



27<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**TO: Parents and Carers**

**RE: College Response to COVID-19**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your ongoing support as we have navigated the ongoing challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. On the 28th February 2022, restrictions will ease in school settings across Victoria. Northside Christian College is continuing to implement a COVID Safe Plan and a range of additional strategies to assist in maintaining a safe learning environment for our College community. Please see below a summary of some the College's responses to COVID-19 as we commence Week 5.

- All staff and Year 3 - 12 students will be expected to carry a face mask while onsite at the College during Term 1, unless an exemption applies.
  - Students in Years 3 - 6 must wear a face mask indoors unless an exemption applies.
  - Years 3 to 6 students are not required to wear masks outside, however they are strongly recommended if physical distance cannot be maintained or when students are not undertaking physical exercise.
  - Face masks remain strongly recommended but are not required in Secondary School.
  - Students in Prep to Year 2 are strongly recommended to wear a face mask indoors at school or a before and after school program.
  - Primary School staff will be required to always wear masks indoors.
  - College staff must don face masks indoors when working in the Primary School setting.
  - There is an exemption from this requirement if Primary School staff are actively teaching and clear enunciation or visibility of their mouth is essential.
  - Masks are not compulsory for teachers and staff outdoors, however they are strongly recommended if physical distance cannot be maintained, even outdoors.
- Everyone over 8 years of age must wear a face mask when travelling to and from school on public transport, taxis, or rideshare vehicles unless a lawful exception applies.
- Windows and doors will be left open as much as possible in classrooms to ensure clean air is circulated through rooms at all times. The College has air purifier units in many learning spaces. During the past week, Northside Christian College installed Carbon Dioxide monitors in a range of spaces across the College.
- Excursions and Camps will take place with additional COVID Safe measures in place.
- The College will carefully consider the necessity of using shared equipment at this time. If used, strict hand hygiene protocols will be followed before and after use. The risks may be further minimised with staff wiping down items where appropriate.
- The Victorian Government has advised that free Rapid Antigen Tests will be made available for all staff and students in Victorian schools throughout Term 1. Rapid antigen testing remains voluntary for all Primary and Secondary School students and staff. Students and staff are recommended to undertake twice-weekly testing on school days (i.e. Monday and Wednesday).
- Students who report a COVID positive result must isolate for seven days and not attend school during that period.
- If a student receives a positive test result at any time, they must also report this through the Department of Health system or via the coronavirus hotline at 1800 675 398. For more



information, please refer to: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/rapid-antigen-tests#report-a-positive-result-on-a-rapid-antigen-test>

- Please note that staff and students with a positive Rapid Antigen Test (probable case) who receives a negative PCR test within 48 hours after the positive Rapid Antigen Test can end their period of self-isolation period and safely return to school.
- Students are requested to refrain from returning to school if they remain symptomatic unless it is known that their symptoms are caused by an underlying health condition or medication.
- If a student is a household contact of a positive case, the school must be informed and the student is required to isolate for seven days and not attend school during that period.
- Students who are required to isolate or quarantine will be supported in the same way as students with an extended absence due to illness or injury, with learning materials provided to support their continued learning.
- Parents, visitors, and volunteers may enter the College grounds. After approximately 15 minutes on the College grounds, a parent is considered a visitor. Parents are asked to support physical distancing, face mask requirements, cough etiquette, and good hand hygiene.
- Schools visitors and volunteers must adhere to COVID Safe requirements - including vaccination, physical distancing, face mask requirements, cough etiquette, and good hand hygiene.
- Volunteers are required to meet third dose vaccination requirements or have a valid medical exception.
- Service Victoria QR code check-in is not required at schools. Routine visitor record keeping arrangements at Northside will continue to apply.
- At Northside, parents, carers and other adult visitors who enter school buildings must be able to show evidence of two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine or have a valid medical exception.

The following limited exceptions also apply:

- when attending to administer medical treatment to their own child when the treatment cannot be administered by the school
- when attending to collect their child who is unwell and cannot leave the school building unaccompanied by their parent/carer
- when attending for a momentary period that does not involve any sustained contact with staff or students, for example, to collect a completed art project, collecting a packet of rapid antigen test or similar.
- Proof of vaccination can be checked by a COVID-19 digital certificate (Service Victoria app or smartphone wallet) or printed copy of a digital certificate or immunisation history statement.
- We still have limitations in terms of gatherings. Assemblies and Chapel services will continue to be conducted online during Term 1.

Thank you once again for your ongoing prayers and support.

Sincerely,

**Michael Bond**  
Principal