



School Is Back Tomorrow!!!! It's Time to Celebrate!!!!

Thursday, September 16, 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I'm sure that you've heard the great news that NSW Health has confirmed that stay-at-home restrictions for our area have been lifted!!! The lockdown helped prevent cases of COVID-19 in our area. This means that **Merimbula Public School is open for all students once again from tomorrow!!** We will be operating under Level 3 restrictions.

Our school has really been missing being onsite for learning and play with our friends. Staff are really looking forward to every student coming back tomorrow, and hope to be able to resume face-to-face learning with all students as soon as possible - as we know the vast amount of benefits this brings when compared with learning from home. Tomorrow will be a **wonderful opportunity for us to reconnect with students prior to the school holiday period, for a strong start to Term 4.**

Tomorrow will be our first day back at school for onsite learning and it is going to be lots of fun! **We are going to celebrate by having a Mufti Day and Party Day!! (All food and treats will be provided. Students have the option to bring extra snacks and must bring a drink bottle).**

Please understand that our school follows all advice from NSW Health and the Department of Education. Our schools are operating in a COVID-safe way and adhering to the recommended restrictions and precautions by NSW Health when on site. It's important that all students come to school so that we can support their wellbeing with a fun return to school day, before we get them back into routine.

Returning To School with Level 3 Restrictions:

Schools moving from stay-at-home rules will return to face-to-face learning and teaching under these settings. All staff and students are expected to be at school with visitors and activities limited.

- All students are expected to be at school unless they have even the mildest of COVID-19 symptoms.
- Students must not attend work or school if unwell, even with mild symptoms of COVID-19. Any person with any COVID-19 symptoms must be sent home and not return to school unless: they have isolated for 10 days, when no medical certificate is available; OR they have a negative COVID-19 test result and are symptom free.
- While at school, masks or face coverings are required for: all students in Year 7 and

above in indoors settings; and all staff in indoor and outdoor settings.

- *Some exemptions apply:*
- *Staff are not required to wear a mask or face covering where it may affect the ability of a student or students to hear or engage with them, such as where students are hard of hearing.*
- *Staff and students are not required to wear a mask where they are alone in an office or classroom.*
- *Masks or face coverings are not required to be worn by a staff member or student who has a physical or mental health illness or condition, or disability, that makes wearing a mask unsuitable.*

Visitors: Non-essential visitors are not permitted in schools. Some visitors are permitted in schools based on the guidelines that follow.

- Parents and carers must follow their school's advice regarding changes to drop off and pick up including staying in the car when dropping off and picking up children if safe to do so. [Our drop off and pick up areas will be as follows:](#)

K-2 (and siblings/students that live in the Henwood St area): Henwood Street Back Gate;

3-6 (and Walking Line/Bus Students): Front gate on Randolph Street.

Parents should:

- maintain physical distancing by avoiding gathering outside of school gates.

Schools can continue to operate:

- Canteens where appropriate hygiene measures are in place;
- [Our canteen will not be open tomorrow as we are having our 'party day'](#). Lunch, snacks and fruit break will be provided for all students (please complete the online permission we are requesting, via School Stream or Class Dojo).

What is permitted with modification:

School based activities:

- Dance and/or drama are permitted in-line with COVID-Safe practices within classes in outdoor spaces. Mixing of classes is not permitted (except for HSC assessment purposes with COVID Safe practices in place).
- Schools must make alternative arrangements for graduations, formals and school dances that support the broader guidance. ***This includes:*** *No mingling of student cohorts; No visitors (including parents and carers); Events to align with current health order restricting size of gatherings; COVID Safe planning. Personal hygiene, physical distancing, cleaning and record keeping practices must be adhered to at these events.*
- **Library activities** are permitted in-line with the Infection Control requirement for Libraries.



- **Uniform Stores** can only operate if they: are online; have pre-ordering arrangements in place, with one dedicated staff member attending outside of school hours to arrange distribution. [Our online store will re-open from Day 1, Term 4.](#)
- **Practicum teachers** and professional experience placement. Department schools who choose to accommodate placements will only support final year pre-service teachers who are due to graduate by the end of this semester.
- Professional experience placements are voluntary for all schools.

Activities that are not permitted or on hold during school hours or within school grounds:

Schools must cease the following activities:

- Singing, chanting, group repetition and choirs (except for HSC preparation and assessment purposes as outlined above);
- Sport (except for sport within existing PDHPE classes, provided this limits student mingling);
- Bands and ensembles;
- Emergency drills. Drills should be put on hold until further notice;
- Interschool activities and events including interschool sport, gala days, trials, knock outs and carnivals;
- SRE/SEE/VSA;
- Community Language Schools;
- Assemblies;
- School performances, productions, concerts, speech nights and award presentations;
- Excursions, camps, field trips and principal-endorsed activities for students;
- International excursions;
- Student visits to aged care facilities;
- School orientation programs are to be postponed until further notice;
- Compliance training (e.g. First aid/CPR) is to be conducted online until further notice;
- Community events (fetes, grandparents' days etc.);
- Playgroups;
- P&C activities, including meetings (unless held online only);

- All external providers and specialist programs not directly related to educational outcomes and support, including Community Use of School Facilities (such as markets and all after school activities) unless delivered online only;
- Community Language Schools;
- School holiday programs (noting that vacation care programs on school sites may continue);

Level 3 Restrictions for Merimbula Public School, supporting Department requirements such as those shared above:

- We will not be having staggered start times, however use of the playground and break times will be staggered as recommended. As a result, we will require all students to go straight to classrooms on arrival at school. **Please let your child/ren know to go straight to class when they get to school tomorrow.**

Students will have staggered lunchtimes/breaktimes as follows:

- *9.35am – 10.10am: Support Classes Recess – Court and Oval (Eating: Play 2 Big Steps/Tables)*
 - *9.35am – 10.10am: Kindy Recess – Lower Flat (Eating Area: Lower COLA)*
 - *10.15am – 10.50am: Stage 1 Recess – Court and Oval (Eating: Silver Court Seats/Grass Strip)*
 - *10.55am – 11.30am: Stage 3 Lunch – Court, Handball Area, Oval (Eating: Upper Silver Seats)*
 - *11.35am – 12.10pm: Stage 2 Lunch – Court, Handball Area, Oval (Eating: Upper COLA Tables)*
 - *12.15pm – 12.55pm: Support Classes Lunch – Lower Flat (Eating Area: Play 2 Big Steps/Tables)*
 - *12.15pm – 12.55pm: Kindy Lunch – Court and Oval (Eating Area: Lower COLA)*
 - *1.00pm – 1.35pm: Stage 1 Lunch – Lower Flat (Eating: Silver Court Seats/Grass Strips)*
 - *1.40pm – 2.15pm: Stage 3 Recess – Court, Handball Area, Oval (Eating: Upper Silver Seats)*
 - *2.20pm – 2.55pm: Stage 2 Recess Court, Handball Area, Oval (Eating Upper COLA Tables)*
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- Canteen – orders only (from Day 1, Term 4).
 - Bubblers will be closed. **Please send your child to school with a water bottle.**
 - No sport – Class based PE only.
 - No parents/caregivers onsite – therefore we will be postponing Kindergarten Orientation. New enrolment interviews must have all documentation completed, 100 points of proof of address, and a parent/caregiver interview will take place over the phone or via Zoom. Kindergarten Orientation programs state-wide have been placed on hold by the Department until they receive additional NSW Health advice.
 - RFF Teachers only working within the grade or stage, not K-6.



Merimbula Public School



- Support Class students will not transition across grades/settings. Support Class students will remain either in their Home Class OR Family Class for the duration of Level 3 restrictions. Transition will recommence once restrictions are at Level 2. *Support Class Teachers will be contacting parents/caregivers to discuss the most suitable class location for each child.*
- Intervention groups for reading/maths will only be Stage based, but still ability based.

We are all so very excited to be back at school tomorrow!!! We cannot wait to see your child/ren!

Regards,

Michelle Hulme

Principal