



Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Dear principals, teachers, educators and support staff

Updated Advice from the Chief Health Officer

Schools have now been open for students since the commencement of Term 2 and I am very encouraged by the way the school community, parents and students are caring for their health and attending school in a responsible way. This is building community confidence in the safety of our schools with the overall attendance rate reaching over 82%. There continues to be no reported cases of student-to-student transmission in Western Australia (WA) and no cases of student-to-teacher transmission.

WA recently recorded 14 days with only 2 reported cases, both of whom were rapidly identified and are in isolation. With over 56,000 negative tests and only 6 active cases, there is currently no evidence of community transmission.

Based on public health advice through the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, the National Cabinet have just announced a 3 stepped framework for a COVID Safe Australia with the opening of schools included from the first step. The State Government has announced how this will be implemented in WA, with further easing of restrictions planned across the next few weeks.

Public health measures in place to protect the community will remain a focus during this time, including broad testing, comprehensive contact tracing when a case is identified, isolation and quarantine measures where required, and education about social distancing and hand hygiene. Plans are in place to respond to any cases identified in the school setting to stop any transmission in the wider school community.

As you will be aware, the health, social and psychological benefits of children attending school, particularly those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, are far reaching and should be weighed up carefully as part of a balanced approach to the health risks of COVID-19.

I continue to recommend that schools remain open to all students, and families should be encouraged to return their children to the classroom. The recommencement of some school activities, such as managed library and pool use can also occur.

We need to remain diligent during this time and I encourage you to please make sure you stay home if you are unwell and, if you have fever or respiratory symptoms, get tested for COVID-19 before returning to work. Following the social distancing guidelines when interacting with other school staff and parents, and keeping a physical distance from each other in the staff-room, is also important.

Thank you again for your leadership and support during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely

DR ANDY ROBERTSON

Chief Health Officer

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