

Dear MC Community,

As promised, I am writing with additional information about the return of students to our school campus.

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

*Please note that our Year 11 and 12 students have received earlier advice this week regarding their return to onsite learning from Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October.*

<b>Commencing 25 October</b> <b>(Week 4)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early childhood centres (ECEC)</li><li>• Preschool and kindergarten</li><li>• Years 1 and 2</li><li>• Year 6</li><li>• <b>Years 9 and 10</b></li><li>• Out of school hours care (OSHC)</li></ul>
<b>Commencing 1 November</b> <b>(Week 5)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Years 3, 4 and 5</li><li>• <b>Years 7 and 8</b></li></ul>
<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.

<b>Use of Check in CBR app</b>	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.
<b>Student illness</b>	Staff and students who are unwell are not able to attend school. Students who present unwell will be required to go home.
<b>Hygiene</b>	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.
<b>Masks</b>	Staff, visitors and students* in years 7-12 must wear a face mask on campus. 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 where appropriate. Please contact the school on details of what evidence will need to be supplied to the school if you have a young person in this situation.

	<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>
<b>Physical Distancing</b>	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.
<b>Environmental cleaning</b>	Our school cleaning program includes regular cleaning of high touch services, frequently used objects, and play equipment.
<b>Ventilation</b>	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.
<b>Managing suspected cases</b>	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.
<b>Will schools have routine testing for COVID-19?</b>	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.
<b>Wellbeing supports</b>	Wellbeing and learning supports, such as face to face appointments with the school psychologist, school nurse and youth worker or access to a Learning Support Assistant, will recommence with the return to school.  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 can't be made, the school will support your child to learn from home.

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

<p><b>Drop off and pick up</b></p>	<p><i>Students will enter the school via their normal entry routes.</i></p> <p><i>Each year group has an allocated area in which they are to wait before school and where they will spend their school break times. This will allow us to prevent all year groups from mixing and therefore limit the risk considerably. Students will be given the area for their year group in their online assemblies prior to returning to school and a map will be available to support this. Year group assemblies will be held on the Friday prior to each year group recommencing. Year Coordinators will advise students of the timings for these online assemblies.</i></p> <p><i>On entering the school, students will be required to move directly to their year group area. Staff will be on hand to remind them.</i></p>
<p><b>Hygiene routines</b></p>	<p><i>Hand sanitiser and sanitising wipes will be available in every classroom as well as entry points to the school. Students will be asked to sanitise hands as they enter the classroom and then to sanitise their desks, chairs and other classroom items prior to exiting the classroom. This will mean the space is sanitised prior to the next group entering. Students will also be required to sanitise any equipment they use prior to it being used by another student during a class.</i></p> <p><i>Used sanitising wipes will be placed in a bin prior to exiting the classroom.</i></p> <p><i>All students and staff will be required to wear a mask while onsite (unless they have a medical certificate to support an exemption – in this instance, please contact the school before students return and provide this evidence). If students do not have a mask then the school will provide one to them. Any used masks will be deposited into a lidded bin and removed using covid safe cleaning practices.</i></p> <p><i>We are confident that our students will follow ACT Health Directions and directions from our staff at all times. Our normal MC student support and management processes will be followed to support students to engage in safe behaviours.</i></p>
<p><b>Break times</b></p>	<p><i>Student break times will remain as they are timetabled however, each cohort will have a specified area on the school grounds and will be required to remain in these areas during all breaks unless otherwise advised.</i></p> <p><i>Year 7 will be in the front courtyard/student services areas</i></p> <p><i>Year 8 in the back oval area</i></p> <p><i>Years 9 and 10 will be in the area of the internal basketball courts and treed surrounds.</i></p> <p><i>These will be fully explained to students prior to their return.</i></p>

<p><b>Before and After School Care</b></p>	<p><i>Students should be dropped off to school as close to 9am as possible and collected immediately after school. For students who ride to school we ask that they also arrive as near to 9am as possible and depart directly after school ends.</i></p> <p><i>Students arriving by bus, and all students arriving at school, will be asked to enter the school as soon as they arrive and move directly to their allocated area on the school grounds where they must remain until they are asked to move into their classes.</i></p> <p><i>Students who leave school by bus will be required to move to the front of the school and line up in Year Group lines which will be distanced from other year groups. Students will need to stay in those lines until their bus arrives and they embark and leave the school.</i></p>
<p><b>School canteens</b></p>	<p><i>The canteen will be opened for Flexischools pre-orders only and only for lunchtime (not recess). You will have to pre-order using the Flexischools App which can be downloaded onto your phone. Orders will be prepared and then students will receive their orders once they are in their year group break areas. More information on Flexischools can be found on the MCSS Website.</i></p> <p><i>Students must also bring a water bottle to school. Our bubblers will be closed however our refill stations will be available for students to refill their water bottles</i></p>

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.

Best wishes to everyone!

*Kerrie Heath Principal Melba Copland Secondary School*