

# COVID Smart Return to School Term 1 2022

## FACTSHEET

- 🌀 *Being together in a classroom is the most effective way for students to learn and grow.*
- 🌀 *Since COVID-19 remains a relatively mild illness for most children, the NSW Government is committed to return to school safely in 2022 through the following measures:*

### Watch for symptoms

- If your child is unwell – even with [mild symptoms](#) – keep them home and get them tested.
- If children have any symptoms, they should take a PCR (nose and throat swab) test or rapid antigen test (RAT).
- If symptoms continue your child should stay home and take another RAT or PCR test in 24 hours.
- If that test is also negative, your child may return to school if another diagnosis is confirmed such as hay fever.
  
- Refer to the COVID19 HOPE Toolkit on [when to get tested for COVID-19](#)

### Vaccinations

- All staff on school sites must be fully vaccinated.
- The NSW Government encourage all to get vaccinated. Children aged 5 to 11 can get vaccinated.
- Once eligible, all adults are encouraged to get [booster shots](#), Book a vaccination or booster using the Australian Government's [Vaccine Clinic Finderlaunch](#).

### Testing

- 🌀 **Before the start of term 1** - All staff and students are asked to take a RAT test and get a negative result before attending school.  
RAT tests will be provided to all staff and students through their schools. ASK!
- 🌀 **At the commencement of term 1** - For the first 4 weeks, students and staff should take a RAT test twice a week before attending school. Test kits supplied by schools.  
Students who are household close contacts must isolate at home for 7 days.

### COVID-19 positive cases

- 🌀 If your child has no symptoms and there is a positive case in their class or year they can continue to attend school in line with NSW Health advice.
- 🌀 Staff and students who get a positive RAT test must [register it through Service NSW](#) ASAP.
- 🌀 Staff and students who receive a positive RAT test must tell their school ASAP & follow NSW Health advice.
- 🌀 Schools will regularly communicate to parents about the presence and impact of COVID-19.
- 🌀 Parents should expect to be provided with any impacted year groups or cohorts.
- 🌀 Refer to the COVID-19 HOPE Toolkit for more on [self-isolation](#) , [manage COVID-19 and support](#).

### Ventilation

- 🌀 Fresh air is the most effective form of ventilation to minimise the risk of transmission.
- 🌀 All learning spaces in public schools have been checked to ensure appropriate levels of ventilation and air purifiers have been provided where needed.
- 🌀 Using outdoor spaces will continue to be encouraged.

### Masks

All school staff and students required to wear masks indoors. Surgical masks are available at schools.

## Activities

COVID-19 will be considered in all risk assessments. Parents will be made aware of the risk of exposure and will need to give their permission for participation in extra-curricular, out of school hours or off-site activities.

## Student cohorting

Schools will continue to use cohort arrangements and consider staggered drop-off and pick ups, break times, playground and canteen access.

## Visitors

- Visitors on school sites should be kept to a minimum to support school activities or student needs.
- Visitors will be required to wear a mask indoors and will be encouraged to wear a mask outdoors if they cannot maintain [physical distancing](#).
- Schools are advised to allow a maximum of 2 parents or carers per student on to school grounds for kindergarten orientation or year 7 transition.

## Keeping schools open

- Parents are asked to respect the rules at their child's school to help keep the community safe.
- Schools can't guarantee staff for any cohort, students may not have their regular teachers.

## Learning from home

The NSW Government will continue to monitor and if needed, learning from home options will be supported.

## School or childcare centre closure

- Schools may need to close to deal with COVID-19 outbreaks, deep cleaning or other emergencies. The NSW School Updates app sends all notifications about school closures.
- Contact childcare centres, preschools, kindergartens and other early childhood care settings directly for the updates.

## Download the Schools Update app



## Schools Update

The Schools Update app will notify you if your child's public school is to be closed the following day due to COVID-19 outbreaks, adverse weather, bushfire, emergencies, or other incidents.

You can register multiple schools on the app.

- [iOSlauncheast](#)
- [Androidlauncheast](#)

## Early childhood education and childcare

[NSW Department of Education COVID-19 guidelines](#) are available for early childhood education and care services like playgroups, kindergartens and childcare.

Parents can help their children feel safer at school and childcare by:

- correctly explaining what COVID-19 is and how it's transmitted
- explaining how children can wash their hands, use masks and physical distance
- showing them how to cough or sneeze into their elbow.

Read the [Australian Government advice](#) about how COVID-19 affects early childhood education and care services.