

Mount Waverley Primary School

COVID-19 Policy from Monday 30 November

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline to parents, carers and students how Mount Waverley Primary School will be managing risk and other operational matters relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) from **Monday 30 November, 2020**.

Mount Waverley Primary School (MWPS) is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment for our students and staff. We ask for all members of the 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 COVID-19 in Victoria.

BACKGROUND

MWPS is following the advice for schools from the Department of Education and Training which can be found on the Department's website at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

SCOPE

This policy applies to everyone in the MWPS community engaging in on-site learning or visiting school grounds. This includes all members of staff (Principals, Teachers and Education Support Staff), all parents/carers who interact with the school and all students. It also includes visitors to the school. Information specific to staff only and not directly relevant to students and their families is not included in this policy.

POLICY GUIDELINES

On-Site Learning

Foundation to Year 6 students are full-time on-site learning commencing the week beginning Monday 12 October. Information on starting dates and times for each year level have been provided to parents via Compass, the school newsletter and the Principal message on Vimeo.

Term 4 Priorities

MWPS will continue to have in place strong measures to protect the health and safety of students, staff, families and the community. In addition to the health and safety measures outlined in this policy, we will be focused on three key priorities in Term 4:-

1. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our highest priority will be the wellbeing, particularly the mental health, of every student and member of staff. This means effectively mobilising all available resources to support our most vulnerable students and enabling staff to access the relevant support services.

2. Learning and Excellence

Some of our students have thrived in the remote and flexible learning environment, others have maintained their learning progress, and some may have fallen behind, despite their best efforts and those of their families and teachers. Our priority will be supporting those who need additional assistance and those who have progressed to continue to extend their learning.

3. Transitions

Transitions sessions have been timetabled for children moving from kindergarten into Foundation (Prep), Year 6 students moving into Year 7, and students moving on into the next year levels.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- **Health and Safety at School**

MWPS follows the Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer's advice and requirements in relation to health and safety. The health and safety measures relating to students are outlined below. These health and safety measures are regularly reviewed in line with the changing context of COVID-19 in Victoria. As a result, as Term 4 proceeds, some measures may no longer be required and/or new measures may be introduced.

Unwell Students and Staff (including students and staff who have been tested)

- Unwell students and/or staff **must** stay home
- Where students or staff have been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) they are required to isolate at home and must not attend school until they are both symptom free and have received their results (provided the test result is negative)
- Parents are requested to show evidence of their child's negative test result on their return to school
- Staff are requested to show evidence of their negative test result on their return to school

Students with underlying conditions (such as hay fever or asthma)

If a student has persistent symptoms due to an underlying condition such as hay fever or asthma, the student should still be tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) if they develop symptoms that are different to or worse than their usual symptoms.

Parents/carers should also consider getting a medical certificate from the child's treating GP to confirm that it is safe for them to attend school with persistent symptoms that may overlap with some of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) such as cough or runny nose.

Young children with persistent mild symptoms

For younger children (Foundation to Level 2) who have had a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test that was taken after they developed symptoms, the decision about return to school should be made in conjunction with the child's treating GP. If the GP is satisfied the child has recovered from their acute illness, is otherwise well, and does not need a repeat coronavirus (COVID-19) test, the child can return even if they are not completely free of symptoms. Any worsening of symptoms will require review and repeat coronavirus (COVID-19) testing, if considered appropriate by the doctor.

Managing Unwell Students and Staff at School

- Students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough, chills or sweats, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, loss of smell or taste, will be isolated in an appropriate space with suitable supervision. Students must be collected by a parent/carer as soon as possible and should be tested.

Urgent medical attention will be sought where needed. Unwell students will not be permitted to travel home unsupervised

- Staff experiencing coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms (as above) must go home and should be tested
- 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 in the first instance we will contact the parent/carer to discuss any concerns about the health status of the student, and we will take a precautionary approach, requesting the parent/carer collect their child if concerns remain. A trained staff member may take the temperature of the student, where appropriate, to support decision-making. Gloves will be worn for the purpose of taking a temperature
- As a precaution, siblings of an unwell student who is presenting with COVID-19 symptoms will also be sent home at the same time their unwell sibling is collected
- Parent/carers of students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) will be encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps.
- Students and staff who have been unwell should not return until symptoms resolve and a negative test is determined and presented to school administration or the school nurse.

Managing a Suspected or Confirmed Case of COVID-19

The Department 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. In accordance with these procedures:-

- MWPS will contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160 to seek advice if a student or a staff member:-
 - is a confirmed case
 - has been in close contact with a confirmed case
- We will inform the Department's Incident Support and Operations Centre who will support the school to make an [IRIS incident alert](#).

DHHS defines 'close contact' as someone who has either:-

- 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.

Face Coverings

- All school staff on site will wear face coverings when moving between classrooms /office area indoors unless exempt due to a medical condition or disability but may remove their face covering when teaching students
- Staff are entitled to take breaks from wearing masks
- As we are a primary school, students are not required to wear face coverings regardless of whether or not they are aged 12 or over, but may choose to do so
- Students are encouraged to bring their own face mask to school
- Parents/carers are not required to wear face masks outdoors on the school site except where physical distancing of 1.5 metres cannot be maintained
- Parents/carers must wear face masks if entering the administration/office area.

Physical Distancing

- The Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer has acknowledged that physical distancing in schools is practicably difficult to achieve and has not mandated this practice
- Parents are asked to observe physical distancing requirements (1.5 metres) whenever dropping off or collecting students from school and must not congregate in groups on the school site or at the school gate.

School Arrival and Departure Arrangements from Monday 30 November

To support physical distancing at our school we have different entry/exit points and the following arrangements:-

- MWPS encourages parents to undertake daily temperature checks of their child/children before school
- Students may arrive at school from 8.45am and make their way to classrooms (older siblings are encouraged to assist younger siblings to their rooms)
- Parents are permitted onsite however they are not permitted in their child/rens classroom/s
- The school bell will sound at 8.50am for students to enter class for the school starting time at 9.00am
- Each morning staff will monitor school entry points at Park Lane and Toirram roads from 8.50am - 9.00am
- Afternoon departure time will be 3.30pm for all students
- Staff will monitor school exit points from 3.30pm -3.45pm
- If parents do not enter the school grounds, they should make a consistent pre-planned 'meeting place' with their child/children to minimize confusion or anxiety
- Parents who enter the school grounds are encouraged to wait at a distance beyond their child/rens classroom or wait beyond the school gates and continue to maintain social distancing
- Students and parents/carers must continue to use the school crossings located in Toirram road or Park Lane.

Mixing Between Student Groups

Students may mix across levels or between cohorts in teacher led activities or programs such as assemblies, lunch time groups, extra-curricular activities or clubs.

Hand, Food and Drink Hygiene

- Hand sanitiser will be available at entry points to classrooms and students will be educated on the importance of this health and safety measure
- All people on school grounds must undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet
- Where shared equipment is necessary, students will be required to exercise strict hand hygiene before and after use
- Students may drink from water fountains and should continue to bring their own water bottle for use and refilling at school
- Students must not share their food.

Air Ventilation

- Wherever possible, we will increase fresh air into indoor spaces and maximise the use of outdoor learning areas and environments. This will include keeping windows and/or doors open to keep air circulating.

Temperature Checks

- Mandatory temperature testing of all students is no longer required. However, we will continue to heed Department and Chief Health Officer advice on this, and temperature checks may be reintroduced if the current levels of community transmission in Victoria increase. If any student appears unwell a trained staff member may undertake a temperature check.

Mobile Phones

- The Department and MWPS Student Use Mobile Phone policies continue to apply so students will not be accessing their mobile phones during school hours
- We ask that students clean their phones regularly out of school hours.

Health, Wellbeing and Inclusions Workforces at School

- Health and Wellbeing staff (such as Student Support Services, Koorie Engagement Support Officers, Visiting Teachers and school nurses) will continue to provide support to students as required
- Please contact your child's teacher and/or the Assistant Principals, Vicki Martin/Jacinta Evans (Wellbeing) for further information.

Record Keeping for Contact Tracing

- To support contact tracing, we are required to keep a record of the name, contact details, date and time of attendance of all staff, students and visitors who attend on-site for more than 15 minutes
- We are also required to record the areas of the school the person attended.

COVID-19 Safety Management Plan

- Our school follows and implements the Department's COVID-19 Safety Management Plan, available at: [COVID19 Safety Management Plan](#).

- **Attendance**

Students who are well and able to attend school, should attend school. Teachers are not responsible for remote learning and will only be teaching students on-site.

Normal attendance notification requirements apply for all students. Please refer to our school Attendance Policy for further information.

Exceptions to attendance may exist for medically vulnerable students. The Acting Deputy Chief Health Officer has advised that decisions regarding school attendance should be informed by the nature of a child or young person's condition, its severity and intensity of required treatment. In most cases, the presence of common conditions of childhood, such as asthma, epilepsy or Type 1 diabetes, should not preclude a student from attending face-to-face learning.

In keeping with expert public health advice, some students may be at higher risk for severe outcomes or complications of coronavirus (COVID-19), for example those with chronic medical conditions. Any student with a chronic medical condition should seek advice from their medical practitioner about attending school on site at different stages in the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Please also contact Assistant Principals, Vicki Martin/Jacinta Evans (Wellbeing) for further information for further support and advice on how we can support your child in these circumstances.

Our school records student attendance in accordance with the Department's [Attendance Policy](#).

- **School Assemblies**

School assemblies will resume face-to-face on Monday 7 December and Friday 18 December for students and staff only.

- **Camps and Excursions**

Camps and excursions will not take place in Term 4. (with the exception of the Year 6 final end of year celebration)

- **Sport and Recreation**

Based on the Department and Chief Medical Officer advice and requirements as at 5 October 2020:-

- Playground equipment can be used by students. However, students should practise hand hygiene before and after use
- Playgrounds are not available for community use until further notice
- Indoor sport is permitted
- Students will participate in physical education
- Students may participate in recreational play outdoor
- School based swimming programs and aquatic activities will not proceed in term 4.

- **Instrumental Music, Music Classes and Sustainability Classes**

Under Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer advice and requirements, school choirs and wood/wind/brass instrument use is not permitted in school until further notice.

Sustainability cooking and food preparation lessons will not continue until further notice.

There is no sharing of food.

- **Visitors and School Tours**

Visitors to school grounds must seek permission from the school Principal and comply with physical distancing, face covering requirements and practise good hand hygiene.

- Parent-teacher information sessions and interviews will be conducted remotely online via Webex
- On-site school tours for prospective students and their families will not be conducted unless an exemption has been granted by the Principal to support essential educational planning and decision-making for students with disability or highly complex needs
- Parent volunteers may attend school with the School Principal approval

- **Buses and Transport**

Students should practice hand hygiene before and after catching any form of public transport. Physical distancing should be practised by both parents and students at bus stops, interchange locations and train stations.

- **Outside School Hours Care**

Outside School Hours Care will be available for students in accordance with their guidelines and process. Parents must drop off and collect their child/children using the Toiram road entrance until further notice. Further information is available from Camp Australia.

- **Interschool activities**

All interschool activities that involve on-site attendance by students from other schools will be cancelled this term.

- **Communication Between Parents/carers and Teachers/School**

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact their child's teacher via email to discuss any concerns or areas of need in regards to their child's learning, health, wellbeing or access to teaching and learning resources. Follow-up phone communication may be possible in non-teaching time. Support Group meetings or parent-teacher meetings may be arranged via Webex.

MWPS preferred general communication and information sharing with parents will be via Compass and through the school newsletter.

Parents and carers may make an arrangement with the school office to enter the administration area or to meet with the school nurse to collect an unwell child or in an emergency.

We strongly recommend email or phone communications wherever possible.

- **Cleaning and Facilities Management**

At MWPS we will:

- Continue extension of routine environmental cleaning, including progressive cleaning throughout the day to ensure that risks of transmission are reduced for high-touch surfaces such as taps, door handles, communally used surfaces. See Department information about [Access to cleaning supplies and services](#).
- At the school's expense over and above the DET cleaning services, MWPS will continue to employ 'A Fresh Start Cleaning Services' to provide an indoor and outdoor antimicrobial service every two weeks to all areas of the school including playground equipment and outdoor seating. Taskforce-J-Fill is a preventative sanitisation service and on contact kills bacteria, viruses and fungus within 60 seconds including COVID -19. Although the product lasts 28 days we will be employing the service every 21 days. A space can be entered 30 minutes after misting
- 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 use of shared equipment
- Classrooms resources should be cleaned after use.

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://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/infectious-diseases/policy>
- [DET Health Care Needs Policy:](#)
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/health-care-needs/policy>
- [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

This policy was last updated on **Monday 30 November** and will be reviewed on a regular basis as the situation changes.