

COVID 2.0 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 4, 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 Coronavirus 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. **If your child is unwell in any way, can you please keep them at home.**
- 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 schools, interschool activities and school tours

- Visitors to our school grounds must be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, cleaning and maintenance workers).
- To support contact tracing, the school will keep a record of all staff, students and visitors who attend on-site for more than 15 minutes. We must record the name, contact details, date, and time of attendance at school, as well as the areas of the school that the person attended. The visitor sign in iPad, student attendance records and staffing rosters will be used to record this information.
- Additional staff, including parent volunteers, will not be able to attend school or student support programs, such as the Reading Room Program, morning reading, music tuition, until advice from the CHO and DET 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.
- Parent-teacher information sessions and interviews must continue to be replaced with online and video alternatives.
- 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.
- Activities that involve on-site attendance by students from different educational institutions (e.g. interschool sport) must not take place or be replaced, where possible, with virtual alternatives.
- Schools must not conduct on-site school tours for prospective students and their families at this time.
- Visitors to school grounds must comply with physical distancing and face covering advice set out in this document, and practise good hand hygiene.
- 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

- Based on advice from the CHO, the Victorian Government has mandated the wearing of face coverings for anyone over the age of 12 at all times when out of their home.
- All people over the age of 12 (who do not attend Tecoma Primary school) must wear a face covering.
- We ask parents/carers to observe social distancing measures by not congregating in areas inside or around the outside of the school.
- 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, preferably off-site.

The following arrangements will be in place until further notice:

5 – 9 October (first week of Term 4)

- Remote and flexible learning will continue for all students.
- On-site supervision will continue to be provided in limited circumstances consistent with DET guidelines.

12 – 16 October (second week of Term 4)

- Students in Prep to Grade 6 will return to full-time on-site schooling on Monday 12th October. Remote learning will not continue from this date.

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.
- The drop-off bay can be utilised but adults must stay in the car where possible.

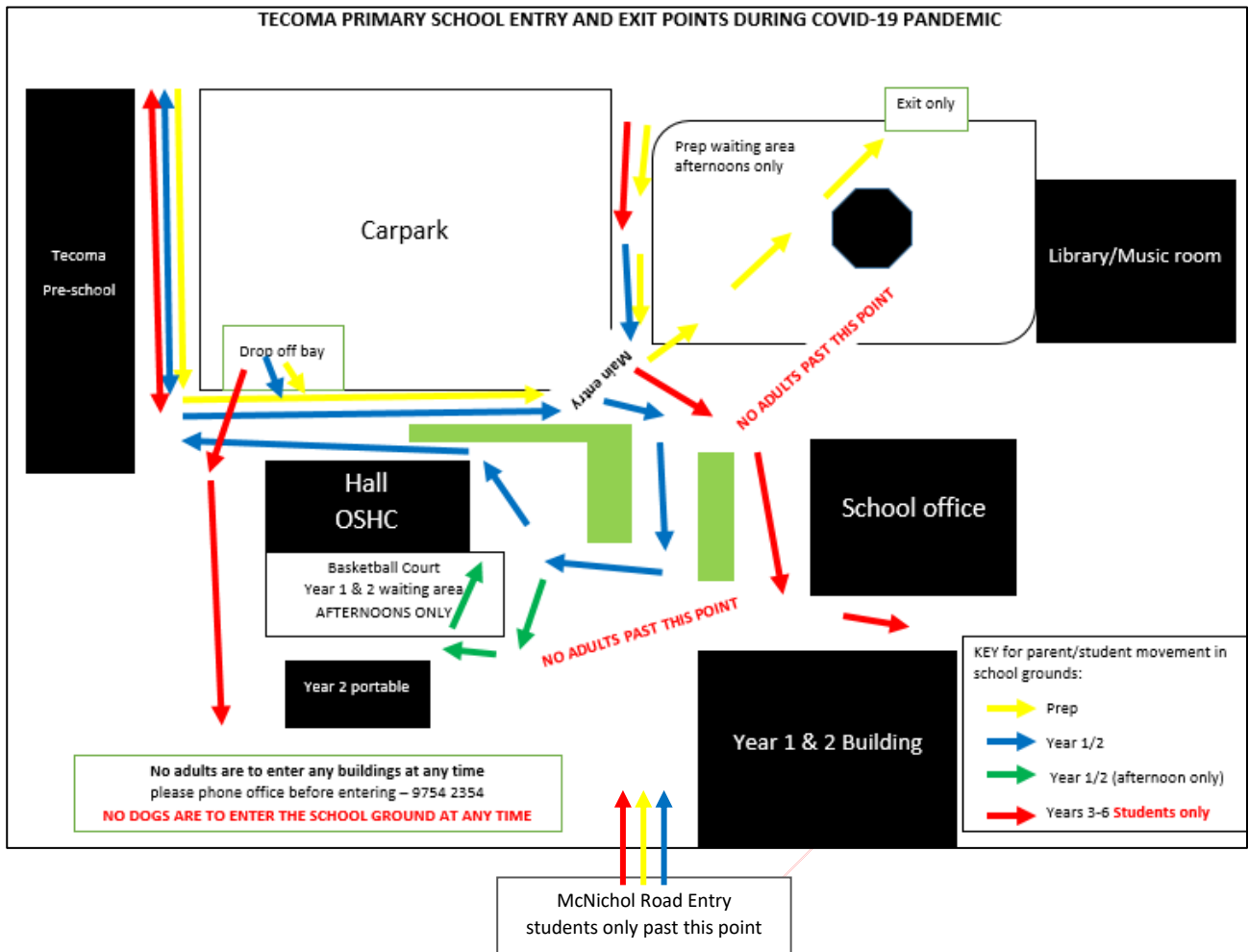
Tecoma Primary School staff will be on duty at each entry/exit point to manage these arrangements.

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.
- The pick-up bay can be utilised but adults must stay in the car where possible.
- 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 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
<p>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.</p> <p>Social distancing by everyone must take place at all times.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>NO DOGS ARE TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE SCHOOL GROUND</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Social distancing by everyone must take place at all times.</p> <p>NO DOGS ARE TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE SCHOOL GROUND</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>Families using the school crossing, must at all time obey the crossing instructors and observe and model social distancing requirements.</p>

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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.

Other health and safety measures

Mobile Phones

The DET Students Using Mobile Phones Policy remains in place. Staff and students must remember to clean their phones regularly. Phones can be turned on with the COVID SAFE app activated immediately before and after school. Schools are managed environments which include records of student, staff and visitor attendance, which can support contact tracing.

COVIDSafe Plan

The [Safety Management Plan for COVID-19 \(COVIDSafe Plan\)](#) applies to all schools, outlines the key health and safety risks and links to the latest guidance.

In conjunction with this Operations Guide, it sets out the approach for managing safety risks in our school in accordance with the minimum requirements for COVIDSafe Plans.

The COVIDSafe Plan has been updated for Term 4 to align with the changes to the advice set out in DET's Operations Guide.

Health and safety measures

Health and safety measures will be regularly reviewed in line with the changing context of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria.

As Term 4 proceeds, based on health advice, some measures may no longer be required and/or new measures may be introduced.

The measures bring together Victoria's COVIDSafe principles for business while acknowledging the unique school setting as both a place of work for staff and a learning environment for children and young people, drawing on local and international literature.

A combination of strategies is required to minimise transmission risk. No single strategy completely reduces risk and not every measure will always be feasible and applicable to all education settings. Where some controls are not feasible, others should be enhanced. Strategies should also be adjusted over time in line with changing risk of transmission in the community.

Further advice on maintaining a COVIDSafe School and explanation of these principles can also be found at [Health and safety advice for schools in the context of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

COVIDSafe principles for schools

Reinforce COVIDSafe behaviours*	Create COVIDSafe spaces	Promote COVIDSafe activities	Respond to coronavirus (COVID-19) risk*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home when unwell* Practise good hygiene* Ensure physical distancing (1.5m) * Wear a face mask* (students 12 years and older in secondary school, and staff. Staff are not required to wear face masks while teaching, but can if they wish to do so) Avoid interactions in enclosed spaces* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make hand hygiene easy Keep surfaces clean and implement enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection Promote outdoor air ventilation and do not have air conditioners on recirculate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit school access to outside visitors where possible Reduce mixing between groups Create workforce bubbles* Adapt, modify or defer higher-risk activities Move activities outdoors where possible, weather permitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep records and act quickly if someone becomes unwell* Use personal protective equipment Clean and disinfect appropriately if a staff member or student has been unwell at school Manage individual risk

*These items denote Victorian Government [COVIDSafe principle for business](#) and may require adaptation for the school context

Ensure physical distancing

A variety of strategies to support physical distancing among all students and staff should be pursued, where possible.

Staff **must** practise physical distancing between themselves and other staff members or adults to the extent that is reasonably practicable. Staff should physically distance themselves from students where appropriate and feasible.

Students **should** practise physical distancing where possible. Maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 meters will not always be practical in the school environment and may be particularly challenging in the younger years of primary school. In these contexts, a combination of health and safety measures should be utilised to reduce risk.

Density quotients of one person per 4m² do not apply in classrooms and other spaces for the purposes of student use, including corridors and other shared areas.

Density quotients apply to staff areas such as staff lunchrooms and areas accessed by the public, such as reception areas.

Practise good 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. Staff should direct or supervise young students or where required.

- Students should bring their own water bottle for use at school, as students should not drink directly from drinking fountains at this time. Taps may be used to refill water bottles.
- Sharing of food should not occur.
- Non-contact greetings should be used (not shaking hands, hugging or kissing).

Temperature Screening

Based on the advice of the Acting Deputy Chief Health Officer, given the current levels of community transmission in Victoria, **mandatory temperature testing of all students** on arrival to schools **will not** be required in Term 4.

However, should community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) increase, temperature checking may be reintroduced for some schools.

Face coverings in schools

For schools in metropolitan Melbourne, all school-based staff must wear face coverings at school, and when travelling to and from school.

Teachers and education support staff will not be required to wear face coverings while teaching, but those who wish to do so, can.

Teachers should wear face coverings in other areas of the school when not teaching (for example, in the staffroom, on yard duty and when providing first aid or taking temperatures), and when travelling to and from school.

Students who attend Tecoma Primary school for onsite supervision will not be required to wear a face covering. Students who are aged 12 or over by Year 6 will not be required to wear face coverings. The Victorian Chief Health Officer has advised that it is not practical to require some primary school students to wear face coverings while others are not required to.

Some staff are exempt from these requirements. This includes staff who have a medical condition – including problems with their breathing, a serious skin condition on the face, a disability or a mental health condition.

Consistent with all those 12 and over in metropolitan Melbourne, parents/carers will be required to wear face coverings whenever they leave the house, including for school drop off and pick up. If they are travelling in a car alone, or only with members of their household, they do not need to wear a mask.

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 area 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
- Remind all staff that they need to wear face coverings in other areas of the school when not teaching (for example, in the staffroom, on yard duty and when providing first aid or taking temperatures), and when travelling to and from school
- Advise teachers and education support staff that they will not be required to wear face coverings while teaching, but those who wish to do so, can
- 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
- A further Temporary staffroom will be created in the Library for the Prep team and specialists who work in that building
- 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.

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
- Adults are to wear face masks when delivering a child to the service
- All OSHC staff will wear face masks in the service
- **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.
- Adults are to wear face masks when collecting a child from the service.
- All OSHC staff will wear face masks in the service.
- **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.**

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 the 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 the 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, are required to be worn when providing routine care or first aid for students who are well.
- PPE should 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, should be isolated in an appropriate space with suitable supervision and students should be collected by a parent or carer as soon as possible. Urgent medical attention should be sought where indicated. It is not suitable for an unwell student to travel home unsupervised.
- Where staff or students are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), the important actions to follow include hand hygiene, physical distance and putting on a surgical face mask (both staff and student where appropriate). See the Department's [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).
- In the context of schools supporting students with complex health needs, if the care of an unwell child or young person is to be prolonged (for example, because it will take some hours for a parent to collect a child) and maintaining distance is not practical when providing supervision or direct care, the staff member should wear surgical face mask, gloves, gown and eye protection. See the Department's [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).
- Face masks should not be used in situations where an individual is unable to safely or practically tolerate a face mask (for example, a child with complex medical needs including existing respiratory needs. Children who are two years or younger must not wear face masks as they are a choking and suffocation risk).
- 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 it is advisable in the first instance to contact the parent or carer to discuss any concerns about the health status of the student, and taking a precautionary approach, request the parent or carer to collect their child if concerns remain.

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.

School site closures

- In the event of a confirmed case, we will prepare for the possibility that at some point we may be required to close our school site due to a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) having attended our school.
- If a site closure is required, we will be informed by our Regional Director and will be provided with support by the Department's Regional and Area teams.
- You will be notified at our earliest convenience via SMS, School Stream and email, of the closure, so that you can make arrangements to keep your child at home. We will also provide updates as required and advise you as to when the school will reopen.

Infectious cleaning

- In most cases where a school site closes due to a positive case, some or all of the school site will undergo an 'infectious clean', also known as a deep clean. This clean is arranged and paid for by the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) and this applies to all Victorian Government schools, both metropolitan and regional.
- The cleaning is conducted in accordance with guidelines that have been developed with DHHS.

QUICK REFERENCE OF PERMITTED SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

COVIDSafe behaviours

Key actions for schools	Metropolitan Melbourne (Second Step)
Temperature checks	NO
Face masks	YES

Create COVIDSafe spaces

Key actions for schools	Metropolitan Melbourne (Second Step)
Enhanced environmental cleaning	YES
Enhanced hand hygiene facilities	YES
Enhanced ventilation	YES
Community use of school playground	YES*
Libraries (for borrowing and as a learning space)	YES

*with daily cleaning

Promote COVIDSafe activities

Key actions for schools	Metropolitan Melbourne (Second Step)
School tours	NO

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Key actions for schools	Metropolitan Melbourne (Second Step)
Excursions	NO
Community pool use (outdoor pool only)	YES
Incursions	NO
School photos	NO
Camps and overnight stays	NO
Assemblies (whole school)	NO
Assemblies (year level)	NO
Formals	NO
Graduation ceremonies	NO
Kinder transition program (Small group)	NO
Year 7 transition programs	NO
Non-contact sports (indoors)	NO
Contact sports (indoors)	NO
Contact sports (outdoors)	NO

Respond to coronavirus (COVID-19) risk

Key actions for schools	Metropolitan Melbourne (Second Step)
Keep visitor records	YES
Maintain adequate PPE supply	YES

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 **6th October, 2020** and **will continue to be updated as new directives and School Operation Guides are received.**

Initially reviewed by: *Rohan, Thompson, Di Double, Deb Langford, Chelsey Robins, Lisa Dell, David Coe, Nigel Grainger, Natalie Lees, Narelle Paul*

Updated in line with DET's Term 4 Operations Guide by: *Rohan Thompson, Di Double*