



TERM 4 WEEKS 3 AND 4

18 – 29 October 2021

Important Dates – Term 4 2021

| | | |
|-----|------------|--|
| W4 | Tue 26 Oct | School Council Meeting 6pm, via Zoom |
| W6 | Tue 9 Nov | HSC exams begin |
| W8 | Tue 23 Nov | School Council Meeting 6pm, via Zoom |
| W9 | Fri 3 Dec | HSC exams conclude |
| W10 | Mon 6 Dec | Year 12 2021 Sign Out Day #1 |
| W10 | Tue 7 Dec | Year 12 2021 Sign Out Day #2 |
| W10 | Tue 7 Dec | Presentation Day 2021 (proposed) |
| W10 | Fri 10 Dec | Year 12 2021 Graduation (proposed) |
| W11 | Mon 13 Dec | Year 12 2022 - Collaroy Camp - School Leadership Program |
| W11 | Tue 14 Dec | Year 12 2022 - Collaroy Camp - School Leadership Program |
| W11 | Wed 15 Dec | Year 12 2022 - Collaroy Camp - School Leadership Program |
| W11 | Thu 16 Dec | Last day of classes for Year 12 2022 |
| W11 | Thu 16 Dec | Year 12 2021 Formal (proposed) |

Principal's Report

As you are reading our second newsletter for Term 4, our state has commenced easing restrictions for those that are fully vaccinated. Some of our Year 12 students have taken advantage of the opportunity to study collaboratively onsite over the past two weeks with the establishment of study bubbles for HSC students. It has been lovely to have some students onsite and we look forward to the return of students over the course of the next few weeks.

This newsletter will provide you with a summary of the return to school framework as well as an updated guide to the level system that is operating across our schools. Over the course of this term we will continue to see changes to the level structures as we gradually transition back to face-to-face learning.

Return to school road map

In schools like ours where we have been learning from home for an extended period of time, students will return to face-to-face learning over the coming fortnight with NSW Health-approved COVID-safe settings on school sites. This will occur as outlined in the points

Continued over the page →



Principal's Report continued

provided below and in the material from the Department provided at the end of this newsletter.

- Monday 18 October – Year 12, 2021 will be able to attend school for revision and wellbeing reasons. No formal lessons will take place but students are welcome to access key support personnel and study in the library. Our online seminars will continue. Students can also access their teachers for additional support but will need to contact staff to ensure they are available at the time the student is intending on being onsite.
- Monday 25 October – Year 12, 2022 will return to school in a full-time capacity in accordance with their school timetable which was issued on Day 1 of this term. However, due to the guidelines put in place for the Higher School Certificate Examinations, students will need to return to remote learning on Friday 5 November and will continue in remote learning through to and including Monday 15 November, returning to school for onsite lessons on Tuesday 16 November. This is due to the large size of our cohort as well as NESA's COVID-safe plan, meaning that we require thirty examination spaces to run the large English and Mathematics Higher School Certificate Examinations.

It is important to note that the return to school roadmap (included in this newsletter) is subject to change depending on advice from NSW Health. We will continue to provide updates of any changes through our normal communication platforms.

Students, parents and families who may have concerns about the return to school are encouraged to contact their Student Adviser or Deputy Principal to discuss these.

Being well onsite

Students are expected to attend school from their return to school date unless they have been asked by NSW Health to self-isolate, are unwell or have even mild symptoms of COVID-19.

Any person with any COVID-19 symptoms should remain at home and follow the guidance provided by the Department in the must be sent home and not return to school unless:

- They have isolated for 10 days, when no medical certificate is available.
- They have a negative COVID-19 test result and are symptom free.

In circumstances where students have other medical reasons for recurrent symptoms, a letter from their doctor is sufficient to negate the requirement for a negative test.

Anyone who is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms is strongly encouraged to get tested and self-isolate until a negative test result is received.



Mask requirements

When students and staff return to school the following requirements are in place:

- Masks are required for all staff and students indoors on a school site (except when exercising or eating).
- Masks are mandatory on public transport.

If any student has a medical exemption from wearing a mask, they need to provide this information to their Deputy Principal to support their transition back to school.

Ventilation

The New South Wales Department of Education has completed a ventilation audit of our learning spaces. Our report indicates that only one window needs to be repaired. I have included in this newsletter an infographic provided by the Department of Education in relation to maximising ventilation on school sites.

Higher School Certificate

Throughout this term in the lead up to the Higher School Certificate Examinations, our HSC students can continue to attend school for revision, learning and wellbeing support as well as having access to their teachers in a limited way.

We will be having a Zoom Meeting on Wednesday 20 October at 3:30 pm for students sitting their Higher School Certificate Examinations this year and their families. Leah has already sent students the link to this meeting. Students are asked to please check their school emails for the invitation email and are asked to log on through their Department student portal to access the meeting. We will be discussing the examination set up, the COVID-safe procedures that will be in place, the alternate venue that is in place if we need to move sites, and the illness and misadventure process that NESA has in place for all of the Higher School Certificate Examinations. I encourage all our HSC students to attend.

We are all very excited to be getting haircuts, seeing families, sitting down in restaurants and returning to school to see each other in person again. Some school activities will still be on hold during this transition phase, but hopefully our hard work has paid off and it will not be long until school life returns to what we knew it to be. Please take care and we will see you soon.

Sally Smithard

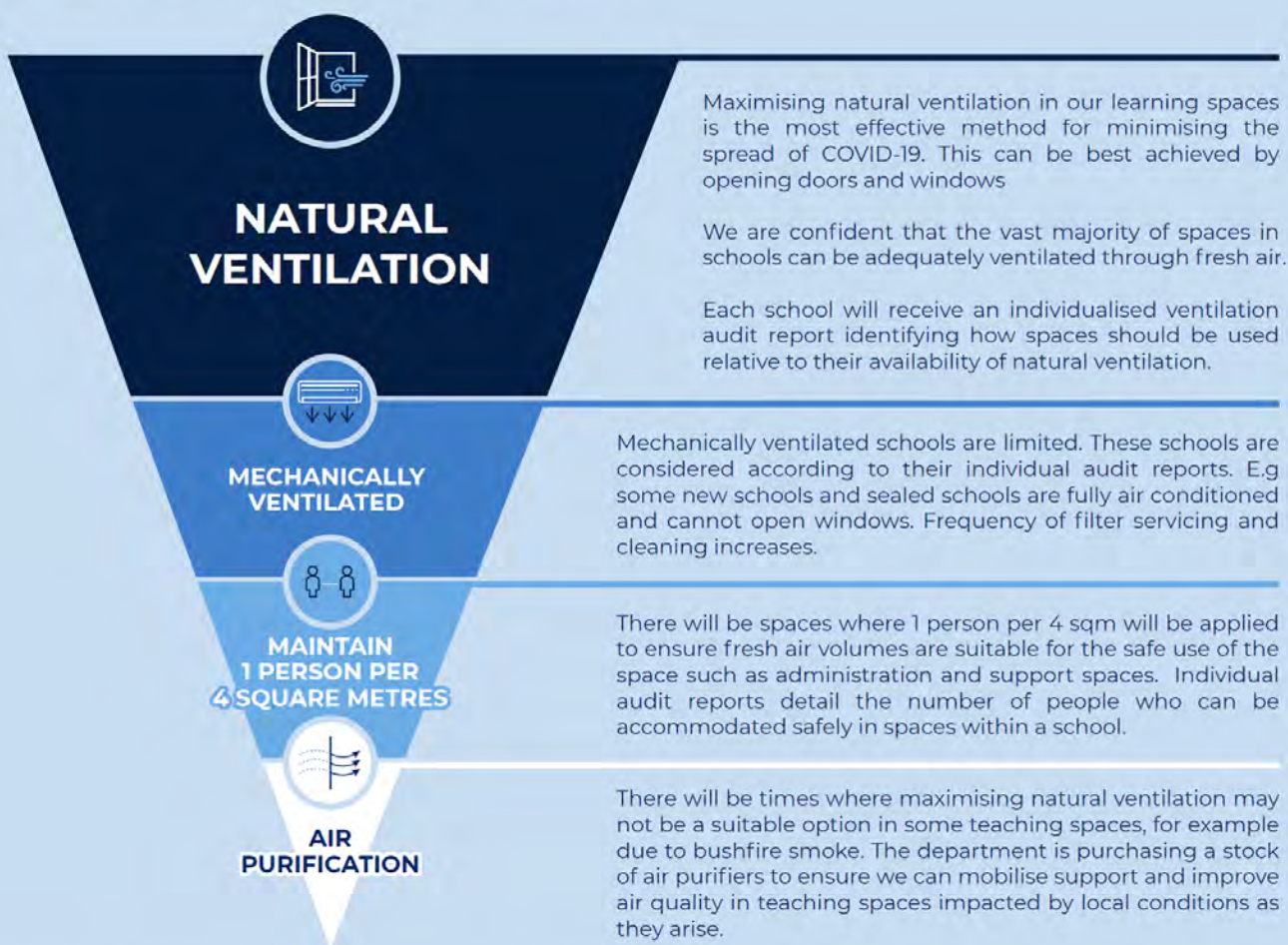
Principal



Maximising ventilation and COVID-safe school operations

The NSW Department of Education's ventilation and asset use recommendations are informed by:

- NSW Health advice
- Independent expert advice from Steensen Varming
- Research from the Doherty Institute
- Research from the World Health Organisation



COVID-safe school operations use a range of infection and control measures.

These apply for all settings and work alongside ventilation, air circulation and asset use recommendations:



For more information on how we are keeping schools safe, visit

www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au

Optional Seminar Sessions for Year 12 2021 – Term 4 2021

| Term 4 Week 3 | Monday 18 October 2021 | Tuesday 19 October 2021 | Wednesday 20 October 2021 | Thursday 21 October 2021 | Friday 22 October 2021 |
|----------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 8:30 am – 9:32 am | Biology | Financial Services Engineering Studies Food Technology | Chemistry | English Extension 1 IPT | Legal Studies Spanish Beginners Japanese Beginners |
| 9:32 am – 10:44 am | IT Multimedia Maths Extension 2 | Drama Maths Extension 1 | Business Services Economics Earth and Env | History Extension | Geography Studies of Religion 2 |
| 10:44 am – 11:14 am | | | | | |
| 11:14 am – 12:26 pm | Investigating Science French Beginners | English Advanced English EALD | English Standard | Maths Advanced | Maths Standard |
| 12:26 pm – 1:38 pm | Business Studies | Agriculture CAFS | Design and Technology Entertainment | Dance | Visual Arts |
| 1:38 pm – 2:08 pm | | | | | |
| 2:08 pm – 3:20 pm | Korean Beginners PDHPE | SDD Ancient History Textiles and Design | Modern History Hospitality | Music 1 | Society and Culture Physics |



Optional Seminar Sessions for Year 12 2021 – Term 4 2021

| Term 4 Week 4 | Monday 25 October 2021 | Tuesday 26 October 2021 | Wednesday 27 October 2021 | Thursday 28 October 2021 | Friday 29 October 2021 |
|----------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 8:30 am – 9:32 am | Korean Beginners PDHPE | SDD Ancient History Textiles and Design | Modern History Hospitality | Music 1 | Society and Culture Physics |
| 9:32 am – 10:44 am | Biology | Financial Services Engineering Studies Food Technology | Chemistry | English Extension 1 IPT | Legal Studies Spanish Beginners Japanese Beginners |
| 10:44 am – 11:14 am | | | | | |
| 11:14 am – 12:26 pm | IT Multimedia Maths Extension 2 | Drama Maths Extension 1 | Business Services Economics Earth and Env | History Extension | Geography Studies of Religion 2 |
| 12:26 pm – 1:38 pm | Investigating Science French Beginners | English Advanced English EALD | English Standard | Maths Advanced | Maths Standard |
| 1:38 pm – 2:08 pm | | | | | |
| 2:08 pm – 3:20 pm | Business Studies | Agriculture CAFS | Design and Technology Entertainment | Dance | Visual Arts |





Bandanna Day 2021

FRIDAY 29 OCTOBER 2021

**Buy a bandanna and make a gold coin donation
to support the important work of Canteen
with young people affected by cancer**



Information from Transport for NSW – School Travel for 2022



2022 school travel applications are now open

Students who need a School Opal card or travel pass for 2022 can [apply](#) now. A new application will need to be submitted if they are applying for a school travel pass for the first time, or if they are requesting an additional travel entitlement as a result of a new shared parental responsibility situation (e.g. joint custody).

Students who change address, school, campus location, or who have repeated a year or received an expiry notification from Transport for NSW for their school travel entitlement should [renew or update](#) their details before **the end of term 4**. This will ensure that schools can endorse applications and current entitlements are updated and remain valid. School Opal card holders will have the changes applied to their existing card.

If a student's distance eligibility has changed based on their grade the system will automatically update their entitlement if they meet the new criteria. If they do not meet the new [eligibility criteria](#), they will receive an expiry notification via email.

Students who have an entitlement approved under a medical condition that is due to expire will receive a notification advising them to re-apply.

[Term Bus Pass](#) holders will receive a notification to re-apply.

Students in the Opal network applying for an Opal card (including a Term Bus Pass) for the first time will receive their Student Opal card at their nominated postal address. Cards will be mailed out from January 2022.

Students living in rural and regional (R&R) areas should receive their travel pass at the start of the new school year from their nominated transport operator. It may come via the school or be sent directly to them at home. **Note:** some R&R operators do not issue travel passes. Students/parents should confirm with their nominated operator if they do not receive a pass.



School Student Transport Scheme site change

On 1 October 2021 the School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) information and application portal was moved to **transportnsw.info**. This will assist families to find all their travel information in the one place.

Travel from Term 1 2022

We ask that parents plan ahead and make sure their child knows which service/s to use and has a valid ticket to travel; either a School Opal card or Child/Youth Opal card (within Greater Sydney) or a School Travel Pass (outside Greater Sydney), from the start of the school year.

Applications for the School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) open at the start of Term 4 2021 for travel in 2022, so parents/students can [apply](#) or [update](#) details early and be ready for the start of the new school year.

Most students using the Opal network will not need a new Opal card and can continue travelling on their existing card each year.

The start of the year is a difficult period for local bus operators, and students travelling without a valid ticket make service planning and operations increasingly difficult.

We recognise that for some families last minute changes to school enrolments mean they may not have a School Opal card or Travel Pass for the start of term. In the Opal network, we strongly encourage these families to have their children travel on a Child/Youth Opal card until they receive their valid School Opal card. If outside Greater Sydney, parents should contact their [local bus operator](#) to discuss their travel needs.

Bus operators are flexible and understanding, particularly at the start of the school year, and will ensure students can travel safely to and from school. But to best support our operators we encourage all students to have a valid ticket, as early as possible, from the start of the school year.

Please also remember that students using Opal cards must tap on and tap off in line with the [Student code of conduct](#) and [Opal terms of use](#).



Further information can be found at transportnsw.info/travel-info/using-public-transport/school-travel

Enquiries can be submitted at transportnsw.info/contact-us/feedback/passes-concessions-feedback



After Hours Tutorial Program 2021 – Term 4, Additional Tutorial

An additional tutorial (for Year 11 Biology, Thursday afternoons) has been added to our schedule, and we have included it below.

If you are interested in attending one (or more) of these, please ensure you get a permission note from the Tutorial Teacher shown (who can be contacted via your classroom teacher in each course). Your note must be completed and returned to the Tutorial Teacher before a student can attend a tutorial activity when we return to school onsite – but Zoom details will be provided to allow students to join tutorials while learning remotely.

| <h1 style="text-align: center;">SMSHS Tutorial Program Timetable</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Term 4 2021 ~ Weeks A & B</h2> <p style="text-align: center; color: red;">Version 2 - As at 14 October 2021</p> | | | | | |
|---|--------|---|---|--|--------|
| Time | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| BEFORE SCHOOL | | Year 11 2021 Mathematics Extension Reuben 7:15 – 8:15 am Zoom / AR1046 | Year 12 2021 Investigating Science Rosemary 7:15 – 8:15 am Zoom / CTR0005 | Year 12 2021 Chemistry Lidija 7:15 – 8:15 am Zoom / ER0013 | |
| AFTER SCHOOL | | Year 12 2021 Society and Culture Dean and Kim 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / AR0062 | Year 12 2021 HSIE (Ancient, Modern, Religion – rotating) 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / AR0062 | Year 12 2021 Drama Nicole 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / VR1005 | |
| | | Year 12 2021 Business Studies and Legal Studies Salochna & Chandra 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / AR0061 | Year 12 2021 Economics Salochna 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / AR0061 | Year 12 2021 Physics Waran 3:25 – 4:30 pm Zoom / ER0013 | |
| | | Year 12 2021 Music Fatima and Michael 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / VR0001 / VR0010 | Year 12 2021 Dance Mel 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / VR1005 | Year 11 2021 French Beginners Kerri-Anne 3:20 – 4:20 pm Zoom / Library | |
| | | Year 12 2021 Visual Arts Sharon L 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / VR1001 | Year 11 2021 Chemistry Tim 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / CTR0001 | Year 11 2021 Biology Ellen 3:20 – 4:20 pm Zoom / ER0015 | |
| | | | Year 11 2021 Physics - Fundamentals Waran 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / ER0013 | | |
| | | | Year 11 2021 Physics – Revision and Extension Andrew 3:30 – 4:30 pm Zoom / CTR0005 | | |



SMSHS – SOURCES OF SUPPORT



| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| School phone: 02 9623 8333 | School email: stmaryssen-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au |
|----------------------------|--|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Year 11 Student Adviser, Surnames A-G | Mitchell Baker | Mitchell.baker57@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Year 11 Student Adviser, Surnames H-O | Nicole Leong | Nicole.leong2@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Year 11 Student Adviser, Surnames P-Z | Jesse Vassallo | Jesse.vassallo2@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Year 12 Student Adviser, Surnames A-G | Nicola Preston | Nicola.preston1@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Year 12 Student Adviser, Surnames H-O | Luigi Serra | Luigi.serra@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Year 12 Student Adviser, Surnames P-Z | Tim Weston | Tim.weston4@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Head Teacher, Learning and Wellbeing | Mel Jacka | Melissa.jacka@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Learning Support Team | Margo Daly Carmel Harriden Nicole Leong Carly McPherson Dianne Pyne | Margo.daly2@det.nsw.edu.au Carmel.harriden@det.nsw.edu.au Nicole.leong2@det.nsw.edu.au Carly.mcpherson@det.nsw.edu.au Dianne.pyne@det.nsw.edu.au |
| School Counsellors | Aimee Tang Tracey Axisa | Please text the counsellor phone on 0417228192 during school hours to organise an appointment |
| Student Support Officer | Surmeet Kaur | Surmeet.kaur@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Deputy Principal – Year 11 | Danielle Ervine | Danielle.ervine@det.nsw.edu.au |
| Deputy Principal – Year 12 | Leah Havord | Leah.havord@det.nsw.edu.au |



This fortnight @ SMSHS

| Monday 18 Oct | Tuesday 19 Oct | Wednesday 20 Oct | Thursday 21 Oct | Friday 22 Oct |
|--|---|--|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Year 12 2021 – Zoom Meeting 3:30 – 4:30 pm <i>Students to check their school email for the meeting link</i> | | |
| Monday 25 Oct | Tuesday 26 Oct | Wednesday 27 Oct | Thursday 28 Oct | Friday 29 Oct |
| Year 12 2022 return to school for timetabled classes – Week B timetable | School Council Meeting 6pm, via Zoom <i>Please email the school for the meeting link</i> | | | World Teachers' Day! |

Our Teams

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Principal: | Sally Smithard |
| School Council President: | Sonia Matthews |
| School Captains: | Alice Chitos Chloe Nolasco |
| School Executive: | |
| - Deputy Principal (Year 11) | Danielle Ervine |
| - Deputy Principal (Year 12) | Leah Havord |
| - English | Julie Robinson |
| - Mathematics | Simone Pett |
| - Science | Lidija Radovancevic |
| - Commercial Studies | Salochna Reddy |
| - HSIE (Rel) | Rebecca Langham |
| - CAPA | Nicole Bonfield |
| - Computing | Matthew Topp |
| - LOTE | Luigi Serra |
| - TAS/PDHPE | Rebecca Powell |
| - Secondary Studies | Liz Hemmings |
| - Learning and Wellbeing | Melissa Jacka |
| - First Australians | Leah Havord |
| - Sport and Recreation | Joanne Brines |
| - Business Manager (Acting) | Rebecca Zinghini |
| - School Administrative Manager (Rel) | Lynette Deuis |
| Student Advisers: | |
| - Year 11, Surnames A-G | Mitchell Baker |
| - Year 11, Surnames H-O | Nicole Leong |
| - Year 11, Surnames P-Z | Jesse Vassallo |
| - Year 12, Surnames A-G | Nicola Preston |
| - Year 12, Surnames H-O | Luigi Serra |
| - Year 12, Surnames P-Z | Tim Weston |
| Learning Support: | Carmel Harriden Dianne Pyne Nicole Leong Carly McPherson |
| Student Support Officer: | Surmeet Kaur |
| Careers Adviser: | Lynette Tuckwell |

Contact Us



St Marys Senior High School
Kalang Avenue
St Marys NSW 2760



02 9623 8333



stmaryssen-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au



St Marys Senior High School Official Site - Facebook



St Marys Senior High School - Skoolbag App



GETTING EXAM READY

TIPS FOR PARENTS

It's normal for students to feel stressed when preparing for exams (especially big exams). It's also normal for parents to share this stress. A bit of stress aids success by increasing motivation, but at high levels it becomes unhelpful and can reduce academic performance.

This sheet is designed to help parents offer support to their children in preparing for exams by recognising when stress is too much—and if it is, how to reduce it.



When pre-exam stress is normal

- * It's short term (such as a few days or weeks around the exam, but subsides once exams are over)
- * Students can still distract themselves by other things
- * Students feel fatigued, but only until exams are over
- * Students feel butterflies or shaky right before an exam



When it's too much

- * The shakiness and nervousness doesn't go away
- * Students are unable to study or sleep properly
- * Students feel nauseous, depressed or constantly worried about not doing well or failing
- * Students appear to be overwhelmed and panicked

REMEMBER— It's normal for students to feel stressed when preparing for exams, but if it gets too much they should seek help.

Have you seen this in your child?

If you notice your child showing any of these signs, there are things you can do to help. First, simply talk to them, for example: "How do you feel about your exams?" Listen to what they have to say and give them time to say it without interjecting. Also try going through the tip sheet for students together. If you still have concerns, contact your child's school or your GP for more advice.

IN A NUTSHELL

Stress is the activation of our 'flight-or-fight' response—a natural part of our sympathetic nervous system designed to prepare us to deal with threat or danger. If we suddenly feel unsafe or under attack, the flight-or-fight system increases our heart rate (which activates

blood flow to our muscles to help us either run or fight), stimulates our sweat glands (to cool the body) and heightens our senses (to increase alertness).

At first it can be hard to see how this is relevant to exams. But when people think of exams as threatening (worrying they won't do well) the flight-or-fight response is activated. Although it isn't helpful to have a racing

heart or to sweat in an exam situation, the increased mental alertness and motivation that stress brings may be helpful.

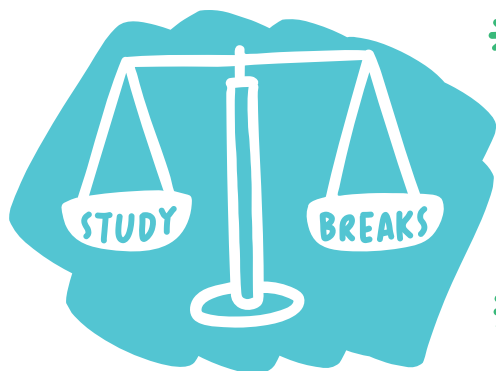
When stress is too high or goes on for too long, the symptoms actually hinder performance.

If this sounds like your child, try some of the ideas and explore the websites and apps listed on the following page.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

MANAGING STRESS LEADING UP TO EXAMS

For most parents there are simple ways to help your children manage stress. We don't want to make it go away completely, but rather use it to their advantage. Different things work for different people, so encourage your child to experiment to see what works for them.



* Encourage balance between study and breaks

Help your child build a routine around realistic study times (eg before school, early evenings or weekends). Try to encourage study before downtime—but it's important not to nag. Be realistic when setting up routines, so that they are actually achievable.

* Provide a dedicated quiet space

A desk in an undisturbed part of the house is best, but wherever your child's study space is, encourage them to put their phone on silent, turn off chat features and keep the music low (or off). Don't get into battles about technology, but rather set clear parameters around its use.

* Remind them to rest

It's important for students to engage in activities that provide mental and physical rest and relaxation, like taking a bath or long shower, listening to music or a guided meditation, reading or watching a movie. Socialising is also a form of downtime. You could also plan some fun activities to enjoy as a family.

* Healthy body = healthy mind

Provide health food options to help keep your child's energy levels up. Encourage regular exercise like running, swimming or walking the dog, which uses up excess adrenaline and stress hormone (cortisol).

* Talk to your child

Ask what you can do to help, whether it's a pop quiz, reading drafts or just sharing your own experiences. When your child makes an effort to study, acknowledge it (even if it isn't as much as you'd like!). Research tells us that one of the things that is associated with severe distress in senior students is perceived pressure from parents. So offer support and encouragement rather than becoming directly involved in their schoolwork, or pushing a 'need to achieve'.



* Remember the bigger picture

It's important to acknowledge that exam results matter, but they're not the 'be all and end all'. While it's helpful for students to have academic goals to work towards, there are many pathways to post-school study options and careers.

EXTRA RESOURCES



Websites

ReachOut.com

Information, support and resources about mental health issues for young people

Headspace.org.au

A non-profit organisation for youth mental health

BeyondBlue.org.au

Helping with issues related to depression, suicide, anxiety and other mental illnesses



Apps

Calm

Soothing visual backgrounds and a range of meditations

Stop, Breathe & Think

Develop the skills to stop everything and just be still

Smiling Mind

Equipping young people with integral skills to thrive in life



Helplines

(available 24/7)

Lifeline

Call 13 11 14

Kids Helpline

Call 1800 55 1800

Transitioning back to High School

Dr Kay Carroll



Transitioning back to high school, timetables, teachers, and peers will take some adjustment for your teenager. School has been online and remote for a significant part of the school year. Teenagers now have to get out of their oodles and hoodies and back into school uniforms. To help the family and your teenager to get ready these steps may help.

What do I need to consider?

Talking about the transition

It is important to have a chat about your teenager's attitude towards returning to school. We may assume that the return to friends, school sports and lunch times will make them deliriously happy. Yet teenagers may not be. For some teens there may be an unwillingness to return to the structure of the school day with earlier starts and regular homework or some peer group changes. It is important to gauge how your teenager feels about the return to school and recognise if they feel negative or upset by this. A good strategy is to connect with them about their feelings, discuss strategies and ways to motivate them to get ready and reassure them that their teachers and schools will support them and welcome them back.

Being prepared.

- Make sure you listen to your teenager as well as talk about some of the positive and fun aspects of returning to school, such as being with friends, seeing their teachers, and getting active.
- Encourage your teenager to start becoming more independent and organised by planning getting up and sleep times, checking bus routes and start times for schools, revising the timetable and checking in on Covid safety, school announcements and schedules.
- Consider if a return to school or extra-curricular sport or activities can happen and fit into the new routines.
- Note if your teenager is not coping well with the idea of returning to school. If they seem more anxious, withdrawn, angry, easily irritated or refuse to go to school seek some help (<https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps>) and have an open conversation.
- Encourage your teenager to make connections with friends and arrange a meet up time for the first time back to school to help them settle in and regain connections with peers.

Independence and Self-Care

Teenagers are learning to be independent at this stage of their lives but the recent impact of Covid restrictions and the varied routines of the last school term may have altered their ability to self-care, regulate and choose options. It is useful to focus on developing these capacities to help in their transition back to school.

Self-care and independence can help teenagers to manage their stress, build resilience and be grateful and happy in everyday tasks or activities. Make sure teenagers have activities such as walking, sports, extra-curricular or hobbies built into a weekly schedule around school. Discuss when homework can be done to fit around these important tasks. Encourage teens to manage their own preparation for school, equipment, masks, lunches, and transport. Take the time to make sure your teenager understands the Covid safe social distancing practices they need to be responsible for.

How do I help my teenager with study when they return to school?

Teenagers often feel overwhelmed by the amount and time pressures of study and with the return to school they may notice they have fallen behind or possibly moved ahead at their own learning. Now the teacher will be regulating the learning and homework may be more frequent, or the pace of learning much faster to catch up on topics or practicals. Getting your teenager to write down in a student diary, whiteboard, google calendar tasks for each day is an important step. We can build in reward and chill out time into this schedule and assist our teenagers to see how chunks of productive study gives them a sense of success and enables rewards to be enjoyed. A great tip is to discuss what they really like to do with their time, what they must do with their and when it needs to be finished by, and how long they think each task will take. Seems simple and practical, but it works. Studies by Adams & Blair (2019) show us if your teenager can manage their time and have an academic work and life balance, they achieve higher marks or grades in their subjects. It works because it buffers student stress and anxiety at the critical point in time and also builds stronger academic success for future study and work.

Managing the Stress

When dealing with back to school melt-downs try and stay calm and see this as a normal setback. Over 40% of teenagers at this time can feel very distressed or even depressed or anxious. Your teenager may be negative, lethargic or a little more irritable. We need to avoid reacting and understand their pressures. If our young person is increasingly showing these signs, then help from others such as [Headspace](#), [Reach Out](#) and [Beyond Blue](#) can really be important.

Getting the balance right

Creating safe and stable routines around teenagers' priorities and needs such as "sleeping, eating, and socialising" is important and can help to avoid the difficult moments or get us all back on track. Spend some time after the school day or at dinner to find out how things are going, what changes are happening, and how they are feeling. Having a check in point for younger and older teens is really important. So, agree on a wake-time, dinner chat and the wind-down times. Sleep may also be more critical in the transition, as returning to school requires more physical and mental energy than turning on a laptop. Make sure teens get enough sleep and recognise that they may be more tired than normal, re-adjusting to school and routines. It may be good to have a chat about how much sleep a teenager really needs- 9-10 hours per day.

Remember that teenagers may need some tools and tips to manage their stress. These can include mindfulness and taking a break/chill out moments, and getting back to other tasks, hobbies, and sports that they love. Make sure they are connecting with friends in a Covid safe way, and maybe discuss how to manage screen time now they are back in the classroom.

Most importantly, give your teen and the family time to re-adjust and focus more on well-being and getting re-connected with their school.

Good links to check out are:

NSW Department of Education Helpful tips for returning to high school
https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/covid19/Helpful_tips_for_returning_to_high_school.pdf

Association of Independent Schools, NSW
<https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/learning-from-home/wellbeing>

Relationships Australia, NSW.
<https://www.relationshipsnsw.org.au/getting-back-to-the-new-normal-school/>

References

Adams, R. V., & Blair, E. (2019). Impact of time management behaviors on undergraduate engineering students' performance. *SAGE Open*, 9(1), 2158244018824506.





| NSW Department of Education


Roadmap for parents and carers Return to school for Level 3 plus

Information current as at 7 October 2021.

Developed in partnership with NSW Health

education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families





In Term 4, schools will return to face-to-face learning either through a 'staged return' or 'full return'.

The best learning environment for students is in the classroom and we are looking forward to welcoming back our staff and students in Term 4. We know that while there will be excitement, there will also be some anxiety and uncertainty about being back together at school.

Recent evidence shows that very little COVID transmission happens between children in school settings, and only a very small number of children who contract COVID-19 get seriously ill. However, to support school safety we are requiring all staff on site to be fully vaccinated, and we are strongly encouraging our students and school community to do the same.

We have worked with NSW Health on our COVID-safe plan to return to school sites and have developed effective practices to support this, including staff vaccinations, mask wearing, reduced mingling of staff and student groups, ventilation in classrooms and continued good hygiene and cleaning. We are confident that this, in combination with support from our school community, will minimise risk and help to keep schools open and students learning face-to-face next to their peers.

How the staged return to school will work

Students will return to face-to-face learning at school in the following order:

- from 18 October – department preschool, Kindergarten, Year 1
- from 25 October – all remaining year groups.

To maximise the re-establishment of a consistent routine, students who attend schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs) are recommended to return at the same time as students in mainstream settings. Students with disabilities in mainstream classes or support classes can also return as part of the staggered return at the same time as their year groups.

Students completing their HSC can already return in a limited way and this will continue for the first two weeks of Term 4. From 18 October, these students will have full-time access to school campuses and their teachers.

Some schools may have slightly different return to school plans, particularly if they have stage based classes or are very small schools.



School attendance

All students should be at school on the date indicated for their year group, unless:

- they have a medical certificate which says they can't return to school due to a condition or illness
- they are currently unwell
- they have been asked by NSW Health to self-isolate.



Wellbeing

If you are worried that the impacts of COVID-19 or going back to face-to-face learning may be affecting your child's wellbeing, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

You can find more information to help your child's wellbeing through the mental health and wellbeing resources on the department's website.



Break times, drop-offs and pick-ups and canteens

To make sure students reduce the risk of transmission across cohorts, schools will put in place staggered recess and lunch breaks, start and finish times and drop-off and pick-up points.

Students can use the canteen during breaks. This will be different at each school depending on the size of the school, the number of students, traffic flow and other factors.

Creating a safe learning environment



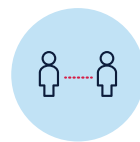
Masks and face coverings

Masks will be mandatory for all staff and all students in Year 7 and above while they are indoors and outdoors on school sites unless eating or exercising. Masks are strongly recommended for primary students both indoors and outdoors unless eating or exercising.



Students should bring their own masks where possible, but schools will have back-up supplies just in case.

Masks are mandatory for all travel on public transport for children 13 years and older.



Physical distancing

All adults must keep 1.5 metres distance from each other, including teachers and support staff, and parents and carers waiting to collect children.

Physical distancing between children in the same class is not required under the latest health guidelines. Mixing between class groups will be minimised and students will be supported to follow strict hygiene practices like:

- regularly washing hands
- not sharing drinks or food
- coughing or sneezing into their elbow, or else using a tissue which should be put in the bin straight away
- filling water bottles from bubblers rather than using the bubbler directly.



Vaccination

All adults at school sites, including employees, contractors, volunteers and essential visitors, must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by 8 November 2021. Adults that are required to support the staged return to school in October 2021 will be required to have received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine by that date. For schools under Level 3 settings, adults are strongly encouraged to have had two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, but are not required to be fully vaccinated until 8 November.

Students aged 12 or above are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination. Parents and carers can book in a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine now.

Vaccination appointments are available at more than 3,000 locations across NSW, including GPs and pharmacies. For students and families who have questions or concerns related to getting vaccinated, refer to [NSW Health's Know the facts COVID-19 vaccination fact sheet](#).



School cleaning and hygiene supplies

Schools will continue to receive additional cleaning in line with advice from NSW Health.

Schools have received extra supplies of soap, hand sanitiser, toilet paper, paper towels, disinfectant wipes and personal protective equipment and can order more as needed.



School activities

Many school-based activities will remain on hold, including large celebrations such as presentation days and graduations, arts and sports events. For a full list of what is permitted and what is on hold, refer to education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families.



Visitors

Only essential visitors are allowed on school sites at this time. When dropping off or picking up your child, parents and carers need to stay outside school grounds, you will need to wear a mask and physically distance. Some exceptions may exist for:

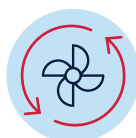
- schools for specific purposes
- vulnerable students
- students with disability
- preschools.

In these instances, follow the vaccination and mask-wearing requirements and sign in using the Service NSW QR code when entering the school.



Reporting and assessment

You will receive your child's Semester 2 report by the end of the year. This will be a simplified version of the report you normally receive.



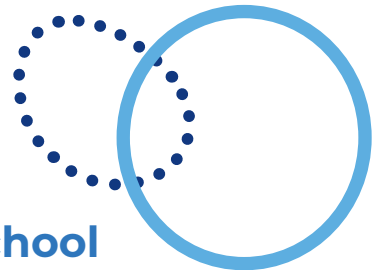
Ventilation

Open or well-ventilated spaces reduce the risk of COVID-19. Where possible classroom doors and windows will remain open and fans and air-conditioners will be set to use outside air, where possible.



Rapid antigen testing

We are exploring with NSW Health the use of COVID home testing kits (known as rapid antigen testing) as a further screening measure to reduce the risk of outbreaks in schools, or the length of time students need to isolate after contact with someone with COVID. Further details will be provided in Term 4.



Orientation and transition to school

We have flexible arrangements so that students and parents and carers can still get help with orientation and transition to school in a COVID-safe way. Kindergarten and Year 7 transition and orientation programs will be virtual for schools doing a staged return. Transition and orientation programs will be possible for other schools, however only children will be allowed on school grounds.



Responding to COVID-19 cases

Where there is a case of COVID-19 in the school community, the department has established systems and protocols with NSW Health to manage and respond accordingly to keep our staff and students safe. These protocols include communication with parents or carers if their child has been in contact with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19 while at school or if the school becomes closed.



If your school reverts to learning from home

If schools revert to learning from home due to a Public Health Order or direction from NSW Health or the Department, the school will continue to provide learning activities for your child to do at home and will communicate with you about their learning.

If your child's school needs to revert to remote learning, your school will let families know through the usual channels, which might include email, social media or the school website.



If your school becomes closed due to a COVID-19 case

Parents and students will be notified when a decision is made to make the school closed for onsite attendance due to a confirmed case of COVID-19 or other events that require the school to close. Information about the operational status of the school will be distributed through the school's information channels, including the school website, Schools Safety App, any school social media channels and the department's website. During this period, the school will continue to provide learning activities for your child to do at home and will communicate with you about their learning. Parents and students will be informed by the department when the school is ready to resume onsite learning.



Get in touch with questions or concerns

Your principal has already started planning for a COVID-safe return at your school, taking into account the unique needs of their students and school. To support this planning, and to allow for your teachers to be fully vaccinated by 8 November or earlier, it is important that students return on the date specified for their year group.

Get in contact with your principal directly if you would like more information about your school's COVID-safe return to school plan or if you have concerns or questions about your child being back in their classroom for face-to-face learning in Term 4.

If you need further information, please call your school. If you need an interpreter to assist you with your enquiry, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. You will not be charged for this service.

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