



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 Bexley North 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.

Thank you to our parents who completed the survey last week. From the survey completed, with 145 responses, 89% are supportive of the return to school.



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 Bexley North Public School, we will have three separate cohorts while we remain at Level 3 Plus settings:

Cohort 1: Kindy / Year 1

Cohort 2: Year 2 / Year 3 / Year 4

Cohort 3: Year 5 / Year 6

Students will remain in these cohorts for breaks to avoid mingling.



Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures

In the mornings, please drop your child off at the gate. Unfortunately, at the moment, no parents are able to enter the school site. Students who arrive before 8.45am, will sit in the cola area. Students arriving between 8.45 and 9.00am will go straight to their classrooms where their teacher will supervise them until the bell.

The following will be in place for pick up of students in the afternoon:

Kindy/Year 1- Teachers will take their class to the back gate for pick up at 2.45pm. Teachers will let students leave as parents are visible outside the gate. Teachers will wait with students until they have all been picked up.

Year 2 / Year 3 / Year 4: Teachers will take their class to the front gate for pick up at 2.45pm. Teachers will let students leave as parents are visible outside the gate. Teachers will wait with students until they have all been picked up. If students have a younger sibling in Kindy or Year 1, they will go to the back gate and wait with their sibling.

Year 5 / Year 6: Students will be released at the bell. If students have younger siblings they will go to the area of their youngest sibling at 2.45pm.



Mask wearing for students and staff

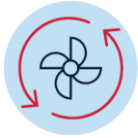
Masks are required to be worn on school site by staff indoors and outdoors and strongly recommended for students indoors and outdoors unless exercising or eating.

We encourage students to provide their own masks, but we have a supply of masks at school if a child forgets theirs and wishes to wear 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.



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.

The department has carried out an extensive audit of our school. All of our classrooms have the required level of ventilation required. We will have all windows and doors open to ensure natural airflow. Any windows which are not able to be opened will be fixed by the time students return to school. Please see attached additional information about 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.

Our Presentation Day will be held by livestream on Friday 10 December. Decisions about other events will be made depending on the restrictions 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 case of a school closure, the community would be notified via our Skoolbag app. I encourage all parents to download this app and turn on notifications as it is the form of communication we will use in the event of any emergency.



Before and After School Care – Bexley North PS

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.

Please follow COVID-safe practices as communicated by our BASC staff.



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.

Our new students and families will receive individual communication regarding transition to school.



Teaching and Learning

When we return to school, teachers will focus on assessing students and ensuring the delivery of quality teaching and learning programs. Students will learn in their classrooms with their class cohort. Students will attend library lessons and will be able to borrow on their usual library day. During the rest of Term 4, we will be focusing on three key areas to support students. These focus areas are:

- Wellbeing: to support the social and emotional needs of our students.
- Literacy: to identify areas of need for students and target teaching and additional support in these areas.
- Numeracy: to identify areas of need for students and target teaching and additional support in these areas.

The school has allocated additional funds to employ additional staff to work with students across in years to support their learning between now and the end of the year. This support is in addition to the EAL/D (ESL), Learning and Support Teachers, Student Learning Support Officers and COVID Intensive Learning Support staff who are already supporting student learning.



Student Wellbeing

Students may be excited and possibly anxious about the return to school following a long period of learning from home. Teachers are experts at helping students establishing routine and settle back into school. Parents can help prepare students by talking positively about school. Please see attached some helpful tips for parents to help their child feel positive about returning to school.

During Term 4, teachers will continue to implement our whole school You Can Do It program to support student wellbeing. Individual wellbeing programs will be developed for students who require additional support. Please talk to your child's class teacher if you have concerns about your child's wellbeing.



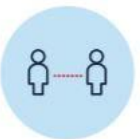
OC Test

As a result of the most recent advice from NSW Health regarding the duration of COVID-19 restrictions and the return to school plan, the Opportunity Class Placement Test has been rescheduled to Wednesday 17 November 2021, further details on the testing arrangements will be confirmed soon.



Visitors

Non-essential visitors are not permitted on school sites. Parents should remain outside of school grounds and adhere to mask-wearing requirements and physical distancing, especially at drop off or pick-up times. All essential visitors are required to sign in using the school's Service NSW QR code. All visitors are required to wear a face mask or covering in accordance with the Public Health Order. Parents who need to come on to school grounds to collect a sick child, or attend a pre-arranged interview with a member of staff will need to sign in using the school's QR Check In code.



COVID Symptoms or Sick/Unwell Students

Students must not attend school if unwell, even with mild symptoms of COVID-19. Any person with any COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home and not return to school unless:

- they have a negative COVID-19 test result and are symptom free or
- they have isolated for 10 days, when no medical certificate is available.

In circumstances where students or staff have other medical reasons for recurrent symptoms, a letter from their GP is sufficient to negate the requirement for a negative test.

Where a person has previously tested positive for COVID-19, NSW Health will provide them with a medical clearance that allows them to return to school or work.



Attendance at School

The NSW Department of Education recognises that 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. Only students with a specific medical need supported by documentation will be supported to continue learning from home and will be discussed with families on an individual basis. Please contact us if this relates to your child.

If parents or carers believe that their child has a condition that means it's not safe for them to return to school, they will need to provide a medical certificate. In this instance, we encourage these families to speak with their doctor or health care provider to develop a COVID 19 Action Plan to support decision-making about their activities, including attendance at school.

We understand that some families were hoping that there would be a continued option to learn from home. However, as outlined above this is not being provided by NSW Department of Education schools. We will communicate any changes to this information should it arise. Teachers will be delivering the face-to-face mode of learning once we return to school. We are unable to provide online learning and feedback for students who are learning from home.