



Tuesday 8. February 2022

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I strongly urge you all to ensure you read this email in its entirety.

The Minister for Education and Training, The Honourable Sue Ellery MLC and the Minister for Child Protection and Community Services, The Honourable Simone McGurk announced the new high caseload protocols specifically for school and childcare settings.

The high caseload settings, the new close contact definition and new testing and isolation protocols **will take effect as of today, Tuesday 8 February 2022.**

The Key points from the high caseload settings, contact definition and new protocols are as follows:

- Additional measures in place to keep schools and childcare settings operating safely in a high caseload environment.
- New testing and isolation protocols beginning today, reducing isolation to seven days.
- New health measures to reduce movement and exposure risks on school sites.
- Indoor events prohibited.
- Restricting groups of students to contact with their year cohort, where possible.
- Expanded mask wearing for parents.
- New arrangements for contact and interactions between staff and parents.

The implications for St Lawrence Primary School are as follows:

PARENTS ON SCHOOL SITES

- Parents will be permitted on school sites for drop-off and pick-up in outdoor locations only; consequently, parents should not be entering school grounds and visiting classrooms. Parents will need to drop off and pick up their children at the two drive through options, the school Carpark or the Church.
- A parent should only attend the school office in the event of a significant pastoral or welfare issue related to their child, wherever possible interactions by staff with parents should take place over via email or over the phone.
- Gatherings of parents on school sites must be avoided.
- Parent-teacher interviews should occur online or over the phone.
- Mask wearing for parents will be expanded to outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

SCHOOL EVENTS

Schools will need to undertake measures to minimise the risk of COVID-19 entering or being transmitted on school grounds. This includes the following steps:

- Prohibiting *indoor* face-to-face events (such as assemblies, meetings, performances, and rehearsals).
- Cancelling or postponing school camps.
- Limiting the contact between different year groups, which may include modification to timetables, recess and lunch times, and pick-up and drop-off times, where practicable.

We have introduced staggered lunch breaks to reduce the contact between children. The children are also eating in their year groups in their classrooms. Teachers and staff are remaining whenever possible in their classrooms and are not gathering in numbers. Our staggered drop off and pick up numbers also helps to minimize contact between children. We maintain stringent hygiene practices. Cleaning occurs after recess and lunch and after school a thorough cleaning of the school takes place. Hand sanitisers, soaps and paper towels are located strategically in classrooms and around the school. All children should be bringing their own water bottles to school.

Previously, our efforts to provide a safe and healthy school environment over the past two years have been very successful because of the generous support of parents and community members and your understanding of the importance of maintaining the safest environment for all community members. We are hoping that you continue to afford the staff and our children your support.

Please remember that we may need to change procedures at times, due to the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines, and school circumstances. Flexibility will be the key. All key information regarding COVID updates will be disseminated directly from me, emailed directly to families, and then uploaded to the school website.

On behalf of the staff, we thank you for your continued support of the health and safety measures we have in place to support the safe education of your children as we continue to navigate the unpredictability of COVID. The school is lawfully bound to follow at all times the Education Minister's and Health Minister's directions, in addition to the directions of The Archbishop of Perth's mandates and The Executive Director of Catholic Education.

Thank you all in advance for your understanding.

Yours in Christ

Mr Sheldon Carey

Principal
St Lawrence Catholic Primary School.