



Learners today Leaders tomorrow

NEWSLETTER

PO Box 66 NORTH BENDIGO 3550

SCHOOL : www.lightningreefps.vic.edu.au

Phone: 5443 2501

ELC : www.bendigoregionalymca.org.au

Phone: 5444 6666

INFORMATION TO SCHOOL COMMUNITY

To better support schools to manage COVID-19 cases, the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Department of Health (DH) have revised how COVID-19 cases will be managed in schools. I wanted to share some information with families to let you know the process we followed when we received notification of a positive case at school.

Much of this information is changing rapidly and schools are only provided with some information after a confirmed case is reported.

This makes it hard to be fully prepared for such circumstances. Please note the information below is guidance only and is subject to change in the event of a positive case.

What happens if a child tests positive?

- If your child or children test/s positive you need to inform the school as soon as possible either via phone or via email. We will need to obtain information from you about the date of the test and the date of the result along with other relevant information about your child's movements and their symptoms.

Please note: The same process occurs if a staff member or adult visitor permitted to attend onsite tests positive to COVID19.

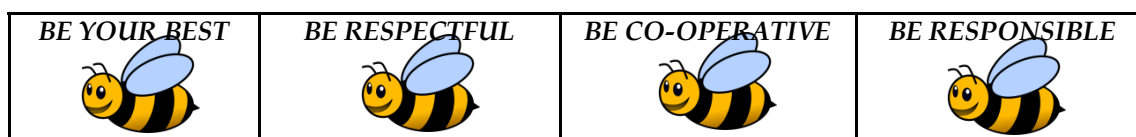
- After the school receives this notification, we contact the Department of Education and raise an alert which prompts the NWV Incident Management Team to contact us at school. They obtain key information about the details of the case and determine the next steps.
- If it is deemed necessary by the Department of Health, the school will be closed for 24 hours to allow time to complete contact tracing.
- The school then moves forward to contact tracing and contacting parents of children who may be considered a Primary Close Contact (PCC) of the positive case. PCCs are likely to be limited to those in the same class as the confirmed COVID-19 case. However, this will also depend on the level of compliance with face-mask requirements and how much classes might have mixed.

On both occasions for us last week, both positive cases were isolating at home already when they were notified. As other students were onsite at the time we received notification, we were informed there was no need to close the school. We were able to identify Primary Close Contacts (PCC) very quickly due to our record-keeping. We isolated the PCC and commenced calling families to collect their child and take them to get tested.

The Positive case on Friday had no students identified as PCCs.

If your child is considered a PCC they will be required to quarantine at home for 14 days, monitor for symptoms and inform the school if they test positive. If this is a whole class, during this time we will run Remote Learning for that class. If your child is 12 and over and is double vaccinated, they only have to quarantine for 7 days. The same applies for Staff as they are double-vaccinated.

Only after the parents of PCC contacts had been notified, was I then able to notify the school community. While we understand the community want to know what is happening, please be aware that we must follow this process. We need to let families of those affected first, then inform the wider community.



If the school is closed, what happens?

• I will send a School Closure notice via Class Dojo, Text message and email from a template provided by the Department of Education. If you know of someone in our community who may not be aware of this, please reach out and let them know. Please note that this notification may come at any time, so it is important to monitor your messages.

Please ensure the school has up to date details and you have joined Class Dojo. If you need help, contact the school. We are happy to help!

- A school closures means that no-one is allowed onsite.
- Please do not call the school during this time, there will be no-one onsite to answer the phone. The best way to contact us is via email. Please keep in mind that if you or your child are a PCC we will contact you.
- While the school is closed, cleaning is undertaken, with a focus on high touch areas.
- The school will be given notification to extend the closure or to re-open and we will confirm this with the community via Class Dojo.
- All students can then return to school unless they have been identified as a Primary Close Contact (PCC).

Are we prepared?

As always throughout the past 18 months the staff at our school have been preparing for this. There will be challenges and glitches, but as a flexible and growth mindset-orientated community, we will be understanding, patient and forgiving. We receive regularly updated guidance from the Department of Education and have developed our own school plans and Covid Safe actions to keep our staff, children and wider community as safe as possible. These school guidelines will continue to be updated and communicated to families via the newsletter & Class Dojo messages and includes things such as multiple drop off and pick up zones, limiting movement and visitors onsite and limited mixing of students onsite.

What can we do at home to support your child/ren in the event of a school closure?

The best thing that you can do is to remain calm and be supportive of your children. Just like adults, they will go through a range of emotions and be challenged by these times. Remind your children to bring home their belongs daily. Practice and encourage them to uphold high levels of hygiene, social distancing and mask wearing where possible. Resources from organisations such as Emerging Minds and Raising Children Network are very useful to support you to have some of these conversations at home.

We have been fortunate to not have to close the school so far, but the reality is that it is quite likely that we will in the future.

I ask that if you get notified of a school closure that you remain calm and be assured that we will contact you **personally** if your child is a PCC. Please keep in mind that our focus during this time needs to be on contact tracing and if you have an issue, we ask if you could please wait until after the school re-opens or contact your child's teacher. I hope that this has provided some clarity and allows you to have some level of comfort.

What do I have to do when my child's quarantine is finished and is ready to return?

Students will need to show evidence of their negative test when they return to school. You can either email Jo at Joanne.Ryan@education.vic.gov.au, the school at lightning.reef.ps@education.vic.gov.au or forward the text to the Principal phone on 0459890531.

Additionally, you may physically show a member of the Leadership or Office Team when you bring your student back to school.

If this is the case, we ask that families ring the door bell at the Office on their first day back so we can follow the required process to check.

Will my child be provided with work during their quarantine period?

Only if your child is identified as a PCC from a positive case at school.

If your child is isolating from exposure within the Community, teachers are not expected to provide work as they are already teaching at school. This is a DET Directive. However, every family has access to Epic, Sunshine online and Sunset Maths as part of Essential Assessment. Contact your child's teacher should you need help accessing these apps.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN ISOLATING AS PART OF THE ELC LAST WEEK OR FROM OUR ROOM 3 CASE EARLIER LAST WEEK, WE DO NEED TO SEE THE CLEARANCE BEFORE YOUR CHILD IS ALLOWED ONSITE AS PER ADVISED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

If you do need to contact us out of hours to report a positive case ASAP, please email or call Jo on 0459890531.

CHANGES TO VACCINATIONS REQUIREMENTS FOR VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS PERFORMING WORK IN SCHOOLS

Visitors and volunteers performing work on school sites (both inside and outdoors) must have had at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine and must have had two doses of COVID-19 vaccine by 29 November 2021 or have a valid medication exception. Visitors and volunteers must follow OUR COVIDSafety requirements set out in the DET School Operations Guide.

External providers who use or hire school facilities outside of school hours must ensure that use aligns with the [Open Premises Directions](#) including vaccination requirements.

Please take the time to read the updated requirements for parents and carers attending our school. This is taken directly from the DET Operation Guide 5.11.21

UPDATED VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS ATTENDING SCHOOLS-

All parents and carers attending schools, including for drop off and pick up must also adhere to physical distancing, density limits, face mask requirements and practise good hand hygiene.

Parents and carers who enter school buildings must check in using the QR code.

Parents and carers who enter school buildings must also have had at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine and must have had two doses of COVID-19 vaccine by 29 November 2021 or have a valid medical exception with the following limited exceptions:

- 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 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 and carers attending any event or activity inside a school building including, but not limited to tours, graduations, kindergarten transition, whole of school events are required to show evidence of vaccination.

Meetings and other discussions (such as Student Support Group meetings) with parents and carers who do not meet vaccination requirements should be held virtually.

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.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Great news. We have managed to arrange for the School Photographers to return to photograph absent students on Friday Nov 19, 2021. We will send reminders closer to the day.

CURRICULUM DAY

A reminder that Wednesday 10th November is a Student Free Day. Some staff will be completing Day 2 of the Berry Street Training Program online with staff from Strathfieldsaye PS and White Hills PS. Those of us who have already participated in this training will be revising our Annual Writing Plan as well as preparing stationary packs for our 2022 students.

Wednesday 1 December is another Curriculum Day where staff will plan in new Teams for the 2022 School Year.

FIRE DRILLS

In preparation for the upcoming Fire Season, we will be conducting another Fire Drill this term. We have a sign that we will put up on the front door that informs the community that we are unavailable as we must all attend the drill. We thank you for your patience in waiting for us to return. We usually finish the drill in 15 minutes.

STOMP

The students were very excited to attend their first STOMP Dance Incursion today. Maddy, from the Dance Company we hired will be leading all students through a program every Monday for the next 6 weeks. We are unsure if our Awards night will go ahead, but will video students dance performance if need be.

GRADUATION

Mrs Parsons is finalising the Graduation arrangements for our 2021 Year 6 students. We are tweaking the arrangements from last year, with students and staff sharing a formal dinner together at Bendigo Pottery on Monday 6 December.

This year we have hired a professional videographer to ensure families can share the experience, albeit after the evening. This will allow us to provide our kids and families with a digital keepsake of this important event in their Primary Education.

STATEWIDE TRANSITION DAY

DET has confirmed that the Statewide Transition Day can proceed. We will keep families updated as arrangements are finalised.

Jo Ryan

Acting Principal

**Happy Birthday to Jet H, Eloise W
and Jackson L.**

We hope you have an amazing day.



Calendar of events:

Wednesday November 10th -

Student free day - NO SCHOOL

Friday November 19th -

Second
Chance School Photos - for any-
one that was absent on the day.

Wednesday December 1st-

Student free day - NO SCHOOL

Tuesday December 14th -

Student led conferences

Friday December 17th -

Last
day of Term 4

CONTACT US:

5443 2501

Acting Principal:

Jo Ryan

Business Manager:

Kristie Coates

Leading Teacher:

Paul Keller

Learning Specialist:

Katrina Johnstone

Specialist Coordinator:

Georgia King

Social Worker:

Gai Maddams

School Council President

Sonia Valli

Parents and Friends President:

Daria Turnbull

Please
remember
smoking is
banned
within four
metres of an
entrance to
all Victorian
Schools and
within the
school
grounds, this
includes our
shared
entrance and
the bus stop



**Just a reminder hats need to be worn
outside from September 1st. Hats are
available from Lowes Marketplace.
Please make sure your child's name is on**



BE YOUR BEST



BE RESPECTFUL



BE CO-OPERATIVE



BE RESPONSIBLE



One of the most important things we can do to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in our community is to stay at home when we are unwell, even when we have the mildest of symptoms.

What you need to know

1. If a child is unwell, even with the mildest of symptoms, they must stay at home

If a child becomes unwell during the day, they must be collected from school/early childhood education and care (ECEC) as soon as possible.

2. If a child has any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) outlined below, however mild, they should get tested and they must remain at home until they receive their results:

- fever
- chills or sweats
- cough
- sore throat
- shortness of breath
- runny nose
- loss of sense of smell or taste.

In certain circumstances headache, muscle soreness, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea may also be considered symptoms.

For further advice:

- call the 24-hour coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline 1800 675 398
- call a general practitioner
- use the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) [online self-assessment tool](#).

Visit: [Where to get tested](#).

3. A child must stay at home until they are symptom free, even if their coronavirus (COVID-19) test is negative

If a person has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or been identified as a close contact they must isolate/quarantine until they receive clearance from DHHS.

Children with persistent symptoms due to underlying conditions such as hay fever or asthma whose symptoms are clearly typical of their condition can continue to attend ECEC/school. They should be tested for COVID-19 if they develop symptoms that are different to or worse than their usual symptoms. They should consider getting a medical certificate from their GP to attend ECEC/school if they have persistent symptoms that may overlap with symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough or runny nose.

Younger children (pre-school up to Grade 2) may have prolonged post viral symptoms such as a runny nose or cough and may return to school/ECEC following a negative COVID-19 test even if they are not completely free of symptoms. They will need a medical certificate from their GP to confirm they are otherwise well or have recovered from their acute illness.

For information on the minimum periods students and children need to stay at home for other conditions, refer to the [DHHS school exclusion table](#).

4. Children do NOT need a medical certificate before returning to school/ECEC

Once symptoms have cleared, there is no requirement from the Department of Education and Training or DHHS for children/students to have a medical certificate before they return to school/ECEC.

Thank you for your support in following these steps, together we can all stay safe.



This advice has been prepared by the Department of Education and Training, Safer Care Victoria and the Department of Health and Human Services

We're developing a strategy for local Kindergartens and the buildings they operate from and want your thoughts!

The City of Greater Bendigo is keen to get your thoughts on what is important to the Greater Bendigo community now, and in the future for pre-school facilities. We also want to know how families currently access kindergarten programs, what the barriers are to participation and what would make it easier for children to participate? This information is important because it will assist the City to develop an Early Years Infrastructure Strategy for the next 10 years.

In 2022, funded kindergarten services are being expanded to include three-year-old and four-year-old children across Greater Bendigo with local children set to benefit from this additional education.

Greater Bendigo has a growing population and the number of children in our community, aged three and four-years-old, is expected to grow from 3594 in 2021 to 3877 in 2029.

In partnership with the Victorian Department of Education and Training the City's goal is to ensure all three and four-year-old children have easy access to contemporary kindergarten programs.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

You can help by completing a short survey at <https://letstalkgreaterbendigo.com.au/kindergarten-services-survey> or via the above QR code.

By Wednesday December 1, 2021.



Schools on the Bushfire At-Risk Register and Schools at Risk of Grassfire (Category 4)

School procedures for the bushfire season

Fire danger ratings and warnings are used in Victoria to provide clear direction on the safest options for preserving life.

Schools and children's services listed on the DET Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) and those at risk of grassfire (Category 4) will be closed when a Code Red fire danger rating day is determined in their Bureau of Meteorology district. **Our school has been identified as being one of those at high bushfire or grassfire risk.**



Where possible, we will provide parents with up to four days notice of a potential Code Red day closure by letter/email/SMS. A Code Red day will be determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1.00 pm the day before the potential closure. Once we are advised of the confirmation of the Code Red day we will provide you with advice before the end of the school day.

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of improvements in the weather forecast. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child. It is also important to note that:

- No staff will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Code Red day.
- Out-of-school-hours care will also be cancelled on these days
- School camps will be cancelled if a Code Red fire danger rating day is determined for the Bureau of Meteorology district in which the camp is located.
- Depending on which Bureau of Meteorology district is impacted bus route cancellations may affect our school.

On these Code Red days families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival Plan – **on such days children should never be left at home alone or in the care of older children.**

For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) advises that when Code Red days are forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Code Red day.

As part of preparing our school for potential hazards such as fire, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan, reprioritised any maintenance works that may assist in preparing for the threat of fire and cleared our facility's grounds and gutters.

What can parents do?

- Make sure your family's bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is closed.

- Ensure we have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers. Keep in touch with us by reading our newsletters, by checking Sentral/Class Dojo and by talking to your child's teacher or any other member of the teaching staff about our emergency management plan.
- Most importantly at this time of year, if you're planning a holiday or short stay in the bush or in a coastal area, you should check warnings in advance of travel and remain vigilant during your stay.
- If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family's bushfire survival plan.
- You can access more information about children's services closures on the Department of Education and Training website – see <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx>

Multiple sources that offer information on emergencies are listed below:

- VicEmergency app – that can be downloaded on your android and iOS mobile devices
- VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
- Website <https://emergency.vic.gov.au>
- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency>)
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/vicemergency>)
- ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters



Don't forget to check lost property if you are missing any items. It is located in the foyer of the gym and it is filling up fast.

