



Tuesday, 25 January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: COVID-19 update

During the past two years, I have regularly reminded parents/carers about specific measures that our school, along with all schools throughout our state, have put in place, designed to protect the health and wellbeing of every member of our school community. I also stated that the situation was often described by relevant authorities as being 'fluid', meaning that these measures could require modification at short notice. This letter outlines the current COVID-19 guidelines our school will be operating under until further notice.

Planned school activities and events

I am hopeful that our school will be able to run many activities this year that we consider to be an integral part of the learning program for our students. Official advice has been provided to independent schools, such as NCS, when considering whether an event should run. This 'advice' requires school staff and leadership to ensure that any planned activity complies with the Public Health Order, has considered any relevant Health authority advice and has been subjected to an individual COVID-safe plan for that specific activity. Parents and carers will be provided with relevant details regarding the COVID-safe plan for any proposed activities and you will be required to provide your informed consent for your children to participate.

Current Health advice strongly recommends minimising activities and gatherings that are not essential to student learning, particularly during the initial weeks of Term 1. Having taken this advice into consideration, and after a meeting of the NCS WHS (Work, Health and Safety) Committee, I can inform our school community that the **School Swimming Carnival will occur as planned on Friday, 4 February but the Twilight Family Picnic, planned for Friday, 11 February, and the NCS 'Perspective' Coffee and Dessert Information Evening for new families, scheduled to occur on 22 February, will now be postponed to later dates.** It will be our intention to carefully examine all planned future activities to consider their suitability to be held and, as decisions are made, we will promptly inform all school families.

RAHT Tests

As part of the NSW Government's focus on prioritising face-to-face learning in schools, the NSW Government will be providing rapid antigen home test (RAHT) kits to all schools in NSW to be used for surveillance testing by staff and students for the first 4 weeks of Term 1, 2022.

How will the RAHT tests be distributed?

We will be distributing the first two weeks' worth of tests this Friday 28 January via a drive through pick-up arrangement. Initially, each child will be given four tests. Parents and Carers will need to [book their pick-up time using this form](#). There are pick-up times available between 8.45am-2.15pm and 3.30pm-5.30pm. **Please complete [this form](#) as soon as possible.**

We will advise what the process will be for future distribution of RAHT tests in the first couple of weeks of Term.

When should we use the tests?

It is recommended that you test your child every Monday and Wednesday before school for 4 weeks (commencing Monday 31 January).

What if my child tests positive to COVID-19?

If your child receives a positive RAHT test, you need to:

- record the positive RAHT result through the Service NSW website or Service NSW app
- notify the school of the positive RAT or PCR test result by emailing office@ncs.nsw.edu.au or calling 02 4422 1199
- follow NSW Health advice to isolate for 7 days

Negative results do not need to be reported to Service NSW or to the school.

How do I complete a RAHT test?

The RAHT kits that will be provided are a quick and easy screening tool to help detect COVID-19 in people who do not have symptoms. They involve a simple nose swab that is placed in a chemical solution.

Parents and carers will administer the RAHT test at home. Provided within the RAHT kits are instructions on how to use the tests, check the results and how to dispose of the tests safely.

Parents, carers and staff can also download the user guides of the relevant test that they received through the Therapeutic Goods Administration website. The user guides will also contain a supplier contact number for additional support.

If you need an interpreter to assist with the enquiry, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

Continuing COVID-19 Measures

Please carefully read through the following information relating to important protocols that are in place in accordance with advice received from both Health and Government authorities:

School attendance

Students should be at school unless:

- They have a medical certificate
- They are currently unwell
- They have tested positive for COVID
- They are a close family contact and have been advised by NSW Health to self-isolate

NSW Health have advised that parents are NOT to send children to school if they are unwell, even if they have the mildest flu-like symptoms. Parents will be called to come and collect students if any of these symptoms present throughout the school day, even if they have returned a negative RAHT.

Students and staff with flu-like symptoms cannot return to school. Students and staff returning from COVID will need to follow NSW Health guidelines before being permitted to return to school.



Masks

Health advice continues to be that masks provide an important first line of defence in minimising potential COVID transmission. The advice in relation to the wearing of masks has not changed since the end of last term.

- Masks are required for all staff and Secondary students in indoor settings
- Masks are highly recommended for students in Years 3-6
- Students with a medical exemption are not required to wear masks
- All visitors, including parents and carers, are also required to wear masks when indoors
- Parents/carers are requested to provide students with a supply of appropriate masks

Other important hygiene practices

- Maintaining excellent personal hygiene protocols is vital, including thorough washing of hands before eating, after going to the toilet or as instructed by staff
- Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school and to fill these from the bubbler taps
- Parents and carers are reminded not to send children to school if they are unwell, even if they have the mildest of flu-like symptoms
- Staff will take measures to maximise flow-through ventilation in all rooms

Access to the school by parents and carers

Where possible, you are still requested to promptly drop off and pick up your children before departing the school grounds, preferably using the 'AM Drop-Off and PM Pick-Up Zone.'

Canteen

NCS Canteen will be open for online lunch orders from Monday 31 January. Please be sure to place your order online before 8.30am using your [My School Connect](#) account.

If you have not used myschoolconnect before, please [register](#) an account and then login to order.

The Canteen will be open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays during school term. Please confirm your order has been placed successfully by checking your account has been debited. Ordering the day or evening before is recommended as My School Connect is sometimes overloaded with lots of orders being placed close to the 8.30am cut-off time.

We fully understand that there continue to be numerous rules and regulations associated with the current COVID situation. Once again, I would take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for your ongoing patience and support. Without doubt, this is a further reflection of the healthy partnership that exists between home and school.

Kind Regards,



Principal

