

Department of Education

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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8 May 2020

Dear parents and carers

We would like to sincerely thank you for supporting the Government's COVID-19 restrictions. Your hard work, cooperation and patience have been greatly appreciated and have contributed to the success of containing the spread.

We've been hearing the desire in the community to return to "normal", and returning to face-to-face teaching and learning. This is a testament to the valued role our schools play in our Tasmanian community and is an important step in our recovery.

While the current advice remains that the best place for students to learn is still at home, Public Health advice continues to be that our school sites are safe for both students and staff.

In Tasmania we will be undertaking a phased approach to returning all students to school sites in line with the lifting of restrictions on the movement of people by Public Health. We are aiming to have all students return to school-based learning by **Tuesday, 9 June 2020**. Our approach will get our youngest and senior secondary learners back to face-to-face learning first, where we know that learning may be impacted from an extended period of learning at home.

Return dates are as follows:

From Monday, 25 May 2020:

- o Kindergarten to Year 6 students will return to learning at school
- o Year 11 and 12 students will return to learning at school/college
- o Students in Year 7 to 10 will continue to learn at home.

From Tuesday, 9 June 2020:

- o Year 7-10 students will return to learning at school.

It is very important that, unless you cannot supervise or support your child to learn at home that you do not send your child to school until the date(s) above, to support Public Health in the staged easing of restrictions. This is vital in our plan to keep our communities safe.

The health and safety of our students, staff and communities are our top priority, so we will continue to follow Public Health advice in the lead up to the return and will adjust our plans should the current advice change.

We know that until we find a vaccine for COVID-19, it will remain a part of our “new normal” way of life. Health and hygiene at school remains vital. We will continue to ensure additional safety measures are in place in schools, including:

- Strict handwashing and hygiene protocols
- Support for schools to access liquid soap and hand sanitiser
- Frequent cleaning
- Cancellation of gatherings (like assemblies, trips, and interschool activities)
- Parents are encouraged to adhere to social distancing at schools (eg at school dropoff)
- School swimming pools will remain closed.

Once schools transition to be open to all students, then learning will be provided for face to face only (except for vulnerable students). If parents choose to keep their children at home then they will need to support their learning through other resources such as the *Learning at Home* web portal on the Department of Education’s website.

In closing, we would like to sincerely thank each one of you for the way you have supported your child’s learning during this time.

Your school will continue to communicate directly with you about school specific information in the lead up to the return dates. We appreciate your cooperation and support. Together we can make the return to classroom learning a successful transition.

Please find attached a key dates timeline as outlined above and a fact sheet for parents.

Yours sincerely



Tim Bullard
SECRETARY



Jeremy Rockliff MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training