



School Operating Guidelines

Baseline Settings

ADVICE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS & CARE SERVICES

Effective Term 2

These guidelines have been developed for schools as we transition toward living with COVID-19. If conditions change the Chief Health Officer will advise the CEWA to adjust settings.



Definitions

For the purposes of implementing these guidelines, the following definitions apply:

- **Vaccination requirement** means staff to be double dose vaccinated against COVID-19 from 12.01am on 31 January 2022 and have a third dose (booster) vaccine within one month of becoming eligible, unless the staff member has an approved exemption.
- **Ad hoc basis** means attendance at any Education Facility or Facilities no more than once a week.
 - Note: A person who attends multiple education facilities in a week, but does not visit the same education facility twice, does not attend on an ad hoc basis. For example, a tradesperson who works at school A on Monday and then works at school B on Wednesday of the same week must comply with the vaccination requirements in these directions.
- Therefore, **regular basis** means more than once per week (either within one site or across multiple school sites).
- **School sites (education facilities)** include:
 - a school, including CEWA offices e.g. Leederville, Geraldton, Broome and Bunbury;
 - early learning and care, Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and long daycare;
 - boarding premises (boarding / residential facilities).
- **Critical worker:** new close contact rules supersede Critical Worker protocols.
- **Close contact:** a close contact is now defined as:
 - A household member or intimate partner of a person with COVID-19 who has had contact with them during their infectious period.
 - Someone who has had close personal interaction with a person with COVID-19 during their infectious period where:
 - they spent greater than 4 hours of cumulative contact with them in any 24-hour period in a residential setting (for instance a home or accommodation facility).
 - where masks have been removed by both people during the period of contact.
 - Someone who is directed by WA Health that they are a close contact.
 - Principals are no longer required to report close contact information on the COVID-19 Reporting Portal.
 - Asymptomatic close contacts are not required to isolate but do have to follow testing and mask wearing requirements.

There is no requirement for parents to report to a school that their child has tested negative to COVID-19, but they are encouraged to do so via the COVID-19 Self-Reporting Portal to further support schools with their management of COVID-19.

Parents/caregivers are instructed to inform the school if their child tests positive and must keep them home until well and free of symptoms. Parents/caregivers must be reminded to also report their child's positive RAT to WA Health.



Vaccination requirement

All staff working at a school site, and visitors who attend the school or schools on a regular basis, are required to meet the vaccination requirements.

Staff who contract COVID-19 may not be eligible to receive their booster vaccination at the point of becoming eligible. Impacted staff must:



Information and FAQs for Baseline Settings

Close contacts:

Can asymptomatic close contact students return to school?

Yes. Parents must inform the school of the child's close contact status and should do so via the CEWA COVID-19 Self-Reporting Portal. Students who return to school must follow the requirements set out by the WA Government including mask wearing (Year 7 and above) and daily RATs. Students in primary school are not required to wear a mask.

Can a close contact wearing a mask remove it if doing vigorous exercise or playing school or community sport?

If the close contact is alone and not in the presence of others then the mask may be removed. If the close contact is in the presence of others the mask must be worn.

Is it compulsory for students who are asymptomatic close contacts to attend school?

Yes; school attendance is compulsory and students should return to normal classes unless symptomatic or a positive COVID-19 result is returned.

What are the requirements of asymptomatic close contacts who also have mask exemptions wishing to attend school?

The mask exemption will continue to prevail, even if the individual is identified as a close contact. Students in this scenario are able to return to school as usual. For impacted staff, consideration may be given to their working from home, if possible.

What recording is required by the school and what evidence needs to be supplied for persons identified as close contacts?

Staff and students are encouraged to report their close contact status via the CEWA COVID-19 Self-Reporting Portal. Staff Parents are welcome to upload photo evidence of their negative RAT, however, this is not a compulsory requirement. Positive RAT COVID-19 cases must be reported on the WA Health website.

Students

Do students need to wear masks while on a bus, for example travelling to excursions or swimming?

Students in Years 6 and below are no longer required to wear a mask. Students in Years 7 and over (other than those with an approved exemption) are required to wear a mask while travelling on public transport, as well as school owned and chartered vehicles.

Do students and staff who are close contacts need to take a RAT each day prior to coming to school?

Yes. Students and staff who are close contacts must take a RAT each day before coming to school and are encouraged to note their result via the portal. Where a student or staff member becomes symptomatic or returns a positive result, they must commence isolation protocols.

When do I need to provide work for students who are not at school?

Schools need to provide work for students who need to stay at home due to isolation requirements. Schools are not required to provide work to students who are being kept at home by parents/carers; however, each case needs to be considered on its merits – see expectations related to remote learning below.

If a positive case returns to school before the WA Health recommended date of return, are we as a school responsible to send them home?

Yes. The parents of students who are COVID-19 positive should be immediately contacted and requested to pick up their child. The child should not return to school until they have completed their 7 day isolation period. The CEWA COVID-19 Self-Reporting Portal will be useful in providing oversight of staff and student return dates, if information is uploaded into the portal.

What are the expectations of remote learning

As a general rule, students should be at school unless they have COVID or are otherwise unwell. Schools should continue to provide remote learning for students who have COVID, if required, as those who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms may do some work from home.

Schools do need to respond to individual circumstances and remain pastoral where there is COVID in households. Most asymptomatic students, who are COVID free but have COVID in the household, should be able to come to school. However, there will be circumstances where this is challenging – for example if parents have COVID, transporting students to school may be a challenge. Schools need to be flexible, pastoral and reasonable in responding to these circumstances and to supporting students with their learning.

Do students/work placements in city need to show proof of vaccinations?

Proof of vaccination may be required dependent upon the industry of work placement. Refer to the vaccination directions for further information.

