



WOONGARRAH PUBLIC SCHOOL

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The inclusive and caring school where expert staff support students to achieve excellence.

5 November 2021

UPDATE FOR FAMILIES

Term 4 Week 5

Dear Families,

It has been wonderful to have everyone back on site for the past two weeks. You will be pleased to know that 100% of our students have returned. I would like to update you on the key changes that will be in place at our school from Monday 8 November and for the rest of Term 4. Please read through the information below and get in touch if you have any questions.

Term 4 Roadmap

As announced by the Minister on 2 November, from 8 November all schools will move onto updated Level 3 settings for the rest of Term 4, that bring schools more into line with what is allowed in the community. The changes support a greater range of activities to go ahead and also allow fully vaccinated providers and visitors on school sites to support curriculum delivery, wellbeing programs and school operations.

Keeping us all safe on school grounds

A combination of layered COVID-safe plans and measures will allow us to prioritise student and staff safety and keep our school open. To do this, the following guidelines will be in place.

Attendance

All students are expected to be at school unless they are unwell. Do not attend school if unwell, even with mild symptoms. Get tested for COVID-19 and follow NSW Health directions. At Woongarra, we operate two sick bays to separate students with symptoms from others. Any person with any COVID-19 symptoms must be sent home and not return to school unless: they have isolated for 10 days, when no medical certificate is available; or they have a negative COVID-19 test result and are symptom free. In circumstances where children have other medical reasons for recurrent symptoms, a letter from your GP is sufficient to negate the requirement for a negative test.

Vaccination, Masks, Hygiene and Physical Distancing

- All staff on school sites must be fully vaccinated.
- Masks are required indoors for all staff, adult visitors and strongly recommended indoors for primary students. Masks can be removed when eating or exercising.
- All staff and visitors by appointment must check in when attending a school site or gathering.
- Adults should maintain 1.5 metres physical distancing wherever practicable.
- Activities and events for students should be held outdoors where practical.
- Indoor spaces are well ventilated
- Students and staff will maintain good hand hygiene and schools will continue with enhanced cleaning, including high touch points.

Visitors, volunteers, parents and carers on site

- Fully vaccinated visitors, such as allied health partners and other external providers, and Department of Education staff are allowed on site to support curriculum delivery, student wellbeing activities and school operations that maintain student cohorts.

- All people who are permitted to come on site must check in using the school check-in, show proof of vaccination on entry and follow mask-wearing requirements.
- Parents and carers must follow the school's advice regarding student drop-off and pick-up, which requires parents to remain off school sites at these times. Parents and carers should follow the physical distancing advice and avoid gathering outside of school gates. This does not apply to drop-off and pick-up from outside of school hours care (OOSHC) as sign-in and -out procedures are required for OOSHC.

Cohorting (Bubbles)

To keep students and staff safe, schools need to maintain cohorting at all times. All activities are planned to minimise mixing and mingling between cohorts. Current plans will remain for the rest of the term. This includes our organisation for:

- staggered entry and exit points and times
- separate play breaks for recess and lunch
- activities in class groups only that are in place so that students avoid mingling with other class and year groups when moving around the school
- strict personal hygiene and physical distancing wherever possible.

Drop off and pick up procedures remain the same. Students are asked to arrive at school between 8:45 – 9am and proceed directly to class. Pick up times are staggered, with K-2 at 2:30 and years 3-6 at 2:45.

The principles of student cohorting are to:

- minimise unnecessary physical interaction between students on school grounds
- ensure that students learn and play only with those in their cohort, wherever possible
- enable learning to be delivered face-to-face

The benefits of student cohorting are to:

- minimise opportunities for COVID-19 transmission or the potential for widespread infection across the school and wider school community
- enable the most effective contact tracing and containment measures in the event of a COVID-19 case.

Canteen

As we are moving to Level 3 restrictions on Monday 8 November, the window service at the canteen will recommence. Students that are on the cement at recess and lunch will only be able to access the window service.

- Recess - Kindergarten and Stage 3
- Lunch - Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Students will NOT be able to go to the canteen if they are allocated to the grass area. eg Stage 1 at Recess. We need to maintain the bubbles and keep lining up to a minimum. Students will physically distance when lining up.

Pre-ordering recess and lunch is still preferred.

Assemblies and Presentations

- From 8 November, assemblies and presentations are allowed outdoors, with cohorts separated and physical distancing in place.
- At our school, virtual assemblies will continue in class groups for the remainder of the year for K-2 and Years 3-6.
- Presentation Day assemblies are being planned in stage groups. Cohorts will be separated with physical distancing in place. Care will be taken to avoid mixing and mingling of cohorts when entering and exiting the outdoor assembly. Fully vaccinated visitors (including parents and carers) will only be allowed to attend if completing a specific role (such as presenting) and at the invitation of the school.
- Mrs Dempsey and the team are considering COVID-safe options for Year 6 farewell and will advise Year 6 families and students when possible.

Transitions and orientations

- Transitions and orientations are allowed as long as they are designed to minimise mingling between visiting children and school cohorts.
- Kindy Orientation is being planned for students only, with two visits later this term. Mrs Buhr has sent separate communication to families. One fully vaccinated parent or carer may attend any transition or orientation event if required to support a child with additional needs. This will be negotiated with the school to meet the needs of the child.

Other activities

If COVID-safe measures are in place – mask wearing indoors, full vaccination of adults on site, minimising mingling, square metre rules in place and good hygiene practices – then schools can continue:

- Dancing and music classes will be allowed within cohorts.
- Canteens
- OOSHC, vacation care
- special religious education (SRE), special education in ethics (SEE) in student cohorts
- emergency drills and evacuations where possible, conducted in a COVID-safe manner – this means where possible keeping classes, groups or cohorts together.

Finally, a Video to share

This week the Secretary sat down for a short conversation with Professor Sharon Goldfeld, a paediatrician and Director of The Centre for Community Child Health. Professor Goldfeld has decades of experience in state government as a senior policy maker in health and education. During the 2020 second COVID-19 wave she analysed the school transmission data for the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. During the discussion Sharon shares some practical tips for families when talking to children about COVID-19, the layers of protection in place in our schools, and the benefits of getting our students into the classroom to learn. Visit [Secretary's video with Professor Sharon Goldfeld](#)

Thank you again for your continued support.

Leonie Clarkson