

Information Sheet

Return to School during COVID-19 pandemic

The Department of Education has released its plans for a safe return to school.

Plans for Term One, 2022

The Department of Education plans for school to return on 9th February 2022 with COVID-19 safety measures in place. They have published an [overview of their operational plan](#), along with a set of frequently asked questions. A [detailed operational plan](#) is also available if you would like more information.

There is also a [parents and carers guide to keeping safe at school](#) available. [Alerts about significant issues in schools](#) will also be published online. If you have a school related COVID-19 enquiry, you can email the Department of Education at COVID19support@education.tas.gov.au or call 1800 816 057.

Resources

- » Autism Tasmania runs learning opportunities for parents and caregivers throughout the year on topics such as Progression to School, and Managing Change. [Become a member](#) to receive our newsletter and further details.
- » Aspect has resources on [Supporting Autistic people through uncertain times](#) and [managing COVID-19 stress](#).
- » I-CAN Network have tip sheets for [Autistic Students Navigating High School](#) and [Parents and Carers Supporting Autistic Students](#).
- » Amaze has a range of resources for [supporting autistic children to return to school during COVID-19](#), including tips for both primary & secondary students, and advice for parents on creating social scripts.
- » ACD have produced a [social script about returning to school](#).
- » Amaze has [resources on what additional support could look like](#). Call our advisors on 03 6722 5000 to discuss how these could be adapted with COVID-19 considerations.
- » The Autism Education Trust has produced a COVID-19 version of [Autism Tools for Teachers](#)
- » [NDIS participants may also be able to use their plans](#) to claim for more RATs

Important Changes to Consider

There will be some changes in place until at least week five of term one. You may want to plan for how these will change your child's routines and needs. These include:

- » **COVID-19 Testing:** Each student will be provided with an initial supply of two rapid antigen tests (RATs) before school starts, then with two RATs per week for each student to use if they have symptoms.
- » **Face masks:** All teachers and school staff will wear face masks; however, teachers may remove their masks if required to assist clear communication when teaching. Primary students do not need to wear masks but can if they would like to. Secondary school and college students must wear face masks indoors. Medical exceptions apply. All schools are well stocked with face masks.
- » **Ventilation:** Open windows and air purifiers will be used in classrooms, and outdoor learning areas will be used when possible.
- » **Visitors:** There will be new rules about parents and visitors entering school sites.
- » **Learning Plans:** Students with disability will be supported by their school. The school will work closely with each student's parents and carers to identify any appropriate educational adjustments that can be made to support each student's continued access to teaching and learning programs. This may include additional support within their personalised learning plan.
- » **Online Learning:** If children need to isolate at home, their learning will be supported online. Years 11 and 12 students will have additional support through Virtual Learning Tasmania and online tutorials.
- » **Timetables:** Regular school activities like music and swimming lessons, and excursions will continue in a COVID-safe manner. However, this may change based on the situation at each school.