

Public School

NARWEE

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to a new school year, an exciting time as our students start or return to their school journey. I want to share how we are continuing to safeguard our school community while keeping our school open, where we know the best learning happens.

We will start 2022 with a layered approach to COVID-smart measures that have been developed in partnership with NSW Health to help to minimise transmissions at school. The health and wellbeing of our students and staff remain our priority, and these measures are designed to help to keep our school open and our students learning in the classroom.

These key measures include:

* Rapid antigen test (RAT) kits will be provided to all students to help monitor your child’s health and minimise transmission of COVID-19 across our school.
* Wearing of surgical masks indoors is required for all staff and strongly recommended for all primary students.
* Only fully vaccinated visitors essential to delivering and supporting learning or wellbeing can come on a school site.
* Up to two parents or carers are allowed to accompany their child into school on their first day of Kindergarten or new students starting at our school.
* Students will be kept in their year groups on school grounds, with staggered drop-off and pick-ups, break times, playground and canteen access to minimise the spread of COVID-19 across cohorts.
* We will continue to use good hygiene, enhanced cleaning, good air flow and ventilation in learning spaces, as well as physical distancing practices.

**Rapid antigen testing**

We are distributing packs of rapid antigen test (RAT) kits for all students and staff at the start of Term 1.

The use of RAT kits is an important step to support the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. They are a quick and easy screening tool to help detect COVID-19. It is a simple process of placing a nose or throat swab in a chemical solution, which is put onto a scanning device. Results can be ready within 15 minutes. Use of RAT kits is highly recommended but not mandatory.

Instructions are included in the kits detailing how to use the tests, check the results and dispose of the tests safely.

**Additional information**

* School staff will not be administering the rapid antigen tests to students.
* RAT kits should be collected from school by a parent or carer and the tests completed at home in the morning before attending school.
* Each student will receive an initial supply of four RATs to be used twice a week in the morning before attending school.
* If a student or staff member receives a **positive** RAT result, they need to:
  + record the positive RAT result through the Service NSW website or the Service NSW app.
  + notify the school of the positive RAT or PCR result as soon as possible
  + follow NSW Health advice <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/self-isolation-and-testing.aspx>  to isolate for 7 days.

Negative results **do not** need to be reported to Service NSW or to the school.

**Unwell at school**

Any student or staff member who is unwell and/or displays symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to go home and stay until they can complete a RAT or PCR test.

* If symptoms continue, they should stay at home and take another RAT in 24 hours or have a PCR test.
* If the second RAT or initial PCR test result is negative and they are displaying no symptoms OR they are diagnosed as another condition such as hayfever, the student or staff member can return to school.

**What happens when a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19**

Under the new close contact rules, schools are no longer included in contact tracing. I will inform the school community when there is a positive case in our school and advise families on public health advice, including monitoring for symptoms.

**Other key measures**

**Ventilation**

We will continue to follow NSW Health ventilation guidelines that natural ventilation is the most effective measure so we will maximise fresh air flow in learning spaces through opening doors and windows.

Air purifiers have been provided to schools as a supplementary measure to support common areas in schools and can be deployed at the principal's discretion. These purifiers could be located in areas where high levels of student and staff mixing occurs, such as staffrooms, internal canteens, student centres and music rooms.

**Cleaning**

We continue to have enhanced cleaning focusing on high-touch and high-traffic areas.

**Physical distancing**

We will continue to follow physical distancing guidelines and maintain 1.5 metres distance wherever possible.

**Canteen**

Our school canteen is operating five days a week for lunch orders and over the counter buying.

K-2 students can go to the canteen during 1st half of lunch and Years 3-6 during 2nd half of lunch. At recess, Years 3-6 students can buy items. K-2 are urged to pre-order if they want to buy something at recess.

**Morning Drop Off**

Our gates open at 8.50am. We have separate play areas for K-2 and Y3-6 until bell time at 9.20am.

**Afternoon Pick Up**

3.00pm - Kinder students. If your child attends After School Care or if they have a sibling at school, they will remain in the classroom until home time.

3.15pm - Year 1 at Top gate, Stage 2 at Bottom gate (or go with their Y1 sibling from top gate)

3.20pm - Year 2 at Top gate, Stage 3 at Bottom gate (or go with their Y2 sibling from top gate)

Many thanks for your support as we begin the 2022 school year.

**Rosemary Monin**

**Principal**

**Friday 28 January**