



Phase 4 School Operations Guidelines

ADVICE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

1 February 2021

In line with State Government and Department of Health advice, COVID-19 Phase 4 Guidelines for schools are as follows:



Student attendance

It is compulsory for all students to attend school unless they are unwell, have a medical referral to learn from home or live with a family member who is medically vulnerable.

Students with a medical condition

Students may continue to learn from home if they are immune-compromised or are otherwise considered at-risk medically.

- Parents who plan to keep their child home to continue learning remotely are to seek medical advice and will be required to provide medical evidence to the school. Students approved to learn from home will continue to be supported in their learning.
- Where a student's pre-existing medical condition is already known to the school, no medical evidence is required.

If a child is unwell

Students who are unwell should stay at home. Parents are asked to seek medical advice if their child exhibits symptoms of COVID-19. Normal processes for advising the school of a child's absence will apply.

Student with medically vulnerable family members

Students may continue to learn from home if a member of their immediate family is immune-compromised or medically vulnerable.

- Parents who plan to keep their child home to continue learning remotely are asked to contact the school Principal and provide medical evidence to support their request.



School facilities

School canteen

Canteens are permitted to provide takeaway service and dine-in service, but must abide by the 2m² rule for food service.

School library

Library access should be managed to ensure supervisors/staff maintain physical distancing of one person per 2m², and good hygiene practices are in place.

Uniform shop

Uniform shops are open to parents and caregivers where the school can assure adherence to physical distancing requirements of 2m², enhanced cleaning of used areas and minimise contact with the broader school population.

Where a school operates a uniform shop, increased cleaning and hygiene practices must be put in place to ensure that the uniform shop meets the required AHPPC guidelines.



School activities

Incursions

Supervisors/staff are to maintain physical distancing of one person per 2m².

School sport

Sports training, games and interschool competitions can proceed with good hygiene practices. Schools must abide by the 2m² and 1.5m distancing rules for adult visitors such as coaches.

In-term swimming classes for students are permitted with good hygiene practices applied. Schools must abide by the 2m² and 1.5m distancing rules for adult visitors such as coaches.

Excursions

Supervisors/staff are to maintain physical distancing of one person per 2m².



Camps

School camps are permitted and student numbers may exceed 100 students. However, school-based camp organisers must follow appropriate risk assessment procedures including ensuring that camp providers comply with WA COVID-19 Health Guidelines.

Additionally, camp providers must provide evidence of procedures to:

- reduce physical contact between students and staff;
- enhance personal hygiene practices;
- strengthen cleaning standards.

Schools should follow CEWA excursion policies, developing mitigations that lower the risk of transmission and promote good health, hygiene and physical distancing within the camp facility.

Work Placements

Work placements may take place. Schools should conduct work placement risk assessments and ensure employers comply with WA COVID-19 Health Guidelines.

Onsite school events

Events and activities such as assemblies, interschool activities, school performances, choir practices and examinations can occur providing schools abide by the 2m² rule for adults.

Physical distancing requirements for students (regardless of age) is not mandatory. Students can be seated together. Family groups may be seated together. However, physical distancing between family groups and other adults, including school staff, is mandatory.

Entertainment spaces with fixed seating are exempt from the 2m² rule. For a seated performance that is ticketed and takes place at such a venue, the maximum capacity is 60% of the fixed seating capacity. This exemption applies to the following venues:

- Theatres
- Concert halls
- Auditorium/amphitheatres
- Cinemas
- Performing arts centres
- Chapels used for the purposes of formal worship

For venues with capacity below 500, external staff (eg. catering contract staff) are not included in the 2m² calculation. For venues with capacity exceeding 500 patrons, external staff are included in the 2m² calculation.

Staff, parents and visitors should be reminded that they are required to adhere to COVID-19 safety requirements.

For catered events, consider the provision of food boxes and packaged food rather than shared platters. Catering staff must comply with COVID-19 requirements.

Offsite school events

The COVID-safe plan of the venue provider should be sighted, discussed and signed off by the Principal. Venue providers must follow appropriate risk assessment procedures including ensuring that they comply with WA COVID-19 Health Guidelines.

Information regarding potential cancellation of events should be confirmed with the provider and communicated to attendees.



School visitors

School meetings

Good hygiene practices and physical distancing of one adult per 2m² applies to all meetings. Regular cleaning of facilities used for meetings is required.

Parent and caregiver meetings

Pre-arranged parent/caregiver meetings can proceed, adhering to physical distancing and hygiene protocols.

Parent and caregiver access

Parents are permitted to enter school sites and attend classrooms on the provision that they follow school sign-in processes, adhere to health and hygiene requirements, and abide by the 2m² and 1.5m distancing rules.

School visitors

All visitors with a lawful purpose are allowed onto the school grounds. Physical distancing with a 2m² rule per adult and good hygiene practices apply. All visitors are required to sign in, as per CEWA guidelines.

Use of school facilities

Regular cleaning of all facilities used for third-party arrangements is required. Good hygiene practices and physical distancing of one adult per 2m² apply to all activities. Ensure third parties adhere to guidelines using the SafeWA App or provide a manual register of attendees.



Health and hygiene

Schools must follow good personal hygiene practices and additional cleaning regimes:

- High frequency cleaning should continue throughout the school day to ensure all high-use areas such as bench tops, desks, doorknobs, taps and hand rails are regularly cleaned and surfaces disinfected.
- Playgrounds should be open with play equipment being cleaned once per day.
- Supplies of soap, hand sanitiser and other cleaning agents must be available.
- Students and staff are encouraged to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser as often as possible.
- Schools may choose to implement staggered starts, breaks and meal times to reduce contact. The latest medical advice confirms that the 2m² and 1.5m distancing rules for students during classroom activities is not required.



Remaining prepared

Catholic schools will continue to review and respond to cleaning and hygiene protocols in line with advice from the Department of Health.

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19, any temporary school closure will be advised by the Department of Health and the school will enact its Six Step Response Plan in the event of a confirmed case.

When making decisions on applying this guidance the following should be considered:

- The AHPPC definition of vulnerable populations is based on age and [underlying medical conditions](#) that are limited and considered relatively serious.
- The AHPPC advises that there is a relatively low risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools amongst children.