



Dear Parent/Carer

27/01/2022

Welcome to 2022!

As you may have heard through the media or Service NSW there are a number of guidelines in place for schools as we resume the school year. The settings are in many ways similar to those in place at the end of last year, however, there are some changes due to the new Covid-19 variant circulating.

I have included the additions to our guidelines as well as a summary of changes for existing guidelines.

Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT)

RAT kits have been sent to our school for students and staff to use **twice a week**. The school has enough supply for four weeks with added supplies available for distribution to schools if needed beyond that time. The school does not have a say in RAT providers or participation in the testing.

RAT kits will be available for parents to pick up Friday (28/01) or Monday (31/01). If you cannot attend the school on either of these two days we are hoping that you will contact us and let us know how to get the kit to you so that your child(ren) can complete the first test prior to attendance. A text will be sent out Friday morning with specifics about pick up times to ensure people don't waste time when they arrive. It will also be advertised on our facebook page.

There are some differences with RAT guidelines for students in support classes. The school will communicate with the appropriate parents about this.

We understand that using the RAT kit is not mandatory, however it is hoped that your cooperation in this program will help us keep everyone as safe as possible. You can find out extra information about the tests at the following:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-01/Using%20a%20rapid%20antigen%20test%20English%20Poster.pdf>

If the test is negative you do not have to do anything beyond the test, however, if it is positive you need to contact the school to let us know and register it on the Service NSW website. You can find information about Covid-19 at the following:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/management/advice-for-confirmed>

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/stay-safe/testing/self-isolation-rules>

If a RAT test is positive for a child, they must also isolate for 7 days at a minimum. To return, however, they must also be free of ongoing symptoms. If a child is in a household with a positive case they should self-isolate for 7 days and only come back to school if they are not showing symptoms. Testing using the RAT kit would be advisable in this case to ensure a secure re-entry to school.

If a student has tested positive and completed their isolation there is no requirement to re-test using the RAT kit as it may show a false positive. The key to exiting isolation is having no ongoing symptoms.

It is important to remember that the Department of Education does have some of its own protocols that they layer over the top for school. This means at times our guidelines are slightly different. Where this is the case we will communicate it to parents/carers.

Existing Guidelines (Summary) – Key Areas

Guideline	Change to 2021	Details
Masks	Yes	Masks must now be a 'surgical mask' not the cloth masks many staff and students were wearing last year. Masks with vents are also not to be worn. The school will have a supply of surgical style masks for students who need them each day.
Cohorting	No	We will continue to cohort as last year. That means having separate areas in the playground and corridors during break time. It also means assemblies will be organised to minimise cohort mixing.
Physical Distancing	No	Physical distancing arrangements will still be in place as per last year.
Vaccinations	No	Vaccinations are available for all secondary students from an approved provider. Vaccinations at the moment are not being administered at school. Vaccinations for students are recommended NOT mandatory. This has not changed.
Students who show symptoms at school	No	Students who show symptoms will be placed in sick bay and then asked to be picked up. They will need to be free of symptoms to return. They will also need to show a negative RAT result or a negative PCR test to return.
Visitors on Site (supporting school)	No	Visitors who have a critical capacity for school operation will still be allowed onsite. General visitors will not be able to visit the school.
Parents on Site	Yes	We are back to a stricter visitation policy. Much like we had mid-way through last year. Parents who come onsite to perform specific duties such as canteen must be vaccinated. Parents cannot attend school functions/activities onsite. If you need to organise uniform or complete any admin task, please ring to arrange a time and discuss entry.
Canteen	No	Canteen is operational as per normal. Organisation around lining up and accessing the canteen will continue.

The start to 2022 is not as easy as we would have liked, however, our school community is now used to moving quickly and changing gears when necessary. I am very confident that our students can work with staff to make the start to this year productive alongside these guidelines.

The guidelines we are being provided with continue to be updated. That means further communication will be needed. In particular we are still waiting for more detail around excursions, carnivals and sport.

Regards



Craig Luccarda - Principal