



What you need to know about our return to school in Term 4

We're excited about our return to face-to-face learning and welcoming students and staff back onsite where we know the best learning happens. This is a short summary of what our parents and students can expect.



Key dates for our staged return

While we know there is excitement about the return to school it's important that we stick to the staged return to give us time to be ready to welcome back students onsite. Students will return to face-to-face learning in the following order

- from 18 October – Kindergarten, Year 1
- from 25 October – Years 2,3,4,5 and 6



Our school's COVID-safe operations

Our COVID-safe return to school plan is NSW Health approved and includes numerous effective practices to support the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. These practices include vaccinations, mask wearing, reduced mingling of student groups and staff, ventilation in classrooms and continued good hygiene and cleaning.



Keeping student groups together

As we return to school students will be kept in their cohorts to minimise opportunities for transmission of COVID-19 and to enable effective contact tracing and containment. This means minimising interaction between students on school grounds and keeping cohorts together where possible.

At Blaxland PS, we have divided the school into 2 cohorts as the size of our student population allows us to do this safely. We will not need to stagger pick up and drop off times but we will be designating pick up and drop off gates. K-3 students will use Baden Place gate and Years 4-6 will use the Great Western Highway gate to limit contact in mixing cohorts. Students must use the correct gate for their Year group starting

Monday 18th October. Mrs Ellis will be at the Baden Place gate and Mrs Cooke will be at the Great Western Highway gate each morning and afternoon. All staff must wear a mask and physically distance themselves from other adults.

K-3 Parents

All K-3 students will be dropped off and picked up from Baden Place each morning and afternoon. All parents are asked to ensure that they follow the parking rules and not park in no parking areas.

Dropping off

When dropping off students' parents are asked to stay in the car and encourage your child to walk to the gate where Mrs Ellis will meet them.

Picking Up

Parents are asked to stay in the car and your child/children will walk to you. If you are unable to stay in the car parents can wait for their child/children in the garden area outside the administration building that can be accessed from the visitor carpark. If parents are waiting in the garden area, we ask that all parents wear a mask as you are on school grounds and all adults onsite must wear a mask. Please do not congregate in big groups and please make sure you maintain 1.5m physical distancing from each other. Mrs Ellis will ensure that the students are safe.

Years 4-6 Parents

Dropping Off

The older students in our school will be entering the school using the Great Western Highway gate as we need to ensure that we do not have students in K-3 and Years 4-6 mixing at all on school grounds. Parents are asked to not congregate at the gate and to move away quickly.

Picking Up

Parents are asked to wait at the gate in the afternoon and maintain 1.5 m physical distance from each other. Mrs Cooke will ensure that students leave school in a safe way.

Families with children in K-3 and Years 4-6

We know that this may cause an issue with families who may have students in both groups, but we need everyone to stick to the plan to ensure that all students and adults are safe. Working together will allow us to do this. Families will need to speak with their children and organise how this is going to work for each family.



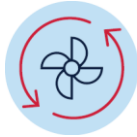
Mask wearing for students and staff

Masks are required to be worn on school site by staff indoors and outdoors. It is strongly recommended for students to wear a mask indoors and outdoors unless exercising or eating. All students are to provide their own masks, but we can provide masks to students if needed. Parents are asked to pack at least two mask each day in case a mask is lost or damaged.



Vaccinations

All staff required on site supporting the return to school will need to be fully vaccinated from 18 October. Then from 8 November all staff, contractors, volunteers and students on student placement on a school site will need to be fully vaccinated, including Outside of School Hours Care staff.



Ventilation

Having open or well-ventilated spaces reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19 because infectious particles are more quickly diffused in the open air. The department will continue to work with NSW Health to provide us with advice and guidance on maintaining good ventilation in our school and we will make use of our outdoor spaces wherever practical.



School activities

During Term 4 many school-based activities will remain on hold until NSW Health advise otherwise. This includes large celebrations like assemblies, presentation days and graduations, arts and sports events.

We will continue our K-6 Virtual Assemblies starting in Week 3.

More information will be provided as the term progresses.



Covid Communication

Parents and students will be notified if a decision is made to close the school due to a confirmed case of COVID-19. During this time we will continue to provide learning from home activities and we will let you know when we can return to face-to-face learning.

The school will communicate with all parents using the school Facebook page and the Skoolbag App if the school needs to be closed. If parents install the NSW School Update App the information will also be found there.



Preschool and out of school hours care

Out of school hours care, vacation care settings and preschools operating on school sites will follow the same COVID-safe guidelines as public schools including the requirement to be fully vaccinated from 8 November.



Orientation and transition to school

Onsite orientations and transition programs are not currently allowed in person on school sites until we are advised differently by NSW Health. We'll share more information in the coming weeks about our school's virtual orientation and transition program.