



COVID-19 Return to School | Advice for Parents/Carers

Educating Together

We look forward to welcoming your child to school for 2022!

Tasmania's education sectors are working together to support the safe return to school for students, families and staff.

Catholic Education Tasmania have been working with the Department of Education and Independent Schools Tasmania to develop COVID-19 management plans to support students and staff as they return to school.

The safety and well-being of all in our school communities continues to be a priority. All education sectors will continue to comply with the requirements set by Public Health and are taking direction from Public Health in the development of COVID-19 management planning for education.

Wearing a Mask

Mask wearing supports the capacity of our schools to provide continued learning.

All Catholic Education Tasmania staff, visitors and contractors will be required to wear masks whilst indoors at all CET schools and offices.

Students in Years 7-12 will be required to wear masks when indoors except when engaged in activities that require clear communication and vigorous exercise.

At this stage students in our primary schools will not be required to wear masks while indoors.

Primary school students aged 12 and over who travel on buses will be required to wear masks whilst on the bus.

Students will need to provide their own masks. A limited number of masks will be available if required.

Visiting Your Child's School

We understand that there will be times when parents will need to attend school however it is important that we minimise the number of visitors to our schools at this time to minimise the potential for transmission.

To support the safety of our school communities all visitors to Catholic Education Tasmania schools are required to wear a mask whilst indoors.

In addition to signing in at the office, visitors will need to sign in using the Check in TAS app.

Parents/carers who are only dropping off or collecting children from childcare or school do not need to check in using the app.

Student Attendance

Your child is an important part of our school community and is expected to attend school.

If your child has a medical condition that limits them attending school, your school will support you to ensure that you have appropriate support to meet your child's educational needs considering the medical advice that has been provided.

If you choose to keep your child at home without an underlying medical or educational reason they will be marked as absent.

Online Learning

Online learning will only be provided for students who are required to isolate as a result of a positive COVID test, have been directed to isolate by Public Health or have been deemed a household close contact. More information on how this will be accessed will be provided in due course.

Online learning will not be provided if parent/carers choose to keep students at home where there is no underlying medical or educational reason for their absence.

Symptom Management

All students, staff and visitors must not attend school sites if they are unwell, if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if they have been directed to isolate by Public Health.

For the Omicron variant the window between becoming infected and being infectious to others appears to be shorter than that for other variants i.e. two

days before the onset of symptoms through to three days after the onset of symptoms.

Please do not attend school if you are displaying cold or flu-like symptoms; stay home and phone your GP or the Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738.

If a student displays cold or flu-like symptoms they will be required to return home. Should a staff member display symptoms they will be directed to return home as soon as possible.

Rapid Antigen Testing

Rapid antigen testing is a key component of Public Health's approach to self-diagnosis of infection and close contact management.

CET has secured two rapid antigen test kits for each of our staff and students. It is anticipated that the kits will be available for distribution to schools by the commencement of Term One.

In Tasmania, rapid antigen tests are not required for screening purposes in schools. They are only to be used if a student or staff member is symptomatic or for testing to rule out transmission where a confirmed case(s) has been present in a school setting.

Vaccination

Public Health recommends vaccination as a measure to reduce risk of severe COVID-19 illness.

Whilst COVID vaccination is highly recommended for students over 5 years of age, Catholic Education Tasmania will not treat students differently based on their COVID vaccination status.

Catholic Education Tasmania recommends all our staff achieve and maintain full COVID-19 vaccination status. We have a very high rate of staff who are fully vaccinated across our schools and are encouraging fully vaccinated staff to get their booster vaccinations according to the recommended schedule.