

The following information provided is a brief snapshot of some of the adjustments to school operations that commence from Monday November 1.

There are some very positive steps in amongst the changes, as well as some settings that have not changed, in an effort to keep our community safe.

## Summary of key operational requirements

Key actions for schools	Phase C
Face masks (see Face Masks in Schools) Recommended for students in Prep to Year 2.	<b>YES</b>
Minimise cohort mixing: Stagger breaks and arrival and departure times	<b>Recommended</b> There are no prescribed requirements, however schools must take steps to minimise wherever possible.
COVIDSafe routine cleaning	<b>YES</b>
Community use of school facilities	<b>YES</b>
Visitors to schools	<b>YES</b> Yes, consistent with vaccination requirements and other health and safety controls.
Health, wellbeing, inclusion visits	<b>YES</b>
School tours	<b>YES</b> School tours must align with public gathering limits and density requirements.
Excursions	<b>YES</b>
Incursions	<b>YES</b>
Camps and overnight stays	<b>YES</b>
Assemblies and other events exclusive to staff and students from single school only	<b>YES</b> Outdoors where possible, must align with public gathering limits and density requirements
Formals, graduations, and other ceremonies (including events held off school premises and/or with parents/carers and other guests)	<b>YES</b> Must align with community settings.
Kinder transition program	<b>YES</b> There is no requirement for parents to be vaccinated for this purpose.
Statewide transition day	<b>YES</b>
All interschool activities (such as debating and interschool sports)	<b>YES</b>
Singing, brass and woodwind classes and groups	<b>YES</b> Following recommended health advice.

## QR Codes and visitors to schools

The use of Service Victoria QR codes for electronic record keeping is mandatory in all schools to enable the effective contact tracing of any COVID-19 cases.

	Need to check in	Not required to check in unless proof of vaccination status is required
All visitors on school site (including contractors, external Department staff and building and maintenance staff)	✓	
All parents who enter school buildings when on school site	✓	
Parents who come onto school grounds for drop off or pick up, but do not enter buildings.		✓

Schools can permit parents to enter buildings onsite for student pick-up and drop-off providing sufficient QR code locations are available for parents to check in. Where this is not possible, parents should not be permitted to enter buildings for pick-up and drop-off.

## Visitors to schools

Visitors to school grounds must comply with vaccination requirements, density limits, face mask requirements, QR code check-ins and practise respiratory etiquette and good hand hygiene.

The [density limit](#) of one person per four square metres should be applied to any spaces and activities being attended by parent/carers and other visitors. The density limit applies to all persons in the space, including students.

Any visitor or volunteers performing work in schools (including parent helpers, NDIS providers, and other operators such as incursion providers and private music teachers) are required to either have had their first dose by the 18 October or, have a booking to receive a first dose by 25 October or, are fully vaccinated by 29 November (unless a medical exemption applies) to attend on site.

## Camps and Excursions

Camps, excursions, and incursions for Victorian schools can resume

## School events, gatherings, and assemblies

**Outdoor events are strongly encouraged.**

**Assemblies and other events exclusive to staff and students from single school** can resume.

**Formals, graduations, and other ceremonies** can resume, however they must align with community settings.

- Indoor events will remain subject to the obligations such as caps and density quotients. All eligible adults must be fully vaccinated.
- Outdoor events can be held with up to 500 people, with a density quotient of one person per two square metres applied.

## COVID Safe settings at school

We are required to increase fresh air flow into indoor spaces (including shared spaces, classrooms, administration area and thoroughfares) whenever possible. We will continue to maximise the use of outdoor learning areas or environments wherever possible,

## Staggered start and finish times and breaks

Staggered drop off and pick up times and use of multiple entry and exit points will remain in place for the time being to prevent concentrations of students and minimise parents onsite

## 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 or sneezing

Hand sanitiser is available at entry points to classrooms and soap and water are readily available too

Sharing of food is not permitted.

## Face masks

**Please see [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au) for the latest face mask requirements.**

For all school settings, the Victorian Chief Health Officer:

- Directs primary school students in Year 3 and above to wear a face mask indoors at school, including Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) programs, unless a lawful exception applies.
- Directs school staff to wear a face mask while teaching wherever practicable, except where removal of a face mask is necessary for effective communication.
- Strongly recommends students in Prep to Grade 2 to wear a face mask indoors at school or OSHC program.

There are a [number of lawful reasons for not wearing a face mask](#), including for staff and students who are unable to wear a face mask due to the nature of their disability, medical or a mental health condition. Parent/carers of a student/s who meet the criteria for an exception should provide their approval in writing for their child/ren to not wear a mask to the school

## Managing a confirmed case of COVID-19

To better support schools to manage COVID-19 cases, the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Department of Health (DH) have revised how COVID-19 cases will be managed in schools.

I thought that it was important to provide the recently updated information on what occurs during a school closure so that you can be prepared for this scenario should it happen. Much of this information is changing rapidly and schools are only provided with some information after a confirmed case is reported. This makes it hard to be fully prepared for such circumstances. Please note the information below is guidance only and is subject to change in the event of a positive case.

### What happens if a child tests positive ?

- If your child or children test/s positive you need to inform the school as soon as possible either via phone or via email. We will need to obtain information from you about the date of the test and the date of the result along with other relevant information about your child's movements and their symptoms.
- After the school receives this notification, we contact the Department of Education and raise an alert which prompts the School Closure Team to contact the school. They obtain key information about the details of the case and determine the next steps.
- If it is deemed necessary by the Department of Health, the school will be closed for 24 hours, however this may be extended if there are additional cases reported in this time, or if contact tracing is not complete. Please note that it is not my call as to whether the school closes, I receive an official order from the Regional Director and have to comply with this order.
- The school then moves forward to contact tracing and contacting parents of children who may be considered a Primary Close Contact (PCC) of the positive case. PCCs are likely to be limited to those in the same class as the

confirmed COVID-19 case. However, this will also depend on the level of compliance with face-mask requirements and how much classes might have mixed.

If your child is considered a PCC they will be required to quarantine at home for 14 days, monitor for symptoms and inform the school if they test positive.

#### If the school is closed what happens ?

- I will send a School Closure notice via Compass from a template provided by the Department of Education. If you know of someone in our community who may not be aware of this please reach out and let them know. Please note that this notification may come at any time so it is important to monitor Compass messages.
- A school closure means that no-one is allowed onsite which means no TeamKids or Onsite Supervision will occur.
- Please do not call the school during this time, there will be no-one onsite to answer the phone. The best way to contact us is via email. Please keep in mind that if you or your child are a PCC we will contact you.
- While the school is closed, cleaning is undertaken, with a focus on high touch areas.
- The school will be given notification to extend the closure or to re-open and we will confirm this with the community via Compass.
- All students can then return to school unless they have been identified as a Primary Close Contact (PCC).

We are hoping that we do not have to experience a school closure or positive case, but the reality is that it is quite likely that we will. I ask that if you get notified of a school closure that you remain calm and be assured that we will contact you personally if your child is a PCC. Please keep in mind that our focus during this time needs to be on contact tracing and if you have a non urgent issue, we ask if you could please wait until after the school re-opens.

I hope that this has provided some clarity and allows you to have some level of preparedness for a future school closure. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding during these complex times.