter the service. Parents/child/ren are to wait under the drop-off bay shelter. Chris, Adelle or Rita will come out to collect your child/ren.
- **No adults are to enter the service.**
- **Due to the individual nature of the servings breakfast will be provided until 7:40am.**

Afternoons:

- In the afternoons when you arrive to pick up your child/ren, please text 0477 725 824 and Chris, Adelle or Rita will bring your child out to the drop-off bay shelter.
- **No adults are to enter the service.**
- **Due to the risk of cross contamination, no food will be served in the afternoon. All children will need to bring their own afternoon snack.**

Hygiene:

DET advises that:

Everyone can protect themselves and prevent the spread of coronavirus by continuing effective hand hygiene.

At our school:

- All staff and students will undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet. This will be directed or supervised by staff where required.
- Where soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitiser will be made available.
- **Students must bring their own water bottles to school for use (and refilling). Students will not be able to drink directly from drinking fountains at this time.**
- Staff and students are reminded to clean their mobile phones regularly. The Tecoma Primary School Mobile Phone Policy remains in place so students should still hand in their mobile phones to their teacher upon their arrival at school.
- Sharing of food is not permitted.
- If students are required to share equipment during classes, they will be asked to wash hands at the conclusion of this sharing.

Specific arrangements for teaching and learning environments and break times

DET advises that:

Maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 metres will not always be practical in education settings. Physical distancing is most important between adults.

At Tecoma Primary School we are fortunate to have a large yard areas that will support social distancing and minimise interactions between year level groups as much as possible.

At our school, we will:

- Maintain a normal recess and lunchtime schedule for all students.
- Students will be strongly encouraged to keep social distance as much as possible, and discouraged from touching or having physical contact with other students or staff.
- There will be no contact sports allowed.

In classrooms, we will:

- Organise learning spaces according to DET recommendations/ Advice from Chief Health Officer.
- Wherever possible use natural ventilation to maintain a flow of fresh air in classrooms.
- Wherever possible use outdoor areas for activities such as Physical Education.

Additionally:

- There will be no formal assemblies or student meetings conducted indoors.

School offices and staff facilities

DET advises that:

As the greatest risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, close proximity between staff will be avoided where possible and especially in offices and staff rooms.

At our school we will:

- In line with other workplaces across Victoria, we will remind staff to maintain physical distancing from each other as much as possible in the reception, staff room, learning spaces and offices.
- Instruct staff who have any illness to stay home.
- Teaching staff in the Prep Learning Centre and the BER will work at their classroom workstation – only accessing the teacher office areas to gather resources or equipment.
- Teachers in portable classrooms should work in these spaces wherever possible
- Teachers in the years 3-6 classrooms should work in classrooms as much as possible – however their office can be used by no more than 2 staff at the same time where necessary
- Contact in administration areas / office should be kept to a minimum – however it is possible for staff to meet 1-1 in these areas as required.
- Use of the staff room will be limited to no more than 8 persons at one time and no more than 3 members in the staff resource areas at any one time
- A temporary staff room will be created in the Year 1/2 building, in the kitchen area.
- Staff should not spend any more than 1/2 of one break time in these areas wherever possible.
- Team meetings can be conducted in classroom areas providing table areas are sanitised prior to the meeting and that staff work at least 1.5m from each other.

Cleaning and facilities management

DET advises that:

Environmental cleaning, coupled with regular hand hygiene, remains important to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.

At our school we will:

- Continue extension of routine environmental cleaning, including progressive cleaning throughout the day to ensure that risks of transmission are reduced for high-touch services. See Department information about [Access to cleaning supplies and services](#).
- Provide liquid hand soap and/or hand sanitiser for use of students and staff
- Carefully consider the necessity of using shared items or equipment e.g. shared computers, class sets of teaching and learning materials, musical instruments, etc., at this time.
- We will be practising hand hygiene immediately before and after use of shared equipment.

Sport and recreation

DET advises that:

In line with community advice, reasonable precautions are still advised to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission in the context of sport and recreation.

- Playground equipment can be used. However, students will be directed to practise hand hygiene before and after use.
- Wherever possible, outdoor facilities will be used for physical education and recreational play. Where indoor facilities are used, we will limit the number of students to a single class.
- We will encourage non-contact sports at this time. Hand hygiene will be practised before and after use of any sporting equipment.

Provision of routine care and first aid

DET advises that:

Physical distancing is not practical when providing direct care. In this situation standard precautions, including hand hygiene, are important for infection control.

At our school:

- Standard precautions as per DET [Infectious Diseases policy](#) and the Tecoma Primary School First Aid Policy will be followed when providing first aid. For example, we will use gloves and an apron when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances.
- Hand hygiene will be practised before and after performing routine care or first aid.
- Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), for example face masks, is not required to provide routine care or first aid for students who are well, unless such precautions are usually adopted in the routine care of an individual student.
- PPE may be considered for adults who are supervising or caring for any children who are showing cold/flu symptoms.

Management of an unwell student or staff member

DET advises that:

It is important that any staff member or student who becomes unwell while at school returns home. While it is unlikely that a staff member or student who is unwell with flu-like symptoms will have coronavirus (COVID-19) there are some sensible steps schools can take while a student awaits collection by a parent or carer as a precaution.

This means that at our school:

- Staff and students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough or sore throat, will be isolated in an appropriate space with suitable supervision, their temperature will be taken using an infrared thermometer and they will need to be collected by a parent/carer as soon as possible. Urgent medical attention will be sought where needed.
- Where staff or students are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus, we will ensure hand hygiene, physical distancing and (where possible) use of a face mask. See DET [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).
- Health care plans, where relevant, should be updated to provide additional advice on monitoring and identification of the unwell child in the context of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- If a staff member is unsure whether a student is unwell in the first instance we will contact the parent/carer to discuss any concerns about the health status of the student, and we will take a precautionary approach, requesting the parent/carer to collect their child if concerns remain.
- Staff or students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) should be encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps. A medical certificate is not required to return to school after a period of illness, however staff and students should not return until symptoms resolve.

- If a student spreads droplets (for example by sneezing, coughing or vomiting), surfaces will be immediately cleaned with disinfectant wipes (and using gloves).

Managing a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

DET has comprehensive procedures in place with the Department of Health and Human Services to manage suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in schools.

- We will contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160 to discuss what to do next if a student or staff member:
 - is a confirmed case
 - has been in close contact with a confirmed case
- We will inform the Department by making an [IRIS incident alert](#).

DHHS defines 'close contact' as someone who has either:

- had at least 15 minutes of face-to-face contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shared a closed space for more than two hours with someone who is a confirmed case.

Further information and resources

- [DET Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website:](#)
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/Pages/coronavirus-advice-schools.aspx>
- [DHHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website:](#)
 - <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>
- [DET Infectious Diseases Policy:](#)
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/infectiousdiseases.aspx>
- [DET Health Care Needs Policy](#)
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/healthcareneeds.aspx>
- [Talking to your child about COVID-19:](#)
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/covid-19/talking-to-your-child-during-coronavirus.docx>
- Department of Education and Training COVID-19 Advice Line – 1800 338 663
- Department of Health and Human Services Coronavirus hotline – 1800 675 398 (24 hours, 7 days a week)

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy may be amended at any time as required by the DET, CHO or Tecoma Primary School. Amendments will be communicated through *School Stream* allowing suitable notification to members of our school community. As there are regular updates in requirements, members of our school community should expect changes and are responsible for reading and adhering to the necessary arrangements for the health and safety of all.

This policy was last updated on **19th May, 2020** and is scheduled for **review at the end of Term 2, 2020**.