



19 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to sincerely thank the entire School Community for their support throughout this period of remote and flexible learning. Thank you once again for your outstanding work. Your commitment to enhancing our students' wellbeing and educational outcomes has been incredible and helped pave the way for a return to school.

Victoria's return to on-site school attendance is based on the advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer who, with the wellbeing and safety of students and staff in mind, has fully endorsed a return to on-site schooling. A copy of his statement is included at the end of this document and our COVID-19 return to school Policy can be found on our school's website.

School will look and feel different in the short term and with the main risk of introducing coronavirus (COVID-19) to the school environment coming from adults, close proximity between adult members of the school community must be avoided. Parents are respectfully requested to **NOT ENTER** the school grounds. This will assist us to create the conditions for a safe and successful return to school.

If we get this right at Edithvale Primary and throughout our broader community, we will be doing our bit to stop the spread of this disease and take further steps towards a return to life we all knew before COVID-19.

The strategies we will put in place are designed to support physical distancing and good hygiene practices to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission within the practical limitations of a school environment. They will not necessarily suit every individual in our community and they may create some short term pain- but the end result will be worth it.

Staged return for students will be as follows:

- Prep, Grade 1 and Grade 2 students on-site from Tuesday 26 May 2020
- Students in Year 3 to Year 6 continue remote and flexible learning program until 5 June 2020
- On-site supervision for students/families who have accessed this service over the past 7 weeks will still be available for our Year 3-6 students. The existing model of on-site schooling for students who cannot be supervised at home and vulnerable children will remain in place. These students must learn at home unless they cannot and must meet the already established DET requirements for on-site learning.
- All students in the year levels returning to on-site schooling are expected to attend school. We will not be providing remote learning where parents elect to keep these students at home, except where this is based on medical advice.
- To support all school staff to prepare for the transition **Monday 25 May 2020 will be a pupil-free day.**

Entrance to school grounds

We Request that students of the following years enter through their designated gate: By opening as many entry and exit points to the school as is safe, and allocating staff to ensure students are safely supervised we are hoping that students and parents feel safe and confident with their arrival/departure from school.

- Years 3, 5/6s please enter and depart through the gate located on French Avenue.
- Foundation please enter and depart through the gate located on Edithvale Road closest to French Avenue.
- Year 1 please enter and depart through the gate located at Haig Avenue.
- Year 2 and 4 please enter and depart through the gates located at on Edithvale Road near the Hall closest to Munro Avenue.

- In order to reduce adult to adult contact, all parents are respectfully requested to **NOT ENTER** the school grounds
- Parents can only enter the school grounds in exceptional circumstances and after contacting the school by phone or email as required to organise. An example might be an early pick up for a doctor's appointment
- Families will need to plan for and adapt to altered arrangements to arrive at times specified
- Teachers will help and support children to change their readers/ put their bags away and help them settle into their classrooms and routines
- Non-contact greetings are strongly encouraged.

Staggered start and finish times:

“In metropolitan, regional and rural schools where there is any risk of congregation at school entry and exit points, schools must introduce staggered drop-off and pick-up times.”

- 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. We have taken these steps to reduce the number of adults congregating outside the school
- We will have a staggered start and end to each day- organised by year levels (F-2 and 3-6), while also enabling siblings to arrive/leave together at the same time and be safely supervised while on the school site (noting there may be some impact on total instructional time)
- For families with more than one child attending school at different staggered start and finish times, we encourage siblings to arrive together as close to 8:45am as possible and leave together as close to 3:30pm as practical
- Lunch and Recess times will be staggered to reduce mixing of grade levels where possible and reducing possible congestion in our staff rooms
- Years 3 – 6 will commence and finish 15 minutes earlier, starting at 8:45am and finishing at 3:15pm. This will come in to effect on June 9. Recess will be between 10:15am and 10:45am and lunch between 12:45pm and 1:45pm
- Foundation to Year 2 will stay as normal, starting at 9:00am (please drop off as close to 9:00am as possible) and finishing at 3:30pm. Recess will remain between 11:00am-11:30am with Lunch between 1:30pm-2:30pm.

Attendance on-site

- All unwell students **must** stay home.
- Visitors to school grounds will be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations. No trade (except for emergencies)/ Tutors/speech therapists etc... or other visiting personnel will be permitted on site
- Additional staff, including parent volunteers, can NOT attend school at this time. Activities dependent on and involving parents (e.g. 1:1 reading) have been cancelled.
- Activities that involve on-site attendance by students from different educational institutions (e.g. interschool sport) will not take place
- School assemblies, excursions, camps and other non-essential large gatherings have been postponed
- 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.
- Students are not to engage in contact activities or activities where contact is likely.
- Staff are on official duty 15 minutes prior to the commencement of teaching instruction. Students should not be on the grounds prior to this time.
- TeamKids are available to support families who need Before and after School Services

Students' Returning

Throughout remote learning our students have acquired new skills and knowledge that will hold them in good stead when school resumes. They have learnt how to manage their time and how to be patient. They have developed new communication skills, resilience and persistence. They have become more proficient with digital technologies and discovered a new way of learning.

Through lack of direct and explicit face to face instruction, many will also have missed out on the chance to work on other important skills. Specific goals that your child's teacher were working closely with your child on in Term 1 will not have been consolidated and these will be picked up when school resumes. Students will have new academic and social goals and work on these throughout the remainder of Term 2.

Students will be out of rhythm and routine and lack learning stamina. It will take a little time to build this up and get used to face to face teaching. Please be patient with them and us.

To help prepare your child for a return to school, we have included a few tips that we hope will assist in getting our students back up to speed as quickly as possible so that they can successfully transition back to school.

- **Morning Routine:** Get back into a routine of being ready to start each day early (when school starts, you will have to build in travel time).
- **Food:** Start preparing snacks and lunches for the day and stick to those (start reducing unscheduled trips to the pantry)
- **Drinking:** The drinking taps will not be available at school as they have been identified as a possible means of transference. Students must bring their own drink bottle filled with water at the start of each day.
- **Toilets:** School is very different to home, start trying to take scheduled toilet breaks at the times your child will be having their recess and lunch breaks. This will build the body's ability to lengthen the period between toilet stops.
- **Talk:** Talk with your child about what they might expect when school resumes (there are no right or wrong answers as none of us really knows what to expect). Ask what they are looking forward to and reflect on the successes they have had during remote learning. The more confidence and belief they have, the greater the chances of a successful return to school.

Communication with Staff

Although ALL staff will be on-site from 26 May, the restriction on parents entering school grounds means that communication channels will remain as they have for the last 8 weeks - with a few minor changes.

Years F to 2: If you need to communicate with your child's teacher, please email, via the School email: edithvale.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au or [phone](tel:97721393) the School on 9772 1393. There may be times where the phones are un-manned. In those times, you will be asked to leave a message, and the appropriate staff member will return your call. If you need to come into the school grounds, please call the office first, for further instruction.

Years 3 – 6: Arrangements will remain the same as they have been during this period of remote learning. Communications should go through the School email: edithvale.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au or [phone](tel:97721393) the School on 9772 1393. There may be times where the phones are un-manned. In those times, you will be asked to leave a message, and the appropriate staff member will return your call.

Hygiene

Everyone can protect themselves and prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) by continuing effective hand hygiene. Enhanced hygiene measures should continue during the return to on-site teaching and learning.

- All students will be asked to undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet. This should be directed or supervised by staff where required.
- Strong personal hygiene standards across the school must be maintained including Supervised toilet breaks by our Integration Staff (as we had in place at the end of Term 1)

- All students will be using hand sanitiser upon entry to their classrooms in the morning and will be regularly washing their hands throughout the day.
- Drinking taps, 'Bubblers' or drinking fountains will not be used at school, **meaning children will need to bring along their own drink bottles.**
- All students will be guided in regular hand-washing- not just after toilet breaks but before and after recess and lunch breaks, too.
- Supervised toilet breaks with Integration Staff like at the end of Term 1(rotation)
- Hand sanitiser will be available in all classrooms and at the front desk and in the staff room. Supplementary cleaning of taps, door handles and communally used surfaces will be carried out during school days. – This will be undertaken by SPOTLESS Cleaning Services and is additional to the normal cleaning.
- Play equipment is included in the cleaning schedule.
- Hand sanitiser should be provided in every occupied room.
- It is recommended that students do not drink directly from drinking fountains at this time. Instead they should bring their own water bottle for use (and refilling) at school.
- All staff will be leaving the school grounds at 3:45pm to support the reduction of adult to adult contact

Provision of routine care and first aid

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

- Standard precautions when coming in to contact with someone for the purpose of providing routine care and/or assistance (for example, the use of gloves for nappy-changing, toileting, feeding) remain in place.
- Standard precautions as per the Department of Education and Training Infectious Disease policy and related policies will be adopted when providing first aid. For example, use gloves and apron when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances.
- 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.
- Management of an unwell student
- It is important that any student who becomes unwell while at school returns home immediately.
- Any student 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 collected by a parent/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.
- 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 they will contact the parent/carer to discuss any concerns about the health status of the student, and taking a precautionary approach, request the parent/carer to collect their child if concerns remain.
- Students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) are encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps. A medical certificate is not required to return to an education setting after a period of illness, however students should not return until symptoms resolve.

Reports and parent/teacher interviews

The Department of Education (DET) has stated that schools are required to provide Semester One reports to families. However, recognition that schools have adopted revised teaching and learning plans for Term 2.

Our semester 2 reports will be solely about students' efforts, attitudes, contributions and achievements during remote learning. Term 1 Progress reports for all students were posted to COMPASS in March and reflected the face to face learning completed in the first 8 weeks of school.

Reports will include

- a description of the areas of the Victorian Curriculum F-10 taught
- a succinct descriptive assessment of student learning achievement,
- a comment on how the student has adjusted to the remote and flexible learning environment, with reference to the Personal and Social Capability curriculum

The Foundation – Year 2 Reports will be made available via Compass on June 5 with parent/teacher interviews being held the following week- remotely

The Years 3-6 Reports will be made available via Compass June 19 with parent/teacher interviews being held the following week- remotely

Access to devices

- For students who are continuing to learn from home and do not have access to digital technologies, we will continue to loan existing devices and support internet access to students where possible.

Sport and recreation

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 should practise hand hygiene before and after use. Playgrounds will be wiped down as part of the enhanced cleaning program
- Outdoor facilities are preferred for the purpose of physical education and recreational play. Where indoor facilities are used, the number of students will be limited.
- Non-contact sports are encouraged. Hand hygiene must be practised before and after use of any sporting equipment.

Canteen

- Our Canteen will re-open on Thursday May 26 with a limited menu
- The revised menu be available through Qkr
- There will be NO window sales
- There can be no parent volunteers to assist Di in the canteen

Regards

James Whittle

Principal

MESSAGE FROM THE VICTORIAN CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER

As Victoria's Chief Health Officer, and as a member of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, and with the health, wellbeing and safety of students and staff front of mind, I fully endorse a return to on-site schooling for all Victorian schools.

As you know, since the beginning of Term 2, most children have been learning remotely in order to limit the number of people moving around the state and to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This careful approach continues, and I trust that you have confidence in my view that it is safe for our community to have school students begin a phased return to classrooms.

I thank teachers, staff and families for their incredible efforts in helping deliver remote and flexible schooling and, in doing so, helping to flatten the curve of the pandemic.

These efforts, in addition to significant testing, mean we are now in a position to begin moving back to face-to-face teaching.

This is in addition to the available evidence that largely indicates that transmission between children in the school environment is low.

This growing evidence, coupled with low levels of community transmission in Victoria, means that the risk posed to staff and students returning to on-site schooling at this time is very low.

Everyone in the Victorian community has a role to play in protecting themselves and keeping the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) suppressed.

Thank you for your incredible contribution to Victoria's response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Adj Clin Prof Brett Sutton

Victorian Chief Health Officer