

COVID-Safe School Operational Plan



**Launceston
Grammar**

EST. 1846

Overview

The National Framework for Managing COVID-19 in Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care advises that Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services and schools are deemed essential and should remain open for the delivery of face-to-face learning wherever possible. Launceston Grammar is committed to doing everything possible to contain and slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus and ensure the health and safety of our School community.

Our COVID-Safe School Operational Plan has been carefully considered. National and Tasmanian State recommendations have been followed to ensure teaching and learning can continue and that our sites are safe for our community. The Plan reflects our commitment to the learning needs of our students along with their safety and wellbeing.

We have a clear plan in place to continue to operate the School safely in Term 4, 2022. Risk assessments for all Launceston Grammar sites have been conducted and we are confident we can continue to provide excellent education and care for our students in a COVID-safe environment.

Our COVID-Safe School Operational Plan will be updated as new recommendations and advice is circulated by regulatory authorities. Ongoing guidance and advice will be shared to keep our community informed.

Entry to School

Students, staff and visitors are encouraged to stay home if unwell or if they have tested positive to COVID-19 and have respiratory symptoms.

Parent, Carer and Visitor Access

On-site school community activities will have full support in Term 4. The School will continue to engage with families via other means where face-to-face is not possible.

It is strongly recommended by Public Health that parents and carers are up-to-date with COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations before attending School sites.

Drop off and pick up for students will be streamlined – stop, drop and go is preferred.

Face-to-face learning

Face-to-face learning will continue, with COVID-safe measures in place. There is a clear process in place to manage COVID-19 cases. All regular school activities, such as assemblies, school photos, music and swimming lessons and excursions will continue in a COVID-safe manner.

Attendance

Students should attend School if they are well. School attendance is important for improved learning, health and wellbeing outcomes.

Students will be supported to stay home if they feel unwell with cold or flu-like (or hay fever) symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat and/or runny nose.

If unwell with cold or flu-like symptoms, students should stay home and conduct a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). If they register a negative result the child may return to school, subject to them not being unwell.

Students, staff and visitors are encouraged to stay home if they have COVID-19 until their respiratory symptoms have resolved.

Keeping Safe at School

To keep our students and staff as safe as possible, proactive measures are in place to limit the impact of COVID-19.

These include:

- **Vaccination:** The government deems vaccination to be the best way to reduce the severity of COVID-19 symptoms and recommends everyone aged 5 years and older to be vaccinated.
- **Face masks:** Face masks are not mandatory at schools but remain an important way to help reduce the risk of COVID-19. It is strongly recommended by Public Health that masks are worn by cases who have had a positive test within the last seven days, regardless of symptoms. Close contacts are also strongly recommended to wear masks.
- **Ventilation:** Continuing to maximise airflow by increasing ventilation remains a key strategy to help minimise disease transmission. There are a number of ways to promote air flow and improve air quality. Windows will be open where possible to ensure good ventilation and the School has installed air purifier units into learning spaces, meeting rooms and offices. Air conditioners are in most learning spaces and are regularly maintained.
- **Outdoor learning:** Where practicable, we will take advantage of outdoor learning opportunities.
- **Physical distancing:** Staff and students will be supported to physically distance and COVID-safe measures will apply in staffrooms and offices.
- **Hygiene practices:** Promoting personal hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, regular handwashing and sanitising will be maintained.
 - Pump action hand sanitisers will be in classrooms, break-out spaces, offices, and soap dispensers in toilets.
 - Posters placed around the campuses will advertise and promote thorough hand washing.
- **Eating & Drinking:** Staff and students will be encouraged to eat and drink outside wherever possible.
 - The Senior Campus Café 1846 will be operating. Junior and Senior students can order lunches as usual.
 - Students will also be encouraged to be fully self-sufficient in terms of food and water/drink, bringing all they need for the day from home.
 - There is to be no sharing or swapping of food or drink bottles, etc.
 - Drinking fountains that require contact to operate and that bring the mouth close to/touching the water outlet will be turned off.
- **Cleaning:** Frequent cleaning will continue, particularly on high-touch surfaces.

Rapid Antigen Tests

Each student will be provided with an initial supply of five rapid antigen tests (RAT) when School recommences in Term 4. If used, these will be replaced upon request. All School staff will be provided with five RATs to use if they have symptoms.

The Boarding House will also have a supply of RATs for use as needed. These are to be kept in the Nurse's office.

Public Health recommends that people that anyone with acute (or new) respiratory symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat and/or runny nose should stay home or away from others.

Parents are asked to register any positive COVID-19 cases with the respective Head of Campus via the following link: [Positive COVID-19 Test Result Form](#). People are encouraged to stay home after a positive test until their respiratory symptoms have resolved.

People who test positive to COVID-19 more than 28 days after recovering from a previous infection should be reported and managed as new cases.

The School Day

Procedures during class time

- Students are to use only their own equipment (no sharing of pens, pencils, ruler, etc).
- If required, classrooms will be reallocated to ensure that larger rooms are used by classes with larger numbers of students.
- Staff who teach practical subjects and operate in shared spaces (e.g., Gym, Music etc.) will implement subject specific COVID-safe practices.

Junior Campus Recess and Lunch

Students are to use outdoor areas, and indoor areas which are supervised, in breaks. Early Learning and Prep-Grade 6 programmes will remain separate.

Senior Campus Recess and Lunch

Students are not to leave the campus at lunch unless they are traveling to a Co-Op class at another School. Students will be supervised while they eat lunch, with hygiene protocols a priority. Boarders will continue to use the Boarders Dining Hall, supervised by the Head of Boarding, to collect recess and lunch.

Café 1846

Café 1846 will be open with COVID-safe measures in place. Orders through Flexischools will continue.

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Monday to Friday – Junior Campus

The OSHC programme will operate as usual in the EL Street building with COVID-safe measures in place. Students will be encouraged to be outside where practicable.

7.30am – 8.30am	Before School Care
3.00pm – 6.00pm	After School Care

School support and wellbeing

Our staff will continue to support the wellbeing of all students, with a particular focus on those students with diverse and complex needs. We will continue to promote and implement the recommended strategies to assist our students, families, and staff.

- Vulnerable students will be supported to access, participate, and engage in learning.
- Those who are more at risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19 will be supported.
- The psychological wellbeing of students, staff and families will be a priority.

At Risk Students

If you are concerned about specific risks that your child has, please contact the respective Head of Campus.

Student Absences

Parents are to advise the School if their child is absent and the reason for the absence. The most important action you can take if your child is unwell is to keep them home and ensure they get tested.

Junior Campus Absences

Students who are absent from School can stay up to date with their learning by liaising with their child's classroom teacher. The Primary Years Programme (PYP) Coordinator will oversee learning arrangements for students who are absent.

Senior Campus Absences

Students who are absent from School can stay up to date with their learning by looking online at the TASS eDiary which will be updated by staff with learning intentions and materials. With the support of their teachers, students are encouraged to take responsibility for self-managing their learning. Students should also liaise with the relevant Head of House (Grades 8-12) or the Head of Grade 7.

Families can provide support for student learning by encouraging attendance on video calls and regular check-ins on the TASS eDiary, helping to provide quiet space for work, and engaging in conversations about posted materials.

An electronic record of all students who have contracted COVID-19 will be kept. This will include the day/date they tested positive and the date of their return to school. If a student is absent and no reason is provided, parents will be contacted to provide the reason for the student's absence.

Student information will be confidential and is for internal records only.

Staff Absences

People and Culture will keep an electronic record of those staff who have contracted COVID-19 and subsequently returned to the workplace. This will comprise of the day/date they tested positive and the date of their return to work.

Proactive strategies are in place to ensure there are enough staff. If needed, relief teachers will be employed.

Public Transport

People using public transport are encouraged to physically distance where possible.

This may include:

- walking or cycling if undertaking a short trip
- keeping a physical distance of 1.5 metres from other passengers when queuing at bus stops
- choosing a seat away from others where possible – members of the same household may sit together
- not occupying the first row of seats nearest to the driver. All school bus operators will continue frequent cleaning of bus interiors, particularly on high-touch surfaces.

Boarding House

Students and staff will be asked to not return to the Boarding House if unwell with acute respiratory symptoms or positive for COVID-19. Students and staff will be required to follow [Public Health guidelines](#) regarding confirmed cases.

There will be daily monitoring of student symptoms in the Boarding House and use of RATs if symptoms are present.

The following strategies have been adopted to mitigate risks:

- Creation of a Case and Outbreak Management Plan specifically for on-campus positive case of COVID-19.
- Follow the directive of Public Health if a confirmed case is on site.
- Maintain up-to-date records on staff and student movements within the House and leave via Reach. Be prepared to share key information with Public Health on suspected close contacts.
- Establish a long-term isolation facility for those unable to return home. Ongoing provision of meals, showers, toilets and mental health support and medical monitoring, in isolation from other wings of the house.
- Medical assessment of close contacts.

Visiting parents are strongly recommended to be up-to-date with COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations. Contractors and suppliers are expected to adopt social distancing protocols.

Vulnerable Students in the Boarding House

The following mitigating strategies will be adopted in the Boarding House for vulnerable people:

- Vulnerable students and staff are identified.
- Staff seek medical assessment of their health and seek advice on their suitability to work.

- Staff are provided with sanitisation and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Staff are allocated alternative roles that limits exposure.

Physical Distancing in the Boarding House

The following physical distancing strategies will be adopted in the Boarding House to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19:

- Staff workstations will adhere to the physical distancing advice in each house.
- Prep time during academic support of students of an evening will be completed, adhering to physical distancing protocols. Same rules as if in a classroom environment.
- Roles requiring close contact with students will be allocated to non-vulnerable staff.
- Staff and Students are restricted from entering the main Chartwell kitchen.
- Room allocation will be one-bedroom per person where possible. Large rooms will have an allocation of a maximum of two boarders.
- Bench seating has been removed and single chairs have been placed around the tables in the Dining Hall.

Launceston Grammar Early Learning Centre and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) programme:

Testing – supply and use of equipment

RATs are to be distributed to all parents/carers so that there is no need to come in to School to collect tests if symptomatic. Instructions for use will be included in the packet the RAT will be collected in.

RAT tests should not be used on children two years or under. It is advised that parents/carers book for PCR test for children under two. Tests are to be administered by parents at home.

Testing (reporting of positive results) and case management

Parents, carers and staff are to register positive RAT results (children and adults) online, notify the School and are encouraged to stay home until their acute symptoms have resolved.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

The School has a detailed cleaning schedule identifying what areas are cleaned, when they are cleaned, and by whom.

Work areas and shared surfaces should be cleaned as follows:

- Use disposable cloths and disposable gloves. Clean surfaces as usual with a neutral detergent and water.
- In addition to routine cleaning, the following surfaces which are commonly touched should be disinfected:
 - door handles and light switches.
 - tables and counters.
 - armrests of chairs (if not fabric).
 - bathroom surfaces including door handles, door locks, toilet seats and buttons.
 - taps, washbasins, counters.
- Sanitising of classrooms will occur regularly, as per the cleaning schedule.
- Toilets will be cleaned as per the cleaning schedule twice per day.
- Cleaning/sanitising of high-volume touchpoints, such as desks, door handles, play equipment handrails, locker areas will take place regularly.
- Water fountains to be turned off/covered up if possible.
- Play equipment, outside seats and play equipment/sports equipment to be cleaned and sanitised regularly.

Staff Cleaning

- Staff are to wash up their own cups and any utensils (nothing left in sinks). A dishwasher on the highest heat setting or washing by hand using hot water and soap are both effective cleaning methods.
- Microwaves to be wiped out after use and surfaces to be wiped down.
- Staff areas are to be cleaned and sanitised daily.

- Hand sanitiser and surface sprays will be located in staffrooms, classrooms and receptions.
- Soap will be available in all toilets.
- Hand washing regime will be employed.
- Posters will be provided in staff areas, classrooms, and common shared area.

Boarding House Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Provision of hand sanitisation at entry points.
- Handwashing monitored.
- Provisions for chemical clean of shared shower and toilet facilities to be applied between uses.
- Chemical and cleaning provision stock monitored and bulk ordering occurring.
- Compliance of chemicals used in line with WHO recommendations for catering, laundry, and general household. Chemical strength upgraded where required.
- Cleaning regimes to incorporate daily cleaning of high-volume touch points.
- Continuation of cleaning surfaces in Boarders Dining Hall and Kitchen preparation areas. Monitoring for compliance as this is student led.
- In the event of a shut-down, Public Health are notified and a thorough clean is coordinated with preferred supplier and Public Health.
- Non-local students are provided with alternative accommodation whilst deep cleaning.

Events and Co-Curricular Activities

Community and Parent Gatherings

The School recognises the importance of parent and community access to our campuses and the value of incidental conversations between parents and staff.

Face-to-face parent-teaching meetings can be conducted with COVID-safe protocols in place, including physical distancing. Parents and community will be welcomed back to our campuses and school events.

Co-curricular Activities

The co-curricular programme is an essential aspect of the holistic education of our students. In Term 4, co-curricular activities will proceed in a COVID-safe manner. To enable this, the following will occur:

- Each co-curricular activity is to provide a Risk Assessment pertinent to its situation prior to the activity and it must be approved by the Head of Campus.
- Bands may continue to rehearse as per their normal schedule.
- The School will adhere to all Government and Public Health guidelines around co-curricular activities.

Excursions and Camps

All planned excursions and camps will continue in Term 4. Organisers must provide a risk assessment pertinent to the specifics of the excursion/camp five days prior to the date of the camp/excursion and it must be approved by the relevant Head of Campus, Chief Operating Officer and Headmaster. The Risk Assessment must cover all COVID-safe strategies in this Plan.

Communication and Education of Staff, Parents and Students

Education will be a key aspect to ensure this Plan is successful. It will ensure to the extent that is practicable:

- People who are unwell do not enter any School campus.
- All adults and students are supported to wear masks indoors.
- Social distancing is maintained wherever possible.
- Good hygiene is practised by staff and students.

The School's COVID-Safe School Operational Plan which will be located on the School website.

Confirmed Cases and Outbreak Management

Parents/carers will be informed if there is a significant increase in positive cases in a grade level and will be asked to monitor their child for symptoms, test if needed, and stay home if unwell. If the level of COVID-19 cases in the School exceeds what would be expected in line with patterns of community transmission, the School will communicate directly with families to provide instructions specific to their children.

Notifications to families regarding cases and outbreaks will utilise existing communication channels used by schools. The School will continue to support students and young people with disability to continue to learn throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including making adjustments to learning and implementing Medical Action Plans where appropriate.

Outbreaks in boarding schools: Public health may declare an outbreak in a boarding house if there are two or more cases identified within three days of each other. Public health will work with the boarding school to provide advice about testing and management of the outbreak.

Students with additional needs: Students with a disability and/or with complex health needs will continue to be supported on an individual basis. Staff will work closely with parents and carers as necessary. This could include additional medical advice within the student's Medical Action Plan, as appropriate.

For the latest information about COVID-19 visit:

- [Tasmanian Government Coronavirus website](#)
- [Australian Government Department of Health website](#)
- [Tasmanian Government COVID-19 vaccination website](#)

For general COVID-19 inquiries, contact the Tasmanian Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738.

For vaccination information, contact the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080.

For independent school related COVID-19 inquiries, contact Independent Schools Tasmania on 03 6224 0125.

References:

Department of Education Tasmania's COVID-safe schools operational plan (Version 4.1)

National Framework for Managing COVID-19 in Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care

Best Practice COVID-19 Workplace Safety: Schools (Version 4.0)

Best Practice COVID-19 Workplace Safety: Early Childhood Education and Care Services (Version 3.0)