



# Macarthur Anglican School

## COVID -19 Information Sheet

### Summer Term 2021

#### General Principles

In a letter to schools, the Chief Health Officer provided general advice which in the Macarthur context will mean that Macarthur will:

- continue to exclude students and staff with even mild symptoms of COVID-19 and encourage them to seek testing immediately. Parents of children who have undergone a COVID-19 test will be expected to provide evidence of a negative result prior to returning to school. In circumstances where children have other medical reasons for recurrent symptoms, a letter from the GP is sufficient to negate the requirement for a negative test;
- ensure visitors, staff, parents and students regularly review the [latest COVID-19 locations in NSW](#) (and interstate);
- have COVID-19 Safety Plans and record keeping procedures in place for school events;
- promote physical distancing where possible and appropriate for staff and adults within the school, at school events and at drop off/pick up;
- monitor the mixing of student cohort groups (class, year group, or stage) to limit close contacts where practicable;
- follow specific public health advice as provided from time to time; and,
- support school-based access for NSW Health services including immunisation and dental programmes.

The following protocols have been developed in line with NSW Health and the Department of Education advice.

#### First Day of School

Parents and carers will be permitted to enter the designated area on campus for the purpose of dropping off children in Transition, Kindergarten and Year 7, as well as any new student to the School, at the start of the school year.

Parents must wear a face mask and sign in using the QR code associated with the NSW Services app and are NOT permitted into any classrooms.

#### Parents and Other Visitors to the Campus

Consistent with the Public Health Order, non-essential adults are not permitted on the campus or at school events other than to drop-off or pick-up children using the designated areas.

Parents are permitted to attend an appointment for a meeting with school staff with physical distancing rules applying. Where physical distancing of 1.5m is not possible or in confined spaces, staff and parents are to wear a face mask.

All parents and visitors must sign in using the QR code associated with the NSW Services app.

Gatherings of parents are limited to 30 people indoors and 30 people outdoors and must occur outside of school hours. Gatherings should be limited to 1 hour where possible and a COVID-19 Safety Plan must be in place including the wearing of face masks and sign in using the QR code.

### **Face Masks**

Staff and students will not be required to wear masks while at Macarthur, however, the wearing of masks while at school is a matter of personal choice.

Students over the age of 12 and staff must comply with the Public Health (COVID-19 Mandatory Face Coverings) Order 2021 when travelling to and from school and during school excursions by public transport, or by chartered/private transport services. The School operated bus services are exempt from this requirement.

### **Overnight Activities and Camps**

Field trips, excursions and camps, including overnight activities, are permitted to proceed.

### **Sport and Carnivals**

Swimming and other sporting carnivals and weekly sport are permitted to proceed.

### **Music and Performance**

Singing, musical groups, drama and dance are permitted to proceed in certain circumstances.

Group singing and chanting remains a high-risk activity for COVID-19 transmission and so the existing restrictions will continue to be applied and will be monitored.

For singing groups involving students in Year 7 to Year 12, no more than 5 performers should sing indoors. There is no recommended cap on performers singing outdoors. All performing singers should face forwards and not towards each other, have physical distancing of 1.5m between each other and any other performers, and be 5m from all other people including the audience and conductor.

In indoor areas, audience members should not participate in singing or chanting. In outdoor areas, audience members older than 12 years should wear masks if singing or chanting.

For students in Transition to Year 6, in-class educational activities such as group repetition, chanting, recitation, or singing activities are permitted with no cap provided these activities take place outdoors or in large, well-ventilated classroom settings with windows and doors open.

### **COVID Testing**

If a student or adult has undergone COVID testing they should exclude themselves from school until a negative test result is reported or longer if instructed by NSW Health. Please ensure that the relevant Head of School is informed if your child is going for a COVID-19 test.

### **Safety and Hygiene**

*Physical distancing is not required for students while at school*

Apart from the exceptions outlined above, physical distancing of students in schools is not required by the AHPPC guidelines. Research has shown limited transmission risk associated in the school context regardless of the age of students.

Notwithstanding this advice, some activities will be modified, including appropriate physical distancing measures, to accommodate specific attributes inherent to the activity such as choirs and bands.

Assemblies and Chapel services will take place without parent involvement and with some modification as appropriate.

#### *Hygiene measures*

Macarthur will remain vigilant in applying infection control and personal hygiene practices while at the School. Macarthur encourages regular washing of hands, will exclude any staff or students who are unwell, will avoid the sharing of food and personal items and will have appropriate cleaning protocols for any shared items such as musical instruments, learning and sporting equipment between uses.

Students should continue to bring water bottles from home to fill at water bubblers rather than drink directly from the bubbler.

The cleaning schedule established in 2020 will remain until further notice.

The School's cleaning is delivered in line with the AHPPC guidelines and advice from NSW Health. Target areas include high-touch areas and other hard surfaces, door handles, lockers, light switches and handrails. Enhanced cleaning is delivered as part of the daily cleaning of the Campus.

The Campus continues to receive an additional clean during the day in line with AHPPC guidance. This includes cleaning frequently touched areas in bathrooms after recess and lunch, as well as replenishing supplies such as soap and hand towels that are provided by the School. High touch surfaces such as balustrades and handrails in the playground are also disinfected.

As per normal operational restrictions, a cleaner cannot enter a classroom while students are in the classroom. During the day, teachers should encourage students to use disinfectant products to wipe down their own learning spaces after each lesson or learning period. When a student is sent home, the classroom that student has vacated is cleaned. The students vacate the room while an in-depth cleaning takes place.

These cleaning protocols will remain in place until such time as changes in the health advice occur.

#### **Attendance and Roll Marking**

All students should be either:

- at school;
- at home because they are currently unwell having notified the School;
- at home awaiting COVID-19 Test result; and/or,
- at home because they have a medical certificate which states that they are unable to return to school due to an ongoing medical condition (or in limited cases where a family member has an ongoing medical condition).

If parents believe that their child has a condition which means it is not safe for them to attend school, they will need to provide a medical certificate. This is likely to be children that are at higher risk of severe illness if they contracted COVID-19.

Macarthur encourages families in these circumstances to speak with their doctor or health care provider to develop an action plan to support decision making about their activities, including attendance at school. Where there are only a few cases in the local community, the actual risk of getting COVID-19 is low. Further information is available from the AHPPC resource Living Well in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students in a higher risk group can return to the School with the written support of their health care provider.

Please note, it is the current advice that students who are residing with a family member who is identified as being at higher risk should attend school unless a medical practitioner advises otherwise. Parents or care givers should provide written confirmation from the treating health professional that the student is unable to attend school and for what period of time.

If students are away from school because they are unwell, there is no expectation that they complete school work. It is important that unwell students rest.

If students cannot attend school due to a long term illness or underlying health condition, as is current practice, Macarthur will continue to provide work for the period they are prevented from being at school.

If a student falls ill while at school, the School's current protocols apply including contacting the student's parent or carer or emergency contact, to collect the student.

### **Recording Absences, Medical Certificates and Case Management**

If a student is absent for more than three days without a medical certificate, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

In relation to medical certificates, if there is an ongoing pattern of poor attendance and major concerns, under [chapter 16a](#) of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1999, the Headmaster may contact the GP to discuss the matter.

Our primary concern is the wellbeing and safety of the students in our care.