

Bendigo South East College

COVID-19 Policy for Term 3

(during Stage 3 restrictions)

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how our school will be managing risk relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) during key interactions between students, parents and staff during Term 3, 2020.

Bendigo South East College is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment for our students and staff. We ask for the whole school community to follow this policy 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.

Background

Bendigo South East College is following the advice from the Department of Education and Training which can be found on the Department's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) website.

Scope

This policy applies to everyone in the Bendigo South East College 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. Information specific to staff only and not relevant to students and their families is not included in this policy.

Details

Learning from home requirement and on-site attendance exceptions

We are currently subject to Stage 3 COVID-19 restrictions which will likely apply until the end of Term 3. This means that all students must learn from home.

On-site supervision will be available for students in the following categories:

- Children whose parents cannot work from home and where no other supervision arrangements can be made (not only those defined as permitted workers)
- vulnerable children including:
 - children in out-of-home care
 - children deemed by Child Protection and/or Family Services to be at risk of harm
 - children identified by the school as vulnerable (including via referral from a family violence agency, homelessness or youth justice service or mental health or other health service).
- any child with a disability.

All families requiring on-site attendance must complete the on-site attendance form indicating the days/part-days required, to enable us to plan for adequate resourcing. This form is available on our [website](#) or contact the General Office to arrange for this form to be emailed to you.

If your child meets any of the above categories but has complex medical needs (including students with compromised immune systems) we encourage parents to seek advice from their treating medical

practitioner to support decision-making about whether on-site education is suitable at this time. Please also contact BSE if you need any support or further information to support decision-making.

Advice for VCE and VCAL students in relation to on-site attendance for mandatory assessments, including SACS, will be provided to these students and families as the information becomes available to our school.

Health and safety at school

Our school follows the Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer's advice and requirements in relation to health and safety. This means:

Unwell students (including students who have been tested)

- Unwell students **must** stay home.
- Where students have been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) they are required to isolate at home and must not attend school even if they meet the exception categories outlined above.

Managing unwell students at school

- Students engaging in on-site learning experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19), such as fever, cough or sore throat, will be isolated in an appropriate space 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, we will ensure hand hygiene, physical distancing and use of a face covering. See DET [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).
- In the context of schools supporting students with complex health needs, if the care of an unwell child or young person is to be prolonged (for example, because it will take some hours for a parent to collect a child) and maintaining distance is not practical when providing direct care, gloves, gown and eye protection will be considered if available.
- 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 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 will be worn for the purpose of taking a temperature.
- Parent/carers of students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) will be encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps. Students should not return until symptoms resolve.
- If a student spreads droplets (for example by sneezing, coughing or vomiting), surfaces will be immediately cleaned.

Managing a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

The Department has comprehensive procedures in place with the Department of Health and Human Services to manage suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in schools. In accordance with these procedures:

- We will contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160 to seek advice if a student or staff member:
 - is a confirmed case

- has been in close contact with a confirmed case
- We will inform the Department's Incident Support and Operations Centre who will support the school to make an [IRIS incident alert](#).

DHHS defines 'close contact' as someone who has either:

- had at least 15 minutes of face-to-face contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shared a closed space for more than two hours with someone who is a confirmed case.

Face coverings

- All school staff on site will wear face coverings unless exempt due to a medical condition or disability but may remove their face covering when teaching students.
- All students on-site must wear a face covering unless they are exempt due to a medical condition.
- Under the Stage 3 restrictions parents are also required to wear face coverings whenever they leave the house, including for a school drop off and pick up. If travelling in a car alone, or only with members of their household, they do not need to wear a mask.

Physical distancing

- Wherever possible we will encourage and support physical distancing of students however the Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer has acknowledged that physical distancing in schools is practicably difficult to achieve and has not mandated this practice.
- Parents are asked to observe physical distancing requirements (1.5 metres) whenever dropping off or collecting students from school.

Hand, food and drink hygiene

- Hand sanitiser will be available at entry points to classrooms and students will be educated on the importance of this health and safety measure
- All people on school grounds must undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet.
- Where shared equipment is necessary, students will be required to exercise strict hand hygiene before and after use.
- Students must not drink from the school water fountains and must bring their own water bottle for use and refilling at school.
- Students must not share their food.

Temperature checks

- All students engaging in on-site learning will have their temperature taken in the morning. Staff responsible for screening student temperatures will wear a face mask throughout the screening process and will ensure the process allows appropriate physical distancing between adults.
- Students with a temperature equal to or greater than 37.5 ° on first reading will be asked to wait in a separate room and will have their temperature re-checked after 15 minutes. Students may be encouraged to remove any outer layer clothing (such as a jacket or jumper) if inside in case this is affecting the reading.
- Students with a temperature equal to or greater than 37.5 ° on the second reading will be isolated until parents/carers can collect the child as soon as possible. In these circumstances, families will be encouraged to seek the advice of their health care professional as soon as possible.

Mobile phones

- The Department and school's mobile phone policies continue to apply and we ask that students clean their phones regularly.

On-site learning and supervision

In accordance with DET advice and requirements:

- The learning program delivered on-site will be the same as the learning program delivered to students undertaking remote learning at home.
- Students on-site will be supervised by school staff on-site but will follow the teaching and learning program provided by their classroom teacher.
- Supervision staff may be teaching staff or education support staff (with a working with children check). Where education support staff are supervising students they will have access to support from teaching staff.

Learning from home and supervision

The parent or carer is responsible for students' general safety when learning remotely from home.

Remote learning program

We will continue to work with the parents/carers of students with a disability, students in out-of-home care and Koorie students via the school's usual methods such as Student Support Groups and maintaining any existing Individual Education Plans.

We acknowledge that remote learning from home can be a challenging experience for both parents and students and we will continue to monitor our delivery of this program to make it as engaging and effective as possible.

Attendance

Normal attendance notification requirements apply for all students, including students undertaking remote learning from home. Please refer to our school Attendance Policy for further information.

Our school records student attendance in accordance with the Department's [Attendance Policy](#).

Camps, excursions, sport and recreation

Under the Stage 3 restrictions:

- Camps and excursions cannot take place.
- Swimming and aquatic facilities will not be used
- Playgrounds are not available for community use.
- Wherever possible students on-site will participate in physical education or recreational play outdoors and will be discouraged from engaging in contact sport.

Visitors and school tours

Under Department and Victorian Chief Health Officer advice and requirements visitors to school grounds must be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, cleaning and maintenance workers). This means:

- Parent volunteers must not attend school
- Parent-teacher information sessions and interviews will be conducted remotely online
- On-site school tours for prospective students and their families will not be conducted

Interschool activities

All interschool activities that involve on-site attendance by students from other schools will either take place virtually or will be cancelled.

Communication between parents/carers and our school

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the General Office on 5443 4522 to discuss any concerns or areas of need in regards to their child's learning, health, wellbeing or access to teaching and learning resources.

Cleaning and facilities management

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](#).
- Carefully consider the necessity of using shared items or equipment e.g.: shared computers, class sets of teaching and learning materials, musical instruments etc at this time.
- We will be practising hand hygiene immediately before and after use of shared equipment

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>
- [DET Infectious Diseases Policy:](#)
 - <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/infectious-diseases/policy>
- [DET Health Care Needs Policy:](#)
 - <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/health-care-needs/policy>
- [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

This policy was last updated on 17 August 2020 and will be reviewed on a regular basis as the situation changes.