

Dear Ms Mills

Thank you for your recent correspondence to the Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and flexible school attendance requirements. The Minister has asked me to respond on her behalf.

All schools returned to full on-campus learning on Monday 25 May 2020. All school activities and operations will be in line with Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and NSW Health guidelines as applicable.

School students do not need to follow physical distancing guidelines, but should follow good hygiene practices like:

- Regularly washing hands
- Avoiding sharing drinks or food
- Coughing or sneezing into your elbow, or a tissue which should be discarded immediately.

All students should be at school unless:

- They have a medical certificate which states that they are unable to return to school due to an ongoing medical condition
- They are currently unwell.

Students who have a medical certificate to stay at home will be supported to learn from home in line with regular procedures if able. These regular procedures are different to what was offered during the learning from home period. Parents you should contact the school for assistance.

The AHPPC has advised that children are at low risk from coronavirus.

We recognise that teachers are on the front line in supporting our students to return to face to face learning while implementing strategies to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. We know and appreciate how hard teachers are working so students can continue to learn, whether in the classroom or at home.

All school-based staff, including temporary and casual staff, are expected to return to working on-campus unless they fall into one of the following categories in line with AHPPC guidelines:

- people aged 70 years and over
- all people with compromised immune systems
- people aged 65 years and over only with chronic medical conditions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50 with chronic medical conditions.

Normal leave management arrangements will apply. Staff will need to submit the appropriate leave application and supporting documents.

Principals or supervisors will need to consider individual circumstances and school operational needs when approving leave.

Further information is available for parents or staff through their local school principal or by visiting the Department's website, which is regularly updated with the latest advice and information about school operations at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>.