



COVID-19 UPDATE 16 MARCH

Dear parents/carers/community,

The situation in regard to COVID-19 continues to evolve with an increasing number of countries having sustained community transmission. The Australian and New South Wales Governments, working closely with health experts, are moving to limit the spread of the virus. Schools have been asked to consider their daily operations and take reasonable proactive steps in order to support the wider societal effort. This is part of the government-wide strategy to 'flatten the curve' of confirmed cases so that our health services can meet the needs of those who require care when they need it. It is important to remember that the current advice from Australia's chief health officers is to keep schools open.

This is a comprehensive update with a substantial amount of information. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the content enclosed and contact me if you have any queries.

We are extremely confident that in working together, the health and wellbeing of our students and staff will be maintained.

SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

Students who fall into any of the categories below are excluded from school for a minimum of 14 days and are required to let the school know by telephone or email (northkellyville-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au).

- Those who have travelled internationally (to any country) and arrived back in Australia from 16 March 2020 are required, by law, to self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
- Those who have travelled prior to 16 March 2020 to China, Iran, South Korea or Italy are required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days.
- Those who are confirmed cases of COVID-19 are excluded from school and are required to obtain a medical clearance to return.
- Those who have come in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 are excluded from school for a period of 14 days. Close contact is defined as a person who has spent significant time either face to face (15 minutes) or in an enclosed space (2 hours or more) as someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.



STAYING HOME DUE TO ILLNESS

Although coronavirus is at the forefront of our minds, students may still become unwell with other ailments. Students who are sick, no matter their condition, should stay home from school. Absences of 3 days or more should be accompanied with a medical certificate.

STAYING HOME DUE TO CONCERN ABOUT INFECTION

Schools remain safe places for students to attend, unless notified otherwise. Our infection control procedures are effective and students are expected to attend school unless they are in an exclusion category or sick. Students who stay at home out of general concern will be marked on the attendance register as explained/unjustified.

STAYING HOME DUE TO CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITION OR COMPROMISED IMMUNITY

Parents of students with a chronic medical condition or immunosuppression who are concerned about the spread of the virus, or parents who have a condition themselves, should contact me directly to discuss options which will both protect the student's health and wellbeing but facilitate ongoing engagement with the curriculum. Absences for these students, after communication with me, will be approved.

LOCAL OPERATIONAL CHANGES

In response to recent advice, North Kellyville Public School will be making some significant changes to its operations. Most of these changes are simple and precautionary only.

1) *Encouraging Good Hygiene*

Students and staff are being reminded of good hygiene practices, including:

- a) **Washing hands regularly** and thoroughly; additional soap is available to students and foaming dispensers have been installed in all toilet blocks. Teachers will cease lessons earlier than usual before recess and lunch time to enable enough time for students to wash their hands.
- b) **Sneezing into elbows or a tissue**, and disposing of the tissue straight away and then washing hands.
- c) **Staying home if unwell.**

Teachers are administering lessons with their home classes about good hygiene.



2) Wiping of Frequently Touched Surfaces

Surfaces which are frequently touched will be cleaned prior to use. This includes technological devices, keyboards and mice.

3) Delaying the Opening of the new Playground Equipment

Although we are all excited that the installation of our fixed playground equipment is near completion, students will be prohibited from using it until further notice. This is due to surfaces such as monkey bars being classified as 'frequent touch'.

4) Limiting Visitors to the Site

It is important to limit the presence of non-essential visitors to this site. I ask for the support and understanding of all involved as this includes parents.

- a) **Drop Off and Go** – Parents and carers should drop their children to school as usual in the morning but avoid congregating within school grounds. Once your child has been dropped at school and is in the care of the supervising teachers on the playground, parents are asked to leave the site. Where students are old enough and capable, parents are encouraged to utilise the kiss and drop zone before school.
- b) **Volunteers Prohibited** – Until further notice, volunteering at school will cease. This includes parents and grandparents who might volunteer their time in the classroom.

5) Greater Square Meterage Per Student on the Playground

During morning tea and lunch times, additional play space will be made available to students meaning that students will disperse more widely. All students will be supervised by teachers.

6) Encouraging Outdoor Learning

The spread of germs and infections is less likely outdoors. Teachers will utilise outdoor learning environments where appropriate.

7) Temperature Checking in Sick Bay & Students Sent Home if Unwell

When students attend the sick bay, they will be assessed and if unwell, will be sent home. We have acquired a non-touch thermometer in order to measure students' temperatures. This will support decision-making.

8) Cancellation of Many School Events

Until further notice, the following events are cancelled:

- a) **All school assemblies** – this includes regular Thursday assemblies as well as our planned Harmony Day / Anti-Bullying Day assembly and badge presentation assembly. We will still teach students the important messages associated with Harmony Day and the National

Day of Action Against Bullying, and we still ask students to come to school in orange or cultural dress on Thursday; however, the assembly will be cancelled.

- b) **Inter-school sport** – this includes weekly PSSA competitions, knock out competitions and trials for representative teams. Sport and physical education lessons (including SISA) within school will continue and students will be directed to wash hands after using equipment.
- c) **Excursions and camps** – we were intending on providing notice of a range of excursions and camps this week but will refrain from doing so until clearance has been provided to proceed. Organisation for the Stage 2 camp to Collaroy and the Stage 3 camp to Canberra are both suspended until further notice. As we cannot predict with certainty whether camps will go ahead in Term 3, we advise parents to put money aside as if they proceed as planned, payment will be required in one lump sum instead of instalments.
- d) **Easter Hat Parade** – we were intending on providing notice of an Easter Hat Parade this week to be held later in the term. This event will not go ahead; however, teachers will communicate about hat making and other ways to mark the occasion shortly.
- e) **Extra-curricular groups** – it is necessary to cancel dance, choir, chess, PSSA, drama, art club, techsperts, debating, 3D printing, SRC and gardening club. Cancelling these groups limits interactions between students across grades and enables teachers who ordinarily coordinate the groups to support enhanced playground supervision. Band tutorials will continue but whole group rehearsals which were due to commence in Term 2 will not go ahead until further notice.

9) No 'Lines' in the Morning, After Recess or Lunch

Students will continue to be supervised within the playground from 8:30am. When the bell sounds at 8:57am, students will be directed to walk straight to their classrooms. Teachers will provide supervision and support of students at each staircase. Parents are asked not to walk up the stairs. This measure is designed to avoid mass-gatherings.

10) Closing the Library at Lunchtime

During lunch time, students of all grades are usually welcome to visit the library. Until further notice, the library will be closed at lunch to avoid close contact of students from a range of grades.

11) Opening Windows to Improve Ventilation

Staff members will leave windows and where possible doors open to improve ventilation of enclosed spaces.

12) Enhanced Hygiene Control in the Canteen

Staff members working in the canteen from Healthy Canteens Australia have enhanced their hygiene practices including the wearing of gloves, washing hands and cleaning surfaces more regularly.

COMMUNITY USERS

Currently, North Kellyville Public School has active contracts with a range of third parties who utilise the school grounds. As these uses are non-essential, community users will be advised that their contracts are suspended until further notice. This will limit access to the school and minimise likelihood of infection. If your children currently engage with these providers, they will be unable to continue their service:

- Norwest Table Tennis
- North West Chinese School
- Pei Ji Chinese School
- Thinking Artz
- Talent Club
- Dancing With Maree
- Hills Arabic School
- Zumba with Nina
- Sydney Academy of Chess

FACE MASKS

There is no need for students or staff to wear face masks. Students or staff who are unwell should be at home.

EXTENDED TRAVEL LEAVE

When seeking leave from school for 5 days or more due to travel, parents are required to submit an extended travel leave request. As principal, it is my obligation to determine whether travel at that time is in the best interests of the student. Given the current restrictions on travel and advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs, it is unlikely that any requests will be granted at this time.

ONLINE STUDY AVAILABLE

Students who are required to self-isolate or who remain at home due to other illness or concern related to chronic medical conditions can access online study units developed by the Department of Education which are accessible [here](#). Alternatively, every student (whose parents have provided permission) has access to the Reading Eggs and Mathletics online study portals. Students are encouraged to complete tasks within both of these platforms. School books will not be sent home.

P&C ACTIVITIES TO BE SUSPENDED

The P&C Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday this week. It will not go ahead. Similarly, all P&C activities and events including school banking will be suspended until further notice. Money is a frequently touched item and therefore it is important to cease this activity. A new P&C executive will be elected when the Annual General Meeting can be rescheduled. A new date will be provided in Term 2.



SCHOOL TOURS CANCELLED

Each term, two school tours are run for prospective parents. These tours are cancelled until further notice. The school's website contains a substantial amount of information as well as video tours which are accessible to the public.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGED RACISM

Racism and other forms of discrimination are unequivocally prohibited at school. However, we know at times students are not aware of the power of their words and harm that they cause. I am aware of a small number of cases where students have felt marginalised because of others' comments about race and links to COVID-19. Students and parents are reminded to report any cases of racism directly to me or the relevant Assistant Principal. The school's Anti Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) is Lisa Ingleton and she will be able to provide support for all students with the aim of her intervention being educative and restoring of potentially damaged relationships.

CREDIT FOR PROGRAMS AND FEE SUPPORT

In cases where parents have paid for programs such as extra-curriculars and these programs do not resume at all during the year, credit equal to the amount paid will be applied to the student's account. Parents are advised not to pay for extra-curriculars if they are yet to do so. The school is experiencing increased financial demand due to the measures outlined in this notice and increased need to employ casual staff, so we encourage all parents to make payments for general contributions and other items contained in statements of account. We also understand that many families might be experiencing financial difficulty themselves. Parents who are unable to make school payments should contact me so that I can provide support and assurance.

The current COVID-19 situation is unlike any that schools have managed before. I sincerely thank the community for the trust and understanding that are being demonstrated.

The Department of Education continues to work closely with NSW Health to monitor and respond to developments and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

All of the operational guidelines outlined in this correspondence will be reviewed at the commencement of Term 2.

Please contact me if you have any queries or would like further clarification.

Sincerely,



Tom Moth
Principal
16 March 2020