

**Information to support a safe and healthy start to the new school year**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for collecting your four RAT kits. We look forward to seeing all our Year 1 – Year 6 students back onsite on Tuesday 1 February. We are very excited to welcome our new families to Melrose Park Public School and can't wait to meet our new Kindergarten students at 'big school'.

As part of the NSW Government's focus on prioritising face-to-face learning, free rapid antigen tests (RATs) are supplied to students and staff. **RATs are highly recommended for students and staff** to be used as a screening tool twice a week for the first few weeks of Term 1 with the possibility of extension.

Instructions are provided within the RAT kits on how to use the tests and check the results also how to dispose of the tests safely. Parents, carers and staff can also download the user guides of the relevant test that they received through the [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#). The user guides will also contain a contact number for the suppliers for additional support.

If you need an interpreter to assist with the enquiry, please call the **Telephone Interpreter Service** on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. Tell the operator the phone number you want to call, and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

**School Staff will not be administering the rapid antigen tests to students.**

***When do I give the Rapid Antigen Test to my child?***

Year 1 – 6      before starting school on Tuesday 1 February

Kindergarten   before starting school on Thursday 3 February

**Week beginning 7 February**

It is recommended to test on Monday and again on Wednesday.

More RAT kits will be supplied for the following fortnight when supplies arrive.

***What If my child contracted Covid over the holidays?***

It is recommended that students returning to school after recovering from COVID-19 do not participate in rapid antigen test surveillance for 28 days (four weeks after recovery) following release from self-isolation. This is due to NSW Health advice that people who have recovered from COVID-19 have low risk of contracting it again in the following 28 days. After 28 days (from week five after recovery) students can resume participation in RAT surveillance.



## ***What happens if my child receives a positive RAT test?***

If a student or staff member receives a **positive** RAT result, they need to:

1. record the positive RAT result through the [Service NSW](#) or [Service NSW app](#)
  2. notify the school of the positive RAT or PCR result as soon as possible
  3. follow [NSW Health advice](#) to isolate for 7 days.
- Negative results **do not** need to be reported to Service NSW or to the school.
  - Students who are household close contacts must isolate at home for 7 days.

## ***What happens if my child is unwell at school?***

Any student who is unwell and/or displays symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to go home and stay until they can complete a RAT or PCR test.

- If symptoms continue, they should stay at home and take another RAT in 24 hours or have a PCR test.
- The student can return to school if the second RAT or initial PCR test result is negative, and they are displaying no symptoms. Students need a letter from the GP confirming another condition such as hay fever, asthma, or a specific medical condition to attend school.

## ***What happens when a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19?***

Under the new close contact rules, schools are no longer included in contact tracing. I will inform the school community when there is a positive case in our school and advise families on public health advice, including monitoring for symptoms.

## ***Does my child need to wear a mask?***

Primary school students are strongly recommended to wear well-fitted masks indoors. All school staff will be required to wear masks indoors. Masks are also strongly encouraged in outdoor settings where physically distancing is an issue. Your child can remove their mask when eating, exercising or playing a musical instrument.

For more information, refer to [Face masks in NSW](#).

## ***Can I come onsite?***

Parents, carers or visitors will be **NOT** allowed on school site until further notice with the following exceptions:

- Two parents or carers are allowed to accompany their child into school on their first day of Kindergarten or students starting at Melrose Park PS.
- Volunteers operating uniform shops must be fully vaccinated. Specialists supporting school operations and curriculum delivery must be fully vaccinated and use a RAT before coming onsite.
- Allied health partners for the wellbeing of students must be fully vaccinated.



## ***What happens if my child is not vaccinated?***

We strongly encourage our students and their families to consider vaccination when eligible. [Find a vaccination clinic](#) to book an appointment near you.

Throughout the term parents will be taking their child for vaccination. Please inform the office on the day of the time and date. Your child will be called to the office to wait for collection. Please call the office on your arrival at the Wharf Rd gate on 98744669. A member of the Non-Teaching Staff will accompany your child to the gate.

After vaccination your child may experience tiredness or be out-of-sorts for a brief period. Please keep them at home to rest and recover.

## ***What happens if my child's teacher is absent?***

We anticipate there may be some staff shortages at our school if staff need to isolate. Please be assured contingency plans are in place for this. Plans include using combined classes, employing extra casual staff, collapsing programs and using staff in non-teaching roles. We will not be able to guarantee particular staff for any cohort and students may not have their regular teacher for a class. At all times we will ensure appropriate supervision.

## ***Will my child miss learning if they need to isolate at home?***

Teachers are preparing plans for the continuity of education at home in case a student or teacher is absent. These plans will be communicated to you early in the new term.

## ***What about the planned Swimming Carnival?***

At all times we assess higher-risk activities and how we intend to mitigate any risk involved. At this point in time staff have decided to postpone the Swimming Carnival that was scheduled for Thursday 3 February. We will keep you updated with new dates.

We thank our community for the support you give to the school, and we ask you to respect the rules and procedures put in place to help keep our students and families safe. I am sure that working and supporting each other will ensure a positive and happy start to the 2022 school year.

Regards

Clare Kristensen

Principal