



Dear Parent and Carers

As promised, today we are providing you with detailed information about the changes that will be taking place in our school to ensure a COVID-safe return of students to our school campus.

As always, if you have any questions about the operation of our school – including issues like mask wearing, ventilation and cleaning - the Education Directorate also has some very useful [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on their website which may answer questions you have.

Indoor air quality plans will be available on our school's website by 22 October.

Once again, thank you for your patience during this time. I look forward to seeing our students returning to school over the coming weeks.

First, a reminder about the dates for our phased return.

Commencing 25 October (Week 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early childhood centres (ECEC)• Preschool and kindergarten• Years 1 and 2• Year 6• Years 9 and 10• Out of school hours care (OSHC)
Commencing 1 November (Week 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Years 3, 4 and 5• Years 7 and 8
<i>From weeks 1 to 4 of term, onsite supervision and care continues to be available for vulnerable children and young people whose parents are essential workers.</i>	

Drawing on national and local health advice we have developed a return to school plan which has three key priorities:

- the health and safety of staff and young people,
- the mental and emotional well-being of students and staff, and
- ensuring continuity of learning.

Below is an outline of [ACT Health Guidelines](#) that schools are required to implement to ensure effective COVID-19 measures are in place.

Use of Check in CBRapp	All staff and visitors must check in using the 'Check in CBR' app. Parents and carers cannot enter school grounds except for an essential reason. Visitors must call to make an appointment, or in advance of attendance. All visitors must report to the front office.
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Student illness	Staff and students who are unwell are not able to attend school. Students who present unwell will be required to go home.
Hygiene	Schools will maintain and promote appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene practices. Students will need to wash hands and use hand sanitisers throughout the day. Students will not be allowed to share food or drink.
Masks	<p>Staff, visitors, and students* in years 7-12 must wear a face mask on campus. Students in years 3-6 are encouraged to wear a mask if they are comfortable doing so. Students in Preschool to year 2 are not required to wear a mask. Masks may not be suitable for students with a disability or medical condition and schools will make allowances for those students not to wear masks.</p> <p><i>* Students will be required to wear their personal masks. Masks will be available at school for those who require them. Disposable masks need to be changed every four hours.</i></p>
Physical Distancing	Physical distancing between children and young people is not always possible, particularly in single classrooms and school environments. It is however important for limiting the transmission of COVID 19. To promote physical distancing, we may adjust learning programs, breaktimes, our timetable as well as pick up and drop off arrangements. More specific information about what this means for your child is included below.
Environmental cleaning	Our school cleaning program includes regular cleaning of high touch services, frequently used objects, and play equipment.
Ventilation	All schools have been assessed to increase fresh air circulation and this may involve changes to ventilation, modified HVAC system settings and maximising the use of outdoor learning spaces.
Managing suspected cases	We are prepared to respond to a positive COVID-19 case on campus, should the need arise. ACT Health will provide direction to the school and community, which may result in a full or partial school closure. A student who presents with symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated with suitable supervision, and parents will be required to collect their child. Symptomatic students will be required to wear a mask.
Will schools have routine testing for COVID-19?	Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should get tested immediately. ACT Health is not recommending routine COVID-19 testing of children, young people or staff using rapid antigen testing.
Wellbeing supports	<p>Wellbeing and learning supports, such as face to face appointments with the school psychologist or access to a Learning Support Assistant, will recommence with the return to school.</p> <p>For parents and carers of students with a medical vulnerability: if you wish the school to make reasonable adjustments for the safe return of your child, you must consult a GP and provide medical advice to that effect. Where adjustments cannot be made; the school will support your child to learn from home.</p>

To further support the ACT Health Guidelines our school is making the following adjustments.

<p>Drop off and pick up</p>	<p>Junior School</p> <p>On the junior site, drop off and pick up will be run differently in the interest of maintaining separation of cohorts and the social distancing of parents. The following adjustments will be put in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in kindergarten, year 1 and year 2 can be dropped off and picked up 5 minutes earlier than students in years 3 to 6. • Students in preschool (at both Nichols and Hall sites) will have their own staggered start and finish times based on surname in order to allow parents to socially distance. <p>Drop off and pick up points will also be different.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We request that Kindergarten to year 2 use the gate at the turning circle to enter and exit the school. • Students in years 3 to 6 are to use the gates closest to the IGA carpark to enter and exit the school. <p>These changes will be communicated in more detail to parents via Seesaw. Additionally, we will post plans onto our website.</p> <p>Senior School</p> <p>For students on the senior site, we will open additional gates to allow for greater social distancing when entering and exiting school grounds. We request that students observe social distancing requirements outside school grounds and do not congregate in large groups at bus stops.</p>
<p>Hygiene routines</p>	<p>All learning spaces have hand sanitiser and sterile wipes available for use. Students will be routinely encouraged to use hand sanitiser throughout the day which will supplement hand washing with warm water and soap. Any shared resources will be wiped after use.</p> <p>Bins with lids have been provided for the disposal of surgical style face masks and additional masks will be provided to students when required.</p>
<p>Teaching and learning</p>	<p>Teaching and learning will be very similar to how it was before lock-down for all students. To minimise interaction between cohorts to prevent the potential spread of infection we have arranged for students to be grouped according to year levels. Strategies will be put in place to minimise interaction between those groupings in a number of ways.</p> <p>Junior School</p> <p>On the junior site, our specialist program will be paused to allow us to ensure that teachers only work with a specific cohort. There will be some minor changes to class timetables in the junior school. These changes will be communicated to parents through Seesaw.</p> <p>Senior School</p> <p>Some of the teaching programs have had to be modified in order to adhere to the current Health requirements. Any modifications to course outlines will be communicated through classroom teachers.</p> <p>Whole School</p> <p>All extracurricular activities across the school will also be paused for the interim.</p> <p>All activities that include cross over of students from one site to another have been paused until further notice.</p>

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Break times	<p>Junior School A variation to break times has been made to allow for separation of cohorts. The school will run on two separate break schedules. Kindergarten to year 2 will have the same time allocated for breaks but will be assigned to specific play areas to minimise cross over of cohorts. Years 3 to 6 will have the same time allocated for breaks, while again being separated by assigned play areas.</p> <p>Senior School Cohorts have been timetabled to have breaks start at staggered 5-minute intervals to minimise congestion in corridors and around exit points.</p>
Before and AfterSchool Care	We are currently working with Holy Spirit and OSHClub on the establishment of procedures to maintain separation of cohorts. More information will be provided shortly.
School canteens	Our school canteens will be open for pre-orders and contactless click and collect pick-ups only.

We will continue to review and adjust these measures based on the most up to date advice from ACT Health.

Remember, all adults and children aged 12 years and above are eligible for vaccination. If your child is eligible but not yet vaccinated, we encourage you to book them in by calling the COVID-19 vaccination line on 5124 7700 daily between 7am-7pm. Bookings can also be made with some [GP clinics and pharmacies](#).

We understand that there has been considerable change and uncertainty for our students during the pandemic, and as we transition back to school. I'd remind you that you and your child can book an appointment with our Telehealth Support Service on 02 6205 1559 between 9.00am and 4.30pm weekdays. With the return to school, your child will also be able to organise face to face sessions with the school psychologist.

For more information about the return to schools, I'd recommend visiting [the Education Directorate's website](#).

You can keep up to date with the latest health information, advice, and resources on the [ACT's COVID-19 website](#).

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and understanding as we return to face-to-face schooling.

We look forward to seeing all our students back at school.

Yours sincerely



Daniel Breen
Principal
Gold Creek School

15 October 2021