



Teamwork • Respect • Honesty • Care

Goornong Primary School

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Thursday 27th January, 2022

Dear Parents,

BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN – COVID-19 ARRANGEMENTS

I hope that you and your families have enjoyed a relaxing holiday break. As we prepare to welcome students back to our school next week, the Victorian Government has announced some new measures for the beginning of the 2022 school year across all Victorian schools.

Free rapid antigen tests

Free rapid antigen tests will be available for the first 4 weeks of Term 1 2022.

Twice-a-week testing on school days will be strongly recommended for both students and staff.

The Education Department has supplied the tests to our school – you do not need to buy your own. Families will be able to pick up their tests from the school tomorrow, Friday 28th January between 10am–2pm, whilst collecting their child's stationary supplies and paying the student contributions.

Students and staff will do the tests at home and will only need to report their result if it is COVID-positive. They must report a COVID-positive result to:

- The school by phone or the [RA Test Portal](#); this is so the school can support them, record that they will be absent while in 7-day isolation, and let the rest of the school community know there has been a positive case onsite and that everyone should monitor for symptoms.
- The Department of Health via the [COVID-19 Positive Rapid Antigen Test Self-Reporting Form](#) or call centre on [1800 675 398](tel:1800675398).

All students and staff who return a positive result from a rapid antigen test should also follow the latest advice at <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/rapid-antigen-tests>

Information about how to do a test and how to read RAT results, is [available online](#).

Positive Covid-19 cases

Where a student or staff member tests positive to Covid-19, they must isolate for seven days and not attend the school during this period.

Where a student or staff member is a household contact of a positive case (that is, they have spent more than four hours with someone who has COVID-19 inside a house or accommodation facility) they must inform the school and isolate for seven days and not attend school during that period.

Ventilation

Our school has been provided with air purifiers by the Education Department, which will be used around the school as an added safety measure. We will also make sure that classrooms are well ventilated by opening windows and doors when practical, as this has been shown to minimise the risk of infection.

Vital COVIDSafe steps

Hand hygiene, mask wearing, and social distancing will continue wherever possible in Term 1.

Face Masks

Face masks continue to be required at school for students in Grade 3 and above when indoors, unless a lawful exception applies. The students can remove their mask while outdoors, or when eating and drinking.

Face masks are also strongly recommended for Prep to Year 2 students. However, they are not mandatory for these students.

Students are welcome to bring their own mask from home. Alternatively, the school will supply students who don't have a mask with a disposable one to wear.

For students with a disability, parents and carers should speak to their child's doctor or regular health professional about the best methods to encourage mask wearing. Students and parents can also contact the [Disability Liaison Officer program](#) for more information.

Face masks are required for students in Grades 3/4/5/6 unless an exception applies. Exceptions include students with a physical or mental disability where their disability means it would not be suitable. Students with a medical condition or disability that make wearing a face covering unsuitable are not required to wear a mask. Parents of a student who meet the criteria for an exception must provide their approval in writing to the school principal for their child to not wear a mask to school.

All visitors to the school over the age of 8 years old are also required to wear a face mask, unless a lawful exception applies.

Please note that bus travellers 8yo and over are required to wear a face mask when travelling on the school bus.

Staffing our school

I know many of you will have questions about what happens if your child's teacher gets COVID-19. We will endeavour to bring in extra teachers and other staff if we need them, and we will be doing everything that we can to make sure our school stays safe and open.

Vaccination requirements for parents and other adults visiting the school

Parents, carers and other adult visitors who enter school buildings must have had two doses of a Covid-19 vaccine or have a valid medical exemption. Parents, carers and other adult visitors who enter school buildings must check-in using the QR code and schools are required to sight the vaccination information of the visitor.

There are some limited exceptions where parents and carers are able to attend inside the school buildings if unvaccinated and without a valid medical exemption. These include:

- When attending to administer medical treatment to their own child when the treatment cannot be administered by the school.
- When attending to collect their child who is unwell and who cannot leave the school building unaccompanied by their parent/carer.
- When attending for a momentary period that does not involve any sustained contact with staff or students (for example, to collect a completed art project or similar).

Parents, carers and other adult visitors attending an outdoor event or gathering held at schools, such as a fete or school production, are also required to be fully vaccinated. In these instances, parents, carers and adult visitors must check in using the QR code and schools are required to sight vaccination information.

Parents and carers attending school sites for drop off and pick up who do not enter school buildings do not need to comply with vaccination requirements.

Vaccination requirements for volunteers

Under the directions issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, all volunteers attending schools to perform work (both indoors and outdoors) are required to have had two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, or have a valid medical exemption. Parents volunteering with activities such as morning reading, on excursions or with on-site fundraising activities would fall into this category. Our school is required to collect, record and hold vaccination information from relevant volunteers to ensure they meet these requirements. Whilst we are currently limiting the number of volunteers at our school, we ask parents to take note of this requirement for the time when we are again seeking volunteers on-site.

We also remind all parents and visitors of the need to continue to adhere to physical distancing, density limits, face mask and QR code check-in requirements; and to practise respiratory etiquette and good hand hygiene when visiting our school.

Vaccination requirements for students

COVID-19 vaccinations for students are not required for them to attend school but vaccination for students is highly encouraged by health authorities. For more information on how to book a vaccination, including important information about vaccination for children aged 5 to 11, visit [Vaccination information for children and teenagers](#).

Other information about school operations

Our After School Care program is scheduled to begin on Monday 31st January as planned.

We remind parents that stationary supplies and rapid antigen test kits can be collected from the school between 10am-2pm tomorrow. Payment of the student contributions would also be welcomed tomorrow. Payment can be made either by cash at the school or by bank transfer (Jacinta will provide details). For parents that are unable to attend the school tomorrow, we ask that you please contact Jacinta at reception to make an alternative arrangement.

There's no doubt that this term is going to present some challenges for all of us, but we are also very excited to kick off the school year and welcome back all of our students. Feel free to contact me at the school should you require any clarification on the above information.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Cox". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'J' and 'C'.

Jason Cox

Principal