

Tuesday 25 January 2022

Dear Families

SA Health has recently provided guidance on how to manage cases of COVID-19 in Catholic Education South Australia schools, preschools and early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres from 31 January 2022.

The new arrangements recognise the importance of providing quality education and care for our students while minimising the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Schools, preschools and ECECs will remain open if there is a case of COVID-19 under the new arrangements.

Parents and caregivers are a key part of the success of the plan.

It is essential that you keep your child/children home if:

- they are unwell in any way at all
- they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms
- any other member of the household has COVID-19
- they are a close contact for a person who has COVID-19 and are required to quarantine

Please notify us ASAP if your child/ren tests positive for COVID-19

We have several safety measures in place which include:

- Air purifiers installed in every classroom
- Staff will be wearing face masks
- No parents or visitor on site unless it is an emergency
- No common areas in the school will be used ie: staffroom and hall
- Additional cleaning and sanitising of work areas

The recommendation is for students to wear a face mask indoors (if this is possible). In mainstream schools all students in Years 7-12 are required to wear a face mask and it is strongly recommended for Years 3-6. I recognize that for many of our students this is not feasible, we encourage the wearing of face masks in the Middle and Senior Classes if possible.

Schools COVID Plan

If a student or teacher in your child's class tests positive for COVID-19, they will be deemed a classroom contact and the following will occur:

- We will notify all parents in that class/room of the positive case
- All students without symptoms can continue attending school. No rapid antigen testing will be required.
- If your child develops any symptoms (even mild) please keep them home from school and get a COVID-19 test.

Any student who has worked 1:1 with an ESO who has been identified as COVID positive (for more than 15 mins, indoors, in close proximity and where face masks are not able to be worn) will be asked to complete 7 days of 'test to stay' rapid antigen testing each morning before attending school. We will provide you with the testing kits at no charge. Students that test positive must not attend school.

Alternatively, if you don't want your child to complete the 7-day testing or if this is not feasible for your child, they can quarantine for 7 days. During this time, where possible, we will provide some ideas and activities that could support your child whilst at home.

The Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) has recommended that classroom contacts should avoid the following between days 1 to 7 of exposure:

- Attendance at OSHC which you might be accessing at another site
- Attending extra-curricular-based activities for 7 days such as excursions, (noting most of these activities have been temporarily suspended until Week 5).

Please see attached the infographic which outlines the specific Testing, Isolating and Quarantine requirements for schools.

I note that in our context our students and staff work in close proximity to each other, similar to that described under the heading, Student support in 1:1 settings.

Our staff will also undergo 7 days of 'test to stay' rapid antigen testing in the event that they are in a classroom with a student or colleague who tests positive.

These new settings will be in place until the end of Week 4 of Term 1. However, with the rapidly changing nature of the pandemic, this may be reviewed or changed if and when needed. As always, we must remain flexible and responsive.

I understand you may have a lot of questions about this information. I'll continue to provide you with information as soon as we have it.

Thank you for your understanding and support in implementing these temporary measures as we continue to adjust to this rapidly changing environment.

If you have any immediate queries in relation to this information please email or phone me on 0402 155 557.

We look forward to school returning and I thank you in advance for adhering to the very comprehensive requirements that are in place to keep our school community safe during these unprecedented times.

Kind Regards

Cathy Sires

Principal