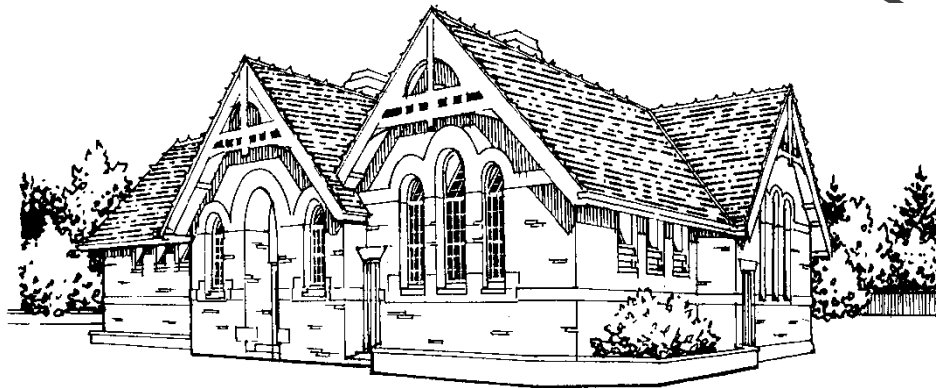


*Essendon Primary School*  
*No. 483*



**Essendon Primary School**  
**~ COVID-19 Return to School Policy~**  
**‘Follow the Gleam’**

**Policy Date:**      **May 2020**

Next Revision:      June 2020

## PURPOSE

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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 the return to school in Term 2 2020.

Essendon Primary School 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

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Essendon Primary School is following the advice from the Department of Education and Training including, [\*Health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the context of COVID-19\*](#) which can be found on the Department's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) website](#).

## SCOPE

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This policy applies to everyone in the Essendon Primary School 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.

## REQUIREMENTS

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### Attendance on-site

The Department of Education and Training (DET) advises that:

*Perhaps the most important action school communities can take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), is to ensure that any unwell staff, children and young people remain at home. Advice of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is that schools should not conduct wide-scale temperature checking of students as there is limited evidence to demonstrate the value of such checks. All schools should operate consistent with the advice of DHHS.*

*While the risk of transmission of the virus is very low among children, staff or students most at risk of severe illness should individually assess appropriateness for onsite attendance at this time with support from their medical practitioner.*

*As the main risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, it is important that visitors to school grounds are limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations.*

This means that at our school:

- All unwell staff and students **must** stay home.
- Parents/carers of students with complex medical needs (including those with compromised immune systems), should seek advice from the student's medical practitioner to support decision-making about whether on-site education is suitable, noting that this advice may change depending on the status of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Victoria. This is in line with the [DET Health Care Needs](#) policy.

- Visitors to school grounds will be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, specialist curriculum programs, maintenance workers).
- Additional personnel, including parent volunteers, are discouraged from attending school at this time. Activities dependent on and involving parents such as classroom support, school banking and second-hand uniform shop are cancelled until further notice.
- We ask that any parents/carers wishing to discuss any matters with a staff member to first use the options of either a phone call, video call or email. If a face-to face meeting is required as a last resort, it must meet the physical distancing requirements of 1.5m between adults.
- All interschool activities that involve onsite attendance by students from other schools will either take place virtually or will be cancelled.
- Whole school assemblies, excursions, camps and other non-essential large gatherings will be postponed until further notice. This is likely to include the Year 5/6 and Foundation performances scheduled for Terms 3 & 4 at the Clocktower, Friday food stalls and the end of year concert.

### School arrival and departure

DET advises that:

*As the main risk of introducing coronavirus (COVID-19) to the school environment is from adults, close proximity between adult members of the school community should be avoided, particularly during school drop-off and pick-up.*

This means that at our school we will:

- Ask staff and parents/carers to observe physical distancing measures by not congregating in areas around and outside the school.
- Ask parents to only enter the school via the main office by appointment and when essential to do so after contacting the school by phone or email as a first option.
- Ask parents and carers not to linger while picking up or dropping off students.
- Encourage non-contact greetings.

To minimise interaction of students and adults within the school and at entry points we will:



time designated for their year level.

- Alphabetized the 6 main perimeter gates from A to F, in an anti-clockwise direction starting from the gate closest to the main building on Raleigh St as the letter 'A'.
- Place markers 1.5metres apart at the school gate/s to encourage spacing between adults
- Stagger drop off and pick up times and areas of entry and exit for designated groups to reduce the number of adults congregating at the school gates
- Students in a homegroup with the same corresponding letter will use that gate as their entry and exit point at the

- Students in the same household will enter and exit at the same gate and time as the oldest child in the family group.  
     **5/6** - 8.30am drop off. 3.15 pm pick up  
     **3/4** - 8.40am drop off, 3.20 pm pick up  
     **1/2** - 8.50am drop off, 3.25 pm pick up  
     **Foundation**- 9am drop off, 3.30 pm pick up
- At pick up, the oldest child in the family group will collect their siblings from their learning area before then meeting their parent/ carer at the appropriate gate.
- Students who are not picked up soon after their designated time will be placed in the After-School Care program which is free to parents until the end of Term 2.

## Hygiene

DET advises that:

*Everyone can protect themselves and prevent the spread of coronavirus by continuing effective hand hygiene.*

At our school:

- Students will be regularly instructed on hand hygiene and reminded to do so each time they enter the learning space (including after play times, specialist classes, toilet breaks and before and after eating).
- We will be practising hand hygiene immediately before and after use of shared equipment and minimize the use of shared equipment and resources where ever possible
- All staff and students will undertake regular hand hygiene, particularly on arrival to school, before and after eating, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the toilet. This will be directed or supervised by staff where required. Where soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitiser will be made available.
- Students **must** bring their own water bottles to school for use (and refilling). It is recommended that students do not drink directly from drinking fountains at this time.
- Staff and students are reminded to clean their mobile phones and iPads regularly. The Essendon Primary School Mobile Phone Policy remains in place so students will not be handling their mobile phones during the school day.
- Sharing of food is not permitted.

## Physical Distancing

DET advises that:

*Maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 metres between students will not always be practical in education settings. It is recommended as a precautionary measure to minimise risk of spread of transmission and aid containment in the rare event of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) on site. In line with community advice, reasonable precautions are still advised to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission in the context of sport and recreation. Physical distancing is most important between adults.*

At our school we will:

- Encourage students at all times to keep their distance from each other without touching, in learning spaces, when transitioning and when playing outside.
- Keep windows and internal doors open to promote fresh air flow indoors
- Maximise the use of outdoor learning areas or environments with enhanced ventilation where possible and as practical depending on weather conditions

- Use outdoor facilities whenever possible for physical education and recreational play. Where indoor facilities are used, we will limit the number of students.
- We will encourage non-contact sports at this time. Hand hygiene will be practised before and after use of any sporting equipment.
- Playground equipment can be used. However, students will be directed to practise hand hygiene before and after use.

### **School offices, work areas and staff facilities**

DET advises that:

*As the greatest risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school environment is between adults, close proximity between staff will be avoided where possible and especially in offices and staff rooms.*

At our school we will:

- Spread staff workstations out as much as possible and limit the number of staff in the main office.
- Remind staff, in line with other workplaces across Victoria, to maintain physical distancing from each other as much as possible in the reception, staff/planning room and offices.
- Staff will maintain physical distancing as much as practical when working in a learning area together
- The external door to the front office will be locked to prevent automatic entry of non-essential personnel into the school building, until staff ascertain the purpose of the visit.

### **Cleaning and facilities management**

DET advises that:

*Environmental cleaning, coupled with regular hand hygiene, remains important to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.*

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](#).
- An increase in the frequency of the regular cleaning beyond what is normally required, using detergent/disinfectant to wipe areas including, but not limited to: doors (door handles, handrails and guardrails), kitchenettes including sinks, drinking troughs and fountains, student tables, chairs and lockers, electrical fixtures and appliances (switches, printers, photocopiers, fridges etc), bathroom areas, classroom waste bins, teaching and non-teaching area floors (hard floors and soft floors)
- Extended cleaning involves progressive cleaning throughout the day, with a focus on high-touch surfaces to areas including, but not limited to: high-touch surfaces (including all entry and exit points, shared surfaces including chairs and desks, benchtops, hand sanitising units, drinking troughs and fountains, bathrooms (including toilets, washbasins, soap dispensers), classroom waste bins, high-touch areas in playgrounds (without climbing equipment)



## Provision of routine care and first aid

DET advises that:

*Physical distancing is not practical when providing direct care. In this situation standard precautions, including hand hygiene, are important for infection control.*

At our school:

- Standard precautions as per DET [Infectious Diseases policy](#) and EPS First Aid policy will be followed when providing first aid. For example, we will use gloves and an apron when dealing with blood or body fluids/substances.
- Hand hygiene will be practised before and after performing routine care or first aid.
- Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), for example face masks, is not required to provide routine care or first aid for students who are well, unless such precautions are usually adopted in the routine care of an individual student.

## Management of an unwell student or staff member

DET advises that:

*It is important that any staff member or student who becomes unwell while at school returns home. While it is unlikely that a staff member or student who is unwell with flu-like symptoms will have coronavirus (COVID-19) there are some sensible steps schools can take while a student awaits collection by a parent or carer as a precaution.*

This means that at our school:

- Staff and students 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 (where possible) use of a face mask. See DET [guidance for the use of Personal Protective Equipment in education](#).
- 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 worn by the attending adults.
- 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.
- Staff or students experiencing compatible symptoms with coronavirus (COVID-19) should be encouraged to seek the advice of their healthcare professional who can advise on next steps. A medical certificate is not required to return to school after a period of illness, however staff and students should not return until symptoms resolve.
- If a student spreads droplets (for example by sneezing, coughing or vomiting), surfaces will be immediately cleaned with disinfectant wipes (and using gloves).

## Managing a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

DET 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.

- We will contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 1300 651 160 to discuss what to do next if a student or staff member:
  - is a confirmed case
  - has been in close contact with a confirmed case
- We will inform the Department by making 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.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

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- [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://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/infectiousdiseases.aspx>
- [DET Health Care Needs Policy](#)
  - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/healthcareneeds.aspx>
- [Talking to your child about COVID-19:](#)
  - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/departments/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:

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This policy was last updated on 20 May 2020 and will be reviewed weekly until the end of Term 2