

Balwyn Primary School

COVID-19 Return to School Guidelines

Term 4 2020

25 October

Purpose

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

Balwyn 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 these guidelines as well as pertinent advice provided by DHHS 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.

Important Dates

- Monday, 12 October: All F-6 students commence school onsite
- Friday, 23 October: Public Holiday for Grand Final Eve
- Monday, 2 November: Curriculum Day
- Tuesday, 3 November: Public Holiday for Melbourne Cup
- Tuesday, 17 November: Curriculum Day
- Friday, 18 December: Final Day of School, 1.30 pm term finishes

What to Bring to School

- Food for recess and lunchtime, and any necessary cutlery to eat this food with
- Drink bottles, which may be filled from the school drink taps
- Raincoat and/or umbrella as pickup and drop off will occur at the school gates
- School pencil cases that may have been taken home for remote learning
- Any library books that have been borrowed from the school library prior to remote learning.

Background

Balwyn 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

These guidelines apply to everyone in the Balwyn Primary School community. 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.

Requirements

Attendance on-site

The Department of Education and Training (DET) advises that:

*The most important action school communities can take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), is to ensure that **any unwell staff and students remain at home, even with the mildest of symptoms.***

Please see [Managing illness in schools and early childhood services during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#) for further information.

This means that at our school:

- All unwell staff and students **must** stay home.
 - <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/self-quarantine-coronavirus-covid-19> provides advice on who should quarantine and who should isolate, how to prepare and how to support someone who is sick during a quarantine period.
- Visitors to school grounds will be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, specialist curriculum programs, maintenance workers).
- Additional visitors, including parent volunteers, are asked to refrain from attending school at this time.
- All parents/carers are asked not to come onsite.
- We ask that any parents/carers wishing to discuss any matters with a staff member use the options of either a phone call, video conferencing or email.
- While individual student instrumental music lessons will continue, parents will not be permitted onsite to attend these lessons.
- From Monday, 12 October, all students in Prep to Year 6 at BPS will return to full-time on-site schooling. Remote learning will not continue.
- While all students are expected to attend on site from this date, exceptions may exist for medically vulnerable students. It is recommended that parents/carers of students with complex medical needs seek advice from the student's medical practitioner to support decision-making about whether on-site education is suitable. The Acting Deputy Chief Health Officer has advised that 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.
- When on-site learning is permitted, schools are not expected to provide remote and flexible learning where parents or carers of students elect to keep their child at home, except where this is based on medical advice.
- If parents need to collect students outside of stipulated pickup times, they must telephone the office first, and then must be wearing masks and meet the physical distancing requirements of 1.5m between adults while waiting. Collection of students during school hours will be from the pedestrian gate, and students will be brought to this Balwyn Road entrance, rather than parents coming onsite. Students will be escorted to the office from their classroom by two classmates, and then will be escorted to the pedestrian gate by a staff member.
- All interschool activities that involve onsite attendance by students from other schools such as interschool sport are not permitted.

- School assemblies (whole school or year level, except by virtual means), graduation ceremonies, excursions, school photos, camps and overnight stays, cohort-based activities such as developmental play, intraschool sport, singing, brass and woodwind classes and groups, and incursions, are not permitted at this stage. Non-contact sports, outdoors, at a class level are permitted.
- All extra-curricular programs such as drama, sports coaching and art are cancelled for Term 4.

School arrival and departure

DET advises that:

To ensure consistency of physical distancing measures, students and families will not be permitted to congregate at the school gate before or after school and will be required to maintain 1.5 metres between each other as far as is practicable at the start and end of the school day. Parents and carers are required to wear face masks whenever they leave the house, including for school drop-off and pick-up.

This means that at our school:

- We ask staff and parents/carers to wear face masks and to observe physical distancing measures by not congregating in areas around or outside the school at drop off and pick up times.
- At drop off parents/carers are asked not to enter the school grounds, but to leave their child/ren at the gate. Students will move straight into their classrooms, supervised by staff around the school grounds. There will be no play allowed in the School grounds before or after school.
- Each entry and exit into the school grounds being used during pick up and drop off times will be supervised by a staff member.
- At drop off and pick up times, all parents/carers are asked not to enter the school grounds, and to leave the school gate areas promptly after dropping off / collecting their child/ren, not lingering or congregating at gates during pick up or drop off times, and maintaining physical distancing requirements.
- To minimise interaction of students and adults within the school and at entry points the following arrangements apply:
 - Gates will be open from 8.45 to 9.00 am, and classrooms will be open and supervised from this time.
 - During the 15 minutes before teaching and learning begins at 9.00 am, students will have an opportunity to get themselves ready for learning, complete Accelerated Reader quizzes and read quietly.
 - The following gates will be open at drop off and pick up times:
 - the vehicle entrance gate on Balwyn Road
 - the pedestrian gate on Balwyn Road
 - the back gate on Rochester Road
 - the gate to the school grounds off Rochester Road through the staff carpark, allowing entry next to the amphitheatre.
 - Drop off of students can be at any gate
 - When all students are attending school from Week 2 (12 October), staggered drop off times will be:
 - 8.45 am until 8.50 am for 3-6 students
 - 8.50 am until 8.55 am for families with students in both groups
 - 8.55 until 9.00 am for F-2 students

- Again during afternoon pickup, parents will not be allowed onsite, and we ask that only one adult come to the gate for pickup. Classes will be taken to their designated pickup gate by their class teacher at the designated pickup time. Parents are asked to please be at the right gate at the appropriate time to ensure smooth pickup processes can operate.
- When all students are attending school from Week 2 (12 October), staggered pickup times will be:
 - 3.20 pm for F-2 students
 - 3.25 pm for 3/4 students
 - 3.30 pm for 5/6 students
 - **Family Friendly Arrangements** – families with siblings across different year levels may nominate to have their children picked up from the gate and the time allocated to the youngest child. If you wish to use this family friendly arrangement you need to email your class teachers and let them know by Monday, 12 October. This arrangement will then be in place for all school pickup times until further notice.
 - If you choose the family option, the older sibling/s will need to walk themselves to the allocated gate at the allocated time of their younger sibling. There will be staff at all the gates, and we will be making sure students understand exactly what gate they need to wait at to be collected.
- Camp Australia will deliver students to their classrooms after 8.50 am for students who are attending the Before School program, and collect students from the School Hall at 3.30 pm who are attending the After School program.
- Students walking home will be reminded to leave school grounds immediately when dismissed. Could parents please advise their class teacher by email if their child will be walking home during the term, advising the school that this is an approved arrangement.
- If parents are late due to unforeseen circumstances, students who have not been collected at their designated time will be taken to the hall, and supervised with appropriate physical distancing. All students who are being collected and taken to the hall may not be available for collection by their parents until approximately 3.40 pm, when the gates have cleared from other pickup times. Parents will need to phone the office when they arrive and their child will be delivered to the Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate.
- Signs will be placed at entrances and along fences to encourage physical distancing.
- No play on school playgrounds, open spaces or courts will be permitted before or after school.
- Students will be collected from the following gates each afternoon:

Gate Collection Points

FK	Rochester Road Carpark Gate
FB	Rochester Road Back Gate
FT	Balwyn Road Pedestrian Gate
FJ	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate

1/2P	Rochester Road Carpark Gate
1/2G	Rochester Road Carpark Gate
1/2M	Balwyn Road Pedestrian Gate
1/2W	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate
1/2J	Rochester Road Back Gate
1/2Y	Rochester Road Back Gate
1/2C	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate
3/4K	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate
3/4J	Rochester Road Carpark Gate
3/4S	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate
3/4B	Rochester Road Carpark Gate
3/4T	Balwyn Road Pedestrian Gate
3/4C	Rochester Road Back Gate
3/4M	Rochester Road Back Gate
5/6M	Rochester Road Carpark Gate
5/6C	Rochester Road Back Gate
5/6D	Rochester Road Back Gate
5/6T	Balwyn Road Pedestrian Gate
5/6R	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate
5/6A	Balwyn Road Vehicle Gate

Hygiene

DET advises that:

Everyone can protect themselves and prevent the spread of coronavirus by continuing effective hand hygiene.

At our school:

- All staff and students will undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet, and after using playground equipment and shared classroom equipment. This will be directed or supervised by staff where required.

- Shared equipment in table tubs will not be used during this period.
- Individual pencil cases, with each students' own supplies, need to be taken to specialist classes.
- Where soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitiser will be made available.
- Students must bring their own water bottles to school for use (and refilling). It is recommended that students do not drink directly from drinking fountains at this time.
- Staff and students are reminded to clean their mobile phones regularly. The Balwyn Primary School Mobile Phone Policy remains in place so students will not be handling their mobile phones during the school day.
- Sharing of food will not be permitted.
- Classroom Cuisine will not be available until further notice.
- The PFTA Kitchen will be closed during Term 4.
- Wipes to clean shared devices will also be available to wipe these down between users.
- Posters as a visual prompt to remind students and staff of good hygiene practices will be displayed throughout the school.

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 (either classes or year levels) 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:

- Conduct specialist classes in designated specialist classrooms, maintaining strict hygiene measures, including the wiping of all tables and common touch points between classes by the specialist teacher.
- Have designated spots for classes to line up, considering physical distancing, when waiting to enter specialist classes, to ensure cohorts of students are kept as separate as possible. The music room will use the smaller side door as the entry point, and the large sliding doors as the exit point. When waiting to enter the art room, students will be on the ground below the ramp, lined up back towards the back gate. When waiting to enter the LOTE room, students will be on the ground below the ramp, lined up back towards the Junior Building.
- Have sport sessions conducted outside at a class level (by class teachers) for 1 hour each week.
- Have staggered recess and lunch break times for F-2 and 3-6 students, during which separate play areas will be designated for F-2 students, and 3-6 students.
- Eat lunch and recess outside, weather permitting.
- Sandpits will be closed during lunch and recess, but can be used by individual classes for learning purposes. Play buckets will also not be available.
- Keep windows and doors open where possible to encourage ventilation.
- Use door jambs where possible to keep air circulating and avoid the need to close and open doors.
- Place masking tape down corridors in the main building and the junior building to divide corridors and keep students travelling in the same direction on the same side.
- Have students walk in single file when moving from a classroom to another location around the school.

- Conduct F-2 Developmental Play at a class level, and students will be asked to wash their hands before and after using any equipment.
- Encourage staff to maintain physical distancing as much as practical when working in a classroom together.
- Ensure all school-based staff wear face masks at school, although teachers and education support staff are not required to wear face masks while teaching. Teachers must wear face masks in other areas of the school when not teaching, for example in the staffroom, on yard duty, and when providing first aid.
- Continue to allow families to have all school digital devices that have been lent out, until a date is set for return by the School.

Term 4 Staggered Learning Times:

F-2 Students

- Lesson 1: 9.00 am to 10.00 am
- Lesson 2: 10.00 am to 11.00 am
- Recess: 11.00 am to 11.20 am
- Lesson 3: 11.20 am to 12.20 pm
- Eating Lunch: 12.20 pm to 12.30 pm
- Lunch: 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm
- Lesson 4: 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm
- Lesson 5: 2.30 pm to 3.30 pm

3-6 Students

- Lesson 1: 9.00 am to 10.00 am
- Lesson 2: 10.00 am to 11.00 am
- Lesson 3: 11.00 am lesson commences
- Recess: 11.30 am to 11.50 am
- Lesson 3: 11.50 am lesson continues to 12.20 pm
- Lesson 4: 12.20 pm to 1.20 pm
- Eating Lunch: 1.20 pm to 1.30 pm
- Lunch: 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm
- Lesson 5: 2.30 pm to 3.30 pm

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:

- Encourage staff to spread out by including both the staffroom and the adjacent library as spaces for staff to congregate and meet, encouraging physical distancing at all times.
 - The Library will only be available for staff use. No students are to access the library during this time.

- Because the library will not be open for students to access, arrangements will be made for books for reading and borrowing to be made available directly to students in classrooms.

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](#).
- Encourage all staff and students to practise good hand hygiene practices whenever using shared equipment.

Sport and recreation

DET advises that outdoor facilities are recommended for physical education and recreational play. Indoor sport is not allowed. Non-contact sports should be encouraged. Hand hygiene must be practised before and after use of any sporting equipment.

At our school:

- Physical Education and sport lessons will occur outside. If PE lessons cannot take place outside, health lessons will be run in classrooms.
- Students will participate in non-contact sports.
- Students will be encouraged to practice good hand hygiene practices before and after PE and sport lessons.

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 Balwyn Primary School First Aid Policy will be followed when providing first aid. For example, we will use gloves when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances. Face masks will also be worn by staff.
- Hand hygiene will be practised before and after performing routine care or first aid.
- Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), 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.

Management of an unwell student or staff member

DET advises that:

It is important that any staff member or student who becomes unwell while at school returns home.

This means that at our school:

- Staff and students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough or sore throat, will be isolated in an appropriate space (eg Health Centre or School Foyer) 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.
- Where staff or students are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), we will ensure use of face masks, hand hygiene and physical distancing. See DET guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education.
- 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 immediately advise our School Nurse and 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 and face masks will be worn for the purpose of taking a temperature.
- Where staff or students are experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) they will be encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps.
- Where staff or students have been tested, they must isolate until they receive their test result.
- A medical certificate is not required to return to school after a period of illness, however staff and 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).

Managing a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

The Department has comprehensive procedures in place with DHHS to manage suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in schools.

- We will contact the Department by calling 1800 126 126 to report an IRIS incident alert if a student or staff member tests positive to coronavirus (COVID-19).
- The Department will notify WorkSafe on behalf of the affected school.
- WorkSafe may be in contact with the affected school to ensure the school is following the health and safety guidance outlined in this document and has implemented their COVID-19 Safety Management Plan.
- 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>
 - <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/self-quarantine-coronavirus-covid-19>

- DET Infectious Diseases Policy:
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/infectiousdiseases.aspx>
- DET Health Care Needs Policy
 - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/healthcareneeds.aspx>
- 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

These guidelines were last updated on 25 October and will be reviewed in line with the changing context of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria.