

# COVID -19 Return to School Policy

## Avondale Primary School 2020



### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

*Avondale Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision making. Avondale Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.*

*Avondale Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, international students from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds, vulnerable children as well as the safety of children with a disability.*

*Every person involved in Avondale Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/ she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.*

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how our school will be managing risks relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) during key interactions between students, parents and staff during the return to school in Term 4, 2020.

Avondale Primary School is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment for our students and staff. We ask for the whole 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

Avondale Primary School is following the advice from the Department of Education and Training including, [Health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the context of COVID-19](#) which can be found on the Department's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website](#).

### Scope

This policy applies to everyone in the Avondale Primary School 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 approved visitors to the school. Information specific to staff only and not directly relevant to students and their families is not included in this policy.

### Details

#### Attendance on-site

All students will return to full-time on-site learning commencing week beginning Monday 12 October. Information on procedures for student drop off and pick ups will be provided to families via the school newsletter and Compass.

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### Term 4 priorities

We 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:

#### **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.

#### **Learning and excellence**

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

#### **Transitions**

We will make every effort to ensure successful transitions for children moving from kindergarten into Prep, the Grade 6s moving into Year 7 as well as students moving to the next grade at APS in 2021.

### Health and safety at school

Our school 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.

### School arrival and departure

DET advises that:

*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. It is important that visitors to school grounds are limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations only.*

This means that at our school:

- Parents will not enter school grounds and will drop off and collect children from designated gates. We ask that parents and carers maintain physical distancing when dropping off or collecting children at gates. All parents/carers must wear a face mask when dropping off/picking up their child/ren.
- To minimise interaction of students and adults within the school and at entry points we:

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- Require Grade Prep students to be dropped at Gate 2, Grade 1 students to be at Gate 1, Grade 2 and 3/4 students to be at Gate 4, and Grade 4/5 and 5/6 students to be at Gate 3. For drop off if you have more than one child at school we ask that you drop the youngest child off first.
- For pick-up it will be the same collection process – please collect the youngest child first.
- For pick up, children who are oldest in the family will collect their siblings and exit via the youngest child's designated gate.
- We will place dots at the school gate/s to encourage spacing between adults and to create order for a check in process. The nature strip grass will be kept low to create greater space for parents to maintain physical distancing.
- We request parents contact the school by phone or email where appropriate and that parents only enter the school grounds when essential to do so. We ask that any parents/carers wishing to discuss any matters with a staff member to communicate/email through Compass. If a face-to face meeting is needed, it must meet the physical distancing requirements of 1.5m between adults.
- Visitors to school grounds will be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services and maintenance workers). Parent volunteer sessions for reading and canteen helpers are cancelled until further notice.
  - School assemblies and other non-essential large gatherings will be postponed.

### *Unwell students (including students who have been tested)*

- Unwell students **must** stay home.
- Where students 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 result is negative).

### *Managing unwell students 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 and collected by a parent/carer as soon as possible. Urgent medical attention will be sought where needed. Unwell students will not be permitted 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 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 to 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.
- Where students are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus, we will ensure hand hygiene, physical distancing and (where possible) use of a face mask. See DET [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).

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- 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 should not return until symptoms resolve.
- If a student spreads droplets (for example by sneezing, coughing or vomiting), surfaces will be immediately cleaned with disinfectant wipes (and using gloves).
- A medical certificate is not required to return to school after a period of illness, however students should not return until symptoms resolve.

### *Managing a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19*

*DET 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.*

- We will contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160 to discuss what to do next if a student or staff member:
  - is a confirmed case
  - has been in close contact with a confirmed case
- We will inform the Department by making an [IRIS incident alert](#).

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

- had 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.

### *Provision of routine care and first aid*

DET advises that:

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

At our school:

- Standard precautions as per DET [Infectious Diseases policy](#) and school policies, eg First Aid and Anaphylaxis policies will be followed when providing first aid, for example, staff will use gloves and protection when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances.
- Hand hygiene will be practiced before and after performing routine care or first aid.
- 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.

### *Hand, food and drink hygiene*

DET advises that:

*Everyone can protect themselves and prevent the spread of coronavirus by continuing effective hand 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. Students may bring hand sanitizer for their own personal use.

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- 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 must not drink from the school water fountains and must bring their own water bottle for use and refilling at school.
- Soap and water is available in student toilets
- Sharing of food is not permitted.
- A day cleaner will be employed each day to routinely clean all surfaces including toilets, taps, doors, benches and tables

### Specific arrangements for teaching and learning environments and break times

DET advises that:

*Maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 metres will not always be practical in education settings. Physical distancing is most important between adults.*

*Reducing mixing between different cohorts is recommended as a precautionary measure to minimise risk of spread of transmission and aid containment in the rare event of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) on site.*

At our school we will:

- stagger drop off and pick up times for the Prep – 2 and the 3-6 students to reduce congestion at school gates
- allocate different areas of the yard to different grades levels at recess and lunch times
- keep doors open to promote fresh air flow
- maximise the use of outdoor learning areas or environments where possible and as practical depending on weather conditions
- students and staff will largely remain in the same classroom areas where possible rather than move classes from room to room
- organising student traffic in line up areas and for entry and exit into the building to maximize social distancing
- staff will maintain physical distancing as much as practical when working in a classroom

### Air ventilation

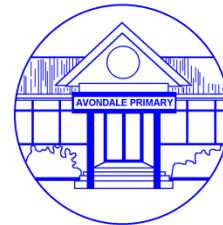
- Wherever possible, we will increase fresh air into indoor spaces and maximise the use of outdoor learning areas and environments. This will include setting air conditioning units to use external air rather than recycling and keeping doors open with door jambs to keep air circulating.

### 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. Temperature checks may be reintroduced if the current levels of community transmission in Victoria increase.

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### *Mobile phones*

- The Department and school's mobile phone policies continue to apply and we ask that students clean their phones regularly.

### *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 Wellbeing Coordinator Carol Broadhurst 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

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 Wellbeing Coordinator Carol Broadhurst 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 not take place until further notice. General announcements and reminders will be made via the PA system, through the Weekly Newsletter and Compass News Feed.

## Camps and excursions

Camps and excursions will not take place throughout Term 4, according to current guidelines.

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### **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 practice hand hygiene before and after use.
- Sports equipment will be rotated to minimise any risk of infection
- Wherever possible, outdoor facilities will be used for physical education and recreational play. Where indoor facilities are used, we will limit the number of students.
- We will encourage non-contact sports at this time. Hand hygiene will be implemented before and after use of any sporting equipment.

### **Instrumental music classes**

Instrumental music classes cannot not place throughout Term 4, according to current guidelines

### **Canteen**

Our school canteen is open for Term 4 and will operate with the highest hygiene practices. All orders must be placed online via FlexiSchools. The canteen will not be open for counter sales and will run with a reduced menu. Volunteers are unable to enter the school to assist at the canteen until further notice.

### **Visitors and school tours**

Under Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer advice and requirements visitors to school grounds must be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, cleaning and maintenance workers). This means:

- Parent volunteers must not attend school
- Parent-teacher information sessions/meetings/interviews will be conducted remotely online
- 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.
- Approved visitors to school grounds must comply with physical distancing and face covering requirements and practice good hand hygiene.
- Parents who need to pick up their child early will need to phone the front office to arrange collection of their child from Gate 2.

### **Outside school hours care**

Outside School Hours Care will be available for students in accordance with their usual process. Further information is available from OSHC Coordinator Sonya Coleman or the school office.

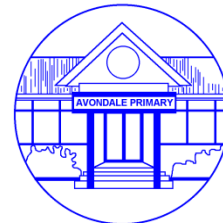
### **Interschool activities**

All interschool activities that involve on-site attendance by students from other schools, for example, Interschool Sports are unable to take place during Term 4.



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### Communication between parents/carers and our school

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact their child's classroom teacher via Compass 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.

### Cleaning and facilities management

DET advises that:

*Environmental cleaning, coupled with regular hand hygiene, remains important to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.*

At our school 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 services. See Department information about [Access to cleaning supplies and services](#).
- staff will carefully consider the necessity of using shared items or equipment, for example, shared computers, class sets of teaching and learning materials, etc at this time.
- we will be practising hand hygiene immediately before and after use of shared equipment
- ensure we have sufficient supplies of hand sanitizer in office spaces, staffrooms and in classes

### School offices and staff facilities

DET advises that:

*As the greatest risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, close proximity between staff will be avoided where possible and especially in offices and staff rooms.*

At our school we will:

- Limit the number of staff in offices and utilize unused spaces as much as possible
- In line with other workplaces across Victoria, we will remind staff to maintain physical distancing from each other as much as possible in the reception, staff room and offices and wear face masks.

### 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:](#)



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- <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/departments/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 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and will be reviewed on a regular basis as the situation changes.