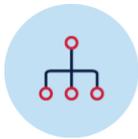




# What you need to know about our return to school in Term 4

We're excited about our return to face-to-face learning and welcoming students and staff back onsite where we know the best learning happens. This is a short summary of what our parents and students can expect at **Avalon Public School**.



## Key dates for our staged return

While we know there is excitement about the return to school it's important that we stick to the staged return to give us time to be ready to welcome back students onsite. Students will return to face-to-face learning in the following order

- from 18 October – Kindergarten, Year 1
- from 25 October – all remaining year groups.



## Our school's COVID-safe operations

Our COVID-safe return to school plan is NSW Health approved and includes numerous effective practices to support the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. These practices include vaccinations, mask wearing, reduced mingling of student groups and staff, ventilation in classrooms and continued good hygiene and cleaning.



## Keeping student groups together

As we return to school students will be kept in their cohorts to minimise opportunities for transmission of COVID-19 and to enable effective contact tracing and containment. This means minimising interaction between students on school grounds and keeping cohorts together where possible.

At Avalon, keeping cohorts together means keeping students in their class groupings as far as possible, and allowing students to only interact within their year group for the time being.

We will manage the year-based cohort model in a way that best ensures;

- Each class will be allocated a learning space, completing all lessons and break times with their allocated year cohort.
- Break times, playground and canteen access to be separated by year cohort.

- Within each cohort, students are maintaining strict personal hygiene.

### **Week 3:**

**Kindergarten and Year 1 students** will return to their original 2021 class grouping with their class teacher (this includes all students in 1/2AL who need to be kept together as a class group for obvious reasons).

Any students in **Years 2-6** who return in Week 3 will be organised into classes by year eg. all Year 3 students will be placed together and supervised by a Year 3 teacher/s (not necessarily their own teacher) or a casual teacher. They will continue with the single unit provided for 'Learning from Home'.

### **Week 4**

All students are expected to return to school and will be taught by their 2021 class teacher. Normal lessons will resume and the Learning From Home unit will no longer be provided.

### **School drop off**

#### **Week 3**

There will be no play before school in the playgrounds to ensure COVID-safe separation of all student cohorts. Students are strongly discouraged from arriving before 8.55am.

All 3 gates (Old Barrenjoey Rd, Bellevue Ave and Sanders Lane) will be open from 8.30am and supervised by staff from the school start time of 8.55am. Hand sanitiser will be provided to ensure hygiene protocols are implemented.

- Any students arriving before 8.55am will be directed to sit in the playground in separate designated, signposted areas for each year group.
- At 8.55am, K-1 students will be taken directly to their 2021 classrooms with their teacher. Students in years 2-6, will be directed to their 'grade supervision' rooms and will be supervised by teachers.

#### **Week 4**

There will be no play before school in the playgrounds to ensure COVID-safe separation of all student cohorts. Students are strongly discouraged from arriving before 8.55am.

- As in Week 3, but at 8.55am all students will go directly to their original 2021 classroom.
- Students arriving after 8.55am will be directed to go straight to their 2021 classrooms.

### **School Pick up from Week 3 onwards**

- Staggered departures are a requirement and must be strictly adhered to.
- All primary grade cohorts will be dismissed at 5-minute intervals from 3.00pm and students are to quickly exit through one of the 3 gates.
- If they have a younger K-2 sibling, they are to make their way to their classroom and collect them asap, before exiting the school.
- Primary students catching buses will assemble at the front of the school and will be supervised until Bus Duty commences at 3.25pm.
- Parents are not permitted to enter the school grounds – it is advisable only one parent collects children at the end of the day.

### **Grade departure times**

- Year 6 dismissed at 3.00pm
- Year 5 dismissed at 3.05pm
- Year 4 dismissed at 3.10pm

- Year 3 dismissed at 3.15pm
- At 3.20pm, K-2 classes will leave their classrooms and be walked as a class, by their teacher and meet parents in 3 distinct grade areas on the grass area across the road (look for your class sign).

## **Learning From Home (LFH)**

### **Week 3**

Students in K-1 are expected to be at school, so LFH resources will cease to be provided.

LFH resources continue for students in years 2-6 as usual. Collection of paper copies as normal at school gates from 8.55am on Monday 18 October.

### **Week 4**

All LFH ceases. The best learning environment for students is the classroom. We have worked closely with NSW Health to develop a COVID-safe and cautious plan to stagger the return to face-to-face schooling from 18 October 2021. In the coming week, we expect further advice from the NSW Department of Education on support for students who may be unable to return to face-to-face learning. In the meantime, parents are encouraged to access the appropriate lesson materials from

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/learning-at-home/learning-packages>

## **Zoom Meetings**

### **Week 3**

Zoom meetings will cease for K-1 classes, Learning Support and RFF teachers, as these staff are required for teaching at school. Zooms will continue for years 2-6 at home (Note: students in attendance at school will not Zoom – they will be under the teaching supervision of teacher from their grade and we do not currently have enough laptops/iPads, due to device loans for LFH).

### **Week 4**

All Zoom lessons cease.

## **Canteen**

The canteen will be operational for on-line orders and over the counter purchases from Week 3 (subject to completion of repairs to the hall and canteen roof that have been significantly delayed by lockdown and now by poor weather).

Students will access the canteen in their cohort groups.

## **School attendance**

All students should be at school on the date indicated for their year group, unless:

- they have a medical certificate which says they can't return to school due to a condition or illness
- they are currently unwell
- they have been asked by NSW Health to self-isolate.

## **Wellbeing**

If you are worried that the impacts of COVID-19 or going back to face-to-face learning may be affecting your child's wellbeing, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

You can find more information to help your child's wellbeing through the mental health and wellbeing resources on the department's website.

## **Visitors**

Only essential visitors are allowed on school sites at this time. When dropping off or picking up your child, parents and carers need to stay outside school grounds, you will need to wear a mask and physically distance.



## **Mask wearing for students and staff**

Masks are required to be worn on school site by staff indoors and outdoors and strongly recommended for students indoors and outdoors unless exercising or eating. Students should bring their own masks where possible, but schools will have back-up supplies just in case and will be offered to those students who request one.

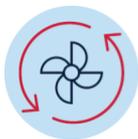


## **Vaccinations**

All staff required on site supporting the return to school will need to be fully vaccinated from 18 October. Then from 8 November all staff, contractors, volunteers and students on student placement on a school site will need to be fully vaccinated, including Outside of School Hours Care staff.

This also includes our canteen and uniform shop personnel if they are on site from 18 October.

To date, there has been no mention of vaccinations for primary school children. However, be assured that in the event that a vaccination program is implemented for primary-school-aged children in NSW public schools, informed consent will be sought from the child's parents or carers before any vaccine is administered.



## **Ventilation**

Having open or well-ventilated spaces reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19 because infectious particles are more quickly diffused in the open air. The department will continue to work with NSW Health to provide us with advice and guidance on maintaining good ventilation in our school and we will make use of our outdoor spaces wherever practical.

All windows and doors were inspected during the recent holiday to ensure functionality. Staff are encouraged to leave windows and doors open wherever possible to ensure good airflow. We are also encouraging teachers to make use of our many outdoor learning spaces on our school grounds (please refer to the [department's information on ventilation](#) )



## **School activities**

During Term 4 many school-based activities will remain on hold until NSW Health advise otherwise. This includes large celebrations like assemblies, presentation days and graduations, arts and sports events.

However, we are very confident that our Year 6 Farewell will proceed, albeit subject to some potential minor adjustments dependent on COVID-safe guidelines at the time.



## Covid Communication

Parents and students will be notified if a decision is made to close the school due to a confirmed case of COVID-19. During this time we will continue to provide learning from home activities and we will let you know when we can return to face-to-face learning.

In the meantime, we recommend that you subscribe to our school app 'SkoolBag' via the App Store or Goggle Play and our Facebook page, to keep up to date with important happenings across the school.



## Preschool and out of school hours care

Out of school hours care, vacation care settings and preschools operating on school sites will follow the same COVID-safe guidelines as public schools including the requirement to be fully vaccinated from 8 November.



## Orientation and transition to school

Onsite orientations and transition programs are not currently allowed in person on school sites until we are advised differently by NSW Health. We'll share more information in the coming weeks about our school's virtual orientation and transition program.

In the meantime, if you have not yet enrolled for Kindergarten 2022, we urge you to do so as soon as possible.

Further information will be made available as it arises in the coming days.

Thanks for your understanding as we navigate this complex and challenging task of returning our 916 students and 60+ staff to face-to-face learning and under COVID-safe conditions.

Kind regards,

Andy Rankin

Principal