
Macquarie College COVID-19 Update 26 ~ 19 August

1 message

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19 August 2020 at 14:32



Good afternoon Parents and Carers,

This week the NSW Government provided updated advice to all schools in relation to guidelines and expectations pertaining to school operation in Term 3.

Macquarie College (MC) understands that many of the measures and expectations set out below will require a change in behaviour or habits for many valued members of our school community.

We trust though that you will appreciate that these measures, as required by the NSW Government, are intended to ensure that every member of our school community remains safe throughout the period of the current global pandemic. Hence, active support of these measures will be greatly appreciated.

Macquarie College continues to operate full time while actively following NSW Government health advice.

Schools continue to be safe, and operations are in line with Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and NSW Health advice. All MC students should be learning on campus unless they are unwell or have a medical certificate to support their absence.

The activities that are permitted at MC will be conducted in a way that is safe and appropriate in the current environment. Those that remain on hold will be reviewed during the term and will recommence when appropriate based on health and other relevant advice.

Responding to COVID-19 Cases

There is a clear plan in place for MC to respond to any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 at our school. We will work closely with NSW Health and will communicate with parents/carers if a situation arises.

NSW Health Advice for Students and Families

In accordance with advice from NSW Health, parents and carers are reminded **NOT** to send children to school if they are unwell, even if they have the mildest flu-like symptoms. MC will make arrangements for students who present as unwell or have flu like symptoms to be sent home.

NSW Health has requested that schools encourage anyone who is unwell or has even mild flu-like symptoms, to arrange to be tested through their local medical practitioner or one of the [COVID-19 clinics](#).

Students absent or sent home due to flu like symptoms need to be tested for COVID-19 and **MUST NOT** return to school until they return a negative COVID-19 result and are symptom free.

The negative COVID-19 test result must be sighted and received by the school for students before their return to school. (A screenshot or similar from an accredited testing authority is appropriate).

[What is the flu?](#)

Flu is not the same as a common cold.

Flu symptoms include:

- runny nose or sneezing

- cough or sore throat
- fever and chills
- headache
- body aches
- vomiting and diarrhoea (more common in children).

Symptoms usually start about 1 to 3 days after catching the flu and can last for a week or more.

Some people can be mildly affected, while others can become seriously ill.

A common cold is not the same as the flu, although some of the symptoms are similar:

- runny nose or sneezing
- cough or sore throat.

School attendance

As per NSW Government requirements, 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 and the expected timeframe
- they are currently unwell.

Maintaining a Healthy School Environment

MC will continue to conduct widespread temperature screening *but not* mandate the wearing of a mask. Students or staff who would prefer to wear a mask at school will be accommodated by MC.

MC remains vigilant in implementing infection control, physical distancing and personal hygiene protocols to protect the health and safety of students and staff. MC will continue to promote the need to follow good hygiene practices such as:

- regularly washing hands
- avoiding sharing drinks or food
- coughing or sneezing into your elbow, or a tissue which should be discarded immediately
- filling water bottles from bubblers rather than using the bubbler directly

- daily intensive cleaning of learning spaces and high use areas
- regular disinfecting of frequent-touch surfaces.

All students who have visited Victoria must have a [permit to enter NSW](#) and are required to comply with health restrictions relevant to their permit which may include the need complete the 14 day self-isolation period commencing the last day they were in Victoria.

School Activities/School Site Usage

Additional safety measures for school activities in NSW have been put in place to minimize the risk of COVID- 19 transmission in schools for the remainder of Term 3.

The following principles underpin these measures:

- Where possible, students will stay within their relevant cohort group (i.e. class, year group, or stage) for all learning activities at MC in order to limit close contacts to the relevant student cohort.
- Interschool activities have been paused for Term 3. This applies to all interschool sport and physical activities, curriculum activities, arts activities and extra-curricular activities organised or sponsored by MC. MC students will not travel outside our local Newcastle/Lake Macquarie local government areas for approved school activities.
- Only providers that are essential to the delivery of curriculum will continue to provide services and programs at MC until further notice.
- Parents/carers and other non-essential visitors are not allowed on the school site. This includes during drop-off and pick-up times. Parents/carers are not permitted to drive past the main flagpole roundabout or proceed on foot past that roundabout or across the pedestrian crossings.
- All parent/carers visitors to the school site must proceed directly to the main school office to complete screening and sign-in prior to moving to any other part of the school site. While this is a significant change to many established practices, please understand that these measures simply ensure that we are meeting the published advice of NSW Health.
- All group singing (choirs) and/or other chanting activities, as well as the use of wind instruments in group settings, are not permitted. Special arrangements are in place for HSC students.

- School formals, graduation or other social events are not permitted in NSW in Term 3. MC may hold a Year 12 assembly at school without parents to recognise the completion of school. Where possible, such events may be delayed until later in the year.

Activities/Site Usage That Can Take Place at MC

- Use of the school library (Nil parent/carer attendance)
- Engage in sporting activities on campus within restrictions (Nil parent/carer attendance)
- Canteens (including approved volunteers.
- Uniform shop (attendance by parents/carers is permitted following completion of screening and site sign-in at the main school office)
- All VET work placements can proceed subject to the availability of placement, appropriate risk assessments, and a COVID-19 Safety Plan must be in place. For any that can't proceed, refer to [the NESA website](#).
- School assemblies (limited to 15 minutes and no external visitors/parents/carers)
- Incursions/External providers can provide activities that support delivery of curriculum (e.g. music tutors, sport skills development programs, science demonstrations, drama tutors).
- Excursions - day field trips to outdoor locations with no physical distancing requirements can take place (e.g. recreation facilities, trips to local river to collect water samples)
- Parent/teacher meetings will be online unless involving significant matters that require face to face discussion.

Activities on Hold for Term 3 at MC

The following events will be reconsidered in Term 4. For now, these events must remain on hold.

- Kindergarten Orientation events
- Year 7 Orientation Day
- School camps
- Excursions (other than field trips explained above)
- Interstate excursions
- International excursions

- All students (except Year 12 students) attending classes/activities relating to subjects only available on other campuses
- Parent and carer attendance at assemblies and other school events
- Parent and carer volunteers – e.g. parent reading helpers (note: canteen and uniform shop volunteers are permitted)
- School-based activities that involve large gathering of adults. These include parent/community gatherings such as parent functions, working bees, fundraisers, BBQs, large parent information evenings, and large on-site cultural events
- Interschool sport, drama, debating and other events including gala days and regional sporting carnivals.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing of students in schools is not required under the AHPPC guidelines.

All teachers, support staff and parents must maintain physical distance from each other (1.5m).

Bus Transport

Bus services to and from MC are scheduled to run as normal. For travel advice to and from MC refer to the NSW [public transport service](#).

Staying up-to-date with the Latest COVID-19 Case Locations in NSW

You can check the [Latest COVID-19 case locations in NSW](#) and follow the recommended actions if you have been in a location where there have been confirmed cases of COVID-19. We encourage members of the community to monitor this site. Please follow the relevant health advice if you have been at any of the locations at the specified dates and times. The locations along with the times and dates of when the cases were identified can be found on the [NSW COVID-19 website](#).

Finally, a quick reminder again in relation to the MC COVID-19 Relief Fund. Please continue to contact our Business Manager, Stephen Andrews, at businessmanager@mc.nsw.edu.au, if

assistance via the MC COVID-19 Relief Fund may be beneficial either now or in the coming 18 months in relation to school fees and/or other school expenses.

Macquarie College will continue to monitor the current Government advice in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak and provide further updates as relevant to our community.

Kind regards

Rohan Deanshaw

Principal

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