

COVID-19 Safety Management Plan (COVID Safe Plan)

This **Safety Management Plan (COVIDSafe Plan)** applies to all Victorian government schools, and outlines some key health, safety and wellbeing hazards that schools should plan for. It links to the strategies described in the [School Operations Guide and the Health and Safety Advice for on site schooling in the context of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, and the central and regional supports available.

The Safety Management Plan is a prevention approach to COVID19 and in the event of a suspected or confirmed case the [COVID19 Management at Schools](#) advice should be followed.

Principals should consult with their local Health and Safety Representative(s) and Health and Safety Committee(s) (if applicable) to implement the recommended controls to the maximum extent reasonably practicable. Contact your [Regional OHS Support Officer](#) for assistance with local consultation if required. A [draft agenda](#) has been developed for Health and Safety Committee (HSC) meetings to assist in facilitating consultation and identifying and managing risks.

The [advice on COVID-19 for schools](#) is evolving over time and therefore the [OHS guidances and supports](#) will be continually reviewed and updated as required.

The **OHS Advisory Service** continues to be available to provide support, for instance, if there are local issues in implementing the latest guidance, for suggestions on establishing effective controls, or difficulty accessing support resources. If you require immediate assistance, please call 1300 074 715 or email safety@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Employees are encouraged to use [EduSafe](#) to report hazards, incidents and mental and physical injuries to ensure effective and timely resolution of OHS issues, as well as escalation for further supports when required. EduSafe reports are being monitored to ensure that support can be provided.

If you or your family need that little bit of extra support, personalised over-the-phone or video counselling is available 24/7 through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This service is available to all all school staff and their immediate families (aged 18 years and over).

This plan covers four key areas of risk ('hazard types'):

- Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control) – page 2
- Working Alone, in Isolation or from Home – page 3
- Occupational Violence and Aggression – page 4
- Mental Health and Wellbeing – page 5.

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
<p>COVID Safe Plan:</p> <p>Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control)</p>	<p>Staff and students may contract disease through social interactions.</p> <p>Physical distancing is unable to be maintained.</p> <p>Local supplies of personal hygiene products may be limited.</p> <p>Misuse of hand sanitiser including ingestion</p>	<p>Refer to the School Operations Guide for advice on working remotely and physical distancing: classrooms, learning spaces and offices.</p> <p>Refer to the School Operations Guide for information on temperature checking of students and how to administer temperature checking.</p> <p>Provide information, training and instruction health hygiene. Refer to maintaining good health hygiene and guidance for face coverings in schools, as well as DHHS guidance on face coverings and masks. Ensure staff access the Working Safely in Schools during COVID-19 webinar.</p> <p>Contact the OHS Advisory Service for more detailed risk assessments if required in relation to students with complex needs.</p> <p>Refer to School Operations Guide for guidance on use of shared equipment and other school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate the latest advice to parents (in multiple languages if appropriate), staff and students (where appropriate), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The latest advice is displayed in visual areas around the school in offices, front administration building and includes displaying on-site signage. • Adjustments have been made to teaching and learning environments, including maintaining distance of 1.5 metres between adults where possible by splitting math/science and B-block staffrooms • maximising air flow by opening windows if appropriate, using outdoor spaces and staggering break times to minimum 25 minutes between classes to allow time for cleaning and maintaining distancing between adults in social gathering places • Consult with HSR and/or OHS Committee about the implementation of controls. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conducting morning briefing staff meetings remotely via WebEx conferencing in staffrooms. Opening up the forum, S11 and S6 and distancing staff for afternoon meetings with the ES staff in Literacy centre via WebEx conference for PLT • Attendance on school sites by non-essential visitors and parents is being limited and implemented. Parents are to only enter the school via the front administration building and separate Staff/Student entry point

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
		<p>activities (e.g. playgrounds, shared resources and excursions).</p> <p>Refer to ChemWatch to access hand sanitiser safety data sheet. Ensure adequate supervision and safe storage of supplies.</p> <p>Visitors to school grounds should be limited to those delivering or supporting essential school services and operations (e.g. student health and wellbeing services, specialist curriculum programs, maintenance workers) and capital works personnel, in accordance with public health directions.</p> <p>Record the attendance of employees, students and visitors through visitor sign in, student attendance records and staffing records (attendance records for capital works should be managed by the principal contractor).</p> <p>Minimise contact with delivery personnel.</p> <p>Refer to School Operations Guide for the use of Personal Protective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation issues for on-site service provisions where the front office is supervision of the school COVID-19 cleaning supplies • Discuss implementation issues for on-site service provision, including planning recesses and lunchtimes, use of alternate spaces to increase physical distancing • supervision of students in the correct conduct of the hygiene products and safety talk about the improper and safety hazards of using these products • Where required use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (including face coverings) and don and doff appropriately • Display posters reminding people to wear masks, distribute information about safe use of face coverings. • MSDS sheet is available at the front administration building and where the cleaning solutions are maintained and handed out to the staff • Encourage staff and students to continue attendance at school, provided they do not fall into a category with restrictions • Reinforce that the DET website is the key source of information and resources for managing coronavirus • OHS officer to conduct regular visual inspections of the workplace to check that recommended risk controls are implemented and working effectively • Use teaching strategies and communications resources to remind students to wear face coverings and practice good hand hygiene. • Remind staff of importance of only attending school when required to for onsite delivery.

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
		<p>Equipment in education settings (page 16) which contains a video on donning and doffing PPE.</p> <p>Refer to personal hygiene products, including sourcing and DET Purchasing Guidance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure contractor sign in requirements are followed by all visitors attending site. • Escalate issues to OHS if issues cannot be resolved locally. Escalate issues to the OHS Advisory Service if issues cannot be resolved locally. • Each morning schools shall check the temperature of students attending site
	<p>Staff and students may contract disease by touching surfaces contaminated with COVID-19, following exposure from someone with the virus and by touching contaminated surfaces.</p>	<p>Refer to environmental cleaning services. Also access to cleaning supplies and services. For playgrounds please refer to School Operations Guide</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hygiene requirements including handwashing should continue to be practiced and encouraged to staff and students on site. • Signs are displayed in the bathroom facilities to remind to wash for 20 seconds, hand soap has been provided and monitored in the facilities • Cleaning material is readily available from the front office administration building in a ‘swap and go’ station, where the supply is maintained and available • Cleaning of the desks and touchable surfaces in the classrooms at the end of every lesson is carried out by teachers and students. • Oversee liaison with local service providers for tailored implementation of school cleaning during the daytime – school cleaner is cleaning highly touchable surfaces throughout the day (door handles, doors, windows etc) in conjunction with the end of day routine cleaning of the school environment

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
	Vulnerable Workforce (higher risk of serious illness).	Refer to School Operations Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with the staff, and incorporate into workforce planning if there are staff in the vulnerable categories. • Individual circumstances taken into account and provisions are made and adjusted to suit the needs of the staff and school in consultation. • All teaching employees are encouraged to proactively manage workload and health and safety issues during this time. • All teaching service employees should discuss the working from home requirement and how this applies to their particular role and circumstance with their Principal or line manager. • The working from home arrangements has arrangements that support staff to perform their duties, enable service delivery and be fair and reasonable for all within the current operating context • To ensure we all remain connected, employees are encouraged to work with their Principal or line manager to determine matters such as work hours, outcomes, access to systems and information, communication plans and checking in to monitor staff wellbeing.
	A confirmed case (or a close contact of a confirmed case) may occur among staff,	Refer to Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID 19) . Also advice regarding unwell students and staff .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate expectations to the school community, and communicate the protocols to staff. • Notices posted on Compass and communicated the school community of the BSC policies and procedures • Any member of staff or student who is unwell must not attend school on-site.

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
	students or the school community.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If suspicion of a COVID-19 case, advise the admin staff and school of a possible situation. Start an isolation period of time until a doctor conformed result is determined. • Inform the school if a COVID-19 test has been conducted and the result of the test • Stay in contact with affected staff or families remotely, providing support with learning for students and staff connection.

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
Working Alone, in Isolation or from Home	The home work environment may cause injury (noise, lighting, thermal comfort, and slips, trips and falls).	Refer to working alone, in isolation or from home policy and procedure . This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS guidance for working from home • ergonomic advice • tips for working from home safely and productively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the OHS advice and support to staff. OHS COVID-19 advice and recommendations was distributed to the staff in regards to wellbeing and additional support DET has in place • Enable reasonable access to available school equipment. If equipment is required for home usage, ensure that all reasonable requests are addressed. BSC has allocation of computers for students and potential staff who do not have access to the internet or devices. Ensure that the BSC computer device agreement has been provided and given to
	Staff may suffer musculoskeletal disorders by adopting static postures while using laptops, portable devices or personal computers.		

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
	Increased isolation (on-site and/or at home) may increase risk of injury.	Encourage staff to access the DET Virtual Gym and structure timetables (where possible) that allow staff to regularly stretch and move during the day.	<p>the student and returned with the parents signature and agreement – provided until end of Term 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively plan with staff who have a known pre-existing injury in regards to the OHS working from home agreement to be completed by all staff and returned to MB in regards to their home office set up that follows the minimum requirements from DET for a safe work environment • Where possible, encourage and allow time for keeping active while working from home – i.e. times when staff are encouraged to stand up and stretch, or take a short break from their workstations. • OHS requirements for working from home ergonomic advice distributed to the staff • Established protocols for regular check-ins with staff at morning WebEx conferencing and the weekly Monday Staff PLT meeting to distribute up to date information and advice from DET
	Exposure to family or gendered violence.	<p>Advice and support (including ergonomic advice via videoconference) is available to all staff via the OHS Advisory Service.</p> <p>Assist staff in following the advice and support for employees exposed to family violence</p>	

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
<p>Occupational Violence and Aggression</p>	<p>Online, over the phone or other remote threatening or aggressive behaviour by students, parents/carers, school staff or other members of school community.</p>	<p>Refer to the Occupational Violence and Aggression Policy, which covers online and on-site behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure onsite staff are ready to manage the students that will be attending. The students are contained to the library and central area during breaks whilst on the premises. Drink taps as above are not in use and water bottles are encouraged and used on the premises. Ensure that the students are well supervised by a teacher/CRT. Behavioural Management Plans for individual students are posted and available on the students Compass home page. • If using a mask when working with students at risk of pulling it, use ones that will release easily, e.g. with hooks over the ears rather than a scarf, bandanna or mask that ties round the back of the head. Regularly and explicitly teach students not to touch or attempt to remove others' masks. • Ensure that the students sign in at the front office when they arrive on the premises. • The remote learning sign up sheet is provided the week before to ensure adequate staffing issues and identify which students are attending and ensure that there are adequate management plans in place for potential behavioural students in attendance • Set expectations for behaviour with the school community where provided via Compass and email to the parents for attendance on the BSC premises
	<p>On-site violence, bullying or harassment by students, parents/ carers, school staff or other members of school community.</p>	<p>If using a mask at risk of being pulled, ensure it will release easily.</p>	
	<p>Staff experiencing stress or anxiety stemming from exposure to increasing onsite or online occupational violence and aggression from parents.</p> <p>Many parents/carers are likely to be anxious during this time.</p>	<p>Also, refer to Creating Respectful School Communities (including template Statement of Values), the Respect for School Staff local policy template, and resources available through Respectful Relationships and Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support.</p> <p>Proactive and open communications with parents and carers is important to prevent an escalation in behaviours. Refer to Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for parents, carers and guardians, and to the communications support pack.</p> <p>Escalated referrals will be managed by the Employee Wellbeing Response Team, and Complex Matter Support Team.</p>	

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
		<p>Refer to the mental health and wellbeing advice on the OHSMS Covid page, and the relevant policy and procedure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of appropriate ways for parents to raise their concerns during COVID-19 has been emailed the support provided in the community and from DET by the Wellbeing Team and home visits from the Administration staff. • Encourage staff to report incidents in eduSafe and IRIS as appropriate, de-brief, and seek escalated support (e.g. through EAP) if required. • Discuss extra supports or strategies for staff who engage with anyone known to present a risk, • Encourage staff to report incidents, de-brief, and seek escalated support (e.g. through EAP) if required and provided the new Mental Health and Wellbing Advice on the COVID-19 page (link sent to staff).

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Leaders managing the anxiety and mental health of others – including students, staff and members of the school community</p>	<p>Refer to the mental health and wellbeing advice on the OHSMS COVID-19 page, and the relevant policy and procedure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult (check-in) with staff during morning WebEx meetings and identify if some staff are not checking in and raise concerns and provide and encourage staff to seek support from the DET about how they are feeling with the current situation, encourage managers to be flexible, and support remote contact between colleagues. • Have regular conversations to provide as much clarity and flexibility as possible about tasks, priorities and the way work can be delivered (e.g. pre-recorded lessons) referring to the BSC policies and handout on remote learning delivery of lessons and through PLT staff WebEx conferencing and KLA Meetings • Feelings of increased anxiety are understandable and valid, ensure the staff and students that services are available through the Wellbeing team and the OHS website, links provided to services. Emails sent out about the additional DET support and reminders during staff connection meetings • Encourage staff to use EAP and other supports and resources available. • All staff have a role to play in supporting each other. The most helpful thing is to be available to others to listen, and allow people to feel heard. It's OK not to have all the answers and reach out to the Wellbeing Team for support.
	<p>Staff experiencing changes to workload (increase/decrease) from modifications in tasks and priorities.</p>	<p>Encourage staff to access the wellbeing webinars currently available.</p>	
	<p>Balancing non-work related demands (e.g. caring responsibilities).</p>	<p>Refer to the Return to Work Coordinator Portal.</p>	
	<p>Staff experiencing disengagement and low morale regarding clarity of tasks, team roles and evolving priorities.</p>	<p>Refer to the Principal Health and Wellbeing services on the OHSMS COVID-19 support page.</p>	
	<p>Staff experiencing uncertainty, stress, anxiety from the transition to working from home arrangements.</p>	<p>Refer to DET Flexible Work Policy.</p>	
	<p>Staff experiencing uncertainty and anxiety about the COVID-19 risks to their personal health (especially if working onsite).</p>	<p>Refer to School Operations Guide</p> <p>Video-counselling is available via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all staff and their adult family members.</p>	
	<p>Staff experiencing isolation and changes in levels of support from leaders and</p>		

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
	<p>colleagues as a result of the changed arrangements.</p> <hr/> <p>Aggravation of stress caused by pre-existing conditions (e.g. existing mental health conditions, disabilities, vulnerable cohorts and staff on leave, including Workers' Compensation or sick leave, etc.).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adjusted return to work strategies for people on sick leave or Workers' Compensation leave. • Communication to the staff the back to school arrangements. Student free day for teachers to prepare the classrooms. Flexibility of the working day with the addition of an extra break between Period 2 and Period 3