



Moe (South Street) Primary School

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'Be SAFE Be RESPECTFUL Be a LEARNER'



25th January 2022

Victorian Department of Education Back to School Plan

Dear South St community,

As we prepare to welcome students back to our school next week, the Victorian Government has announced some new measures for the beginning of the 2022 school year across all Victorian schools.

Victoria's Back-to-School Plan

What's new:

- Free rapid antigen testing**
 - more than 14 million rapid antigen tests to be delivered to schools and early childhood education and care settings
 - twice-weekly voluntary testing at home
 - primary school students and staff
 - secondary school students and staff
 - five-times-weekly voluntary testing at home
 - specialist school students and staff
- Enhanced support to keep schools open and safe**
 - extra staff ready to step in where essential school staff are unable to work
 - updated procedures and notifications to families when there are COVID-19 cases
 - extra planning and support for school leadership
- Keeping schools open and as safe as possible**
 - remote learning only considered as a localised, short-term, last-resort option

Continued COVIDSafe measures: the 3Vs

- Vaccination**
 - staff required to be vaccinated or medically exempt
 - more than 90% of children age 12 and over are now vaccinated
 - roll-out of vaccinations for children aged 5 to 11 through state vaccination hubs, pop-up school vaccination sites and in-reach grants
- Ventilation**
 - delivery of 51,000 air purifiers to schools before day one of Term 1
- Vital COVIDSafe steps**
 - physical distancing
 - face masks
 - regular hand hygiene
 - testing

Updated: 22 January 2022

FREE RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS:

- Free rapid antigen tests will be available for the first 4 weeks of Term 1 2022.
- Twice-a-week testing will be strongly recommended for both students and staff.
- The department will supply the tests to our school – you do not need to buy your own.
- The department will distribute all kits to schools as early as possible. We will let you know once the test kits are available for collection.
- Packs will contain 5 tests to cover the first two weeks of term. Then another pack of five can be collected in week 3.
- Packs will ONLY be handed out to parents/carers listed on your child/ren's record. If a pack is not collected by the parent or carer, it will be sent home with your child/ren.
- Students and staff will do the tests at home; they only need to report their result if it is COVID-positive. They must report a COVID-positive result to:

1: the school by phone or the RA Test Portal (<https://covidtest.educationapps.vic.gov.au/>); this is so the school can support them, record that they will be absent while in 7-day isolation, and let the rest of the school community know there has been a positive case onsite and that they should monitor for symptoms

2: the Department of Health via the COVID-19 Positive Rapid Antigen Test Self-Reporting Form (<https://dhvicgovau.powerappsportals.com/rapid-antigen-test/>) or call centre on 1800 675 398.

At South Street Primary School we grow people who:
Are creative, curious and independent learners. Are resilient and problem solve when faced with challenges.
Respect and care about themselves, each other and the world in which we live.

VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Parents and carers must have had two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine or have a valid medical exception (with limited exceptions) to enter school buildings.
- All staff working in schools need to be fully vaccinated or have a verified medical exception.
- COVID-19 vaccinations for students are not required for them to attend school but vaccination for students is highly encouraged. If your child has not yet had their first dose, please try to organise this before term begins. For more information on how to book a vaccination, including important information about vaccination for children aged 5 to 11, visit Vaccination information for children and teenagers (<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccination...>).
- Currently, there is a pop up vaccination clinic located at Albert St Primary School.

VENTILATION:

- We will also make sure that classrooms are well ventilated by opening windows and doors, to minimise the risk of infection. We have received air purifiers, which will be used around the school as an added safety measure.

STAFFING OUR SCHOOL:

- I know many of you will have questions about what happens if your child's teacher gets COVID-19. We will be able to bring in extra teachers and other staff if we need them, and we will be doing everything that we can to make sure our school stays safe and open.
- We will minimise mixing of grades where possible and hold assemblies and meetings virtually.

VITAL COVIDSAFE STEPS:

- Hand hygiene, mask wearing, and social distancing will continue with COVID stations set up in all classes and spaces.

FACE MASKS:

- Students in Grade 3 and above must wear a face mask indoors at school, including specialist schools), and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) programs, unless a lawful exception applies. Students must wear face masks even if vaccinated. Students are not required to wear masks outside.
- There are lawful reasons for not wearing a face mask, including for staff and students who are unable to wear a face mask due to the nature of their disability, medical or a mental health condition. Parent/carers of a student/s who meet the criteria for an exception should provide their approval in writing for their child/ren to not wear a mask to the school.
- Please get your student to hand their letter 2022 exemption letter to their teacher to pass on to the office. We will need a new one for this start of the year.
- There is no requirement for a letter for a medical exception for not wearing a face mask from a medical practitioner.
- Visitors to schools aged 8 and above must wear a face mask in all indoor spaces unless a lawful exception applies.

CLOSE CONTACTS:

- Where a student is a household contact of a positive case (that is, they have spent more than four hours with someone who has COVID-19 inside a house, accommodation, or care facility) they must inform the school and isolate for seven days and not attend school during that period.

- Where student or staff member has been in contact with a case of COVID-19, including at school or at work.

1: If asymptomatic, students and staff should continue to attend school and monitor for symptoms. Completing a RAT test is recommended.

2: If symptomatic, all students/staff must stay/return home, take a rapid antigen test, or get a PCR test if a rapid antigen testing kit unavailable. On receipt of a negative test result, and if well enough, the student/staff member can return to school. If staff/students are too unwell to attend school, usual leave/absence policies apply. Follow the [Checklist for COVID contacts](#).

The school is not required to seek rapid antigen test results from the students or staff unless a positive test is returned.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOLS:

- Parents / Carers to keep child home if they are symptomatic. Child to only return when symptoms have eased
- Parents / Carer must collect their child should they have symptoms and are at school. Their child/ren will be sent to the collected COVID first aide room.
- A 'suspected' or 'symptomatic' case means a person who displays any [COVID-19 symptoms](#).

As soon as practicable after becoming aware of a suspected case in a staff member or student – and if that person has attended onsite while displaying symptoms, or 48 hours before they developed Symptoms – the principal must take the following actions:

1: Let the person know they need to follow guidelines in the [Testing Requirements for Contacts and Exposed Persons](#). If applicable, the effected person/s should follow the COVID-19 RAT procedure, which recommends a symptomatic person in a workplace takes a COVID-19 test.

ATTENDANCE:

All students are expected to attend onsite unless they are formally registered as being home-schooled. Parent preference is not an approved reason for students to be absent due to COVID-19.

There's no doubt that this term is going to be challenging for all of us, but we are also very excited to kick off the school year and welcome back all our students.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Allison Luxford

Acting Principal