



Dear parent and carers,

As promised, I am writing with additional information about the return of students to our school campus. First, a reminder about the dates for our phased return.

Commencing 25 October (Week 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early childhood centres (ECEC)• Preschool and kindergarten• Years 1 and 2• Year 6• Years 9 and 10• Out of school hours care (OSHC)
Commencing 1 November (Week 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Years 3, 4 and 5• Years 7 and 8
<i>From weeks 1 to 4 of term, onsite supervision and care continues to be available for vulnerable children and young people whose parents are essential workers.</i>	

Drawing on national and local health advice we have developed a return to school plan which has three key priorities:

- the health and safety of staff and young people,
- the mental and emotional well-being of students and staff, and
- ensuring continuity of learning.

Below is an outline of [ACT Health Guidelines](#) that schools are required to implement to ensure effective COVID-19 measures are in place.

Use of Check in CBR app	All staff and visitors must check in using the 'Check in CBR' app. Parents and carers cannot enter school grounds except for an essential reason. Visitors must call to make an appointment, or in advance of attendance. All visitors must report to the front office.
Student illness	Staff and students who are unwell are not able to attend school. Students who present unwell will be required to go home.
Hygiene	Schools will maintain and promote appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene practices. Students will need to wash hands and use hand sanitisers throughout the day. Students will not be allowed to share food or drink.

Masks	<p>Staff, visitors and students* in years 7-12 must wear a face mask on campus. Students in years 3-6 are encouraged to wear a mask if they are comfortable doing so. Students in Preschool to year 2 are not required to wear a mask. Masks may not be suitable for students with a disability or medical condition and schools will make allowances for those students not to wear masks.</p> <p><i>* Students will be required to wear their personal masks. Masks will be available at school for those who require them. Disposable masks need to be changed every four hours.</i></p>
Physical Distancing	<p>Physical distancing between children and young people is not always possible, particularly in single classrooms and school environments. It is however important for limiting the transmission of COVID 19. To promote physical distancing we have adjusted learning programs, breaktimes, our timetable as well as pick up and drop off arrangements. More specific information about what this means for your child is included below.</p>
Environmental cleaning	<p>Our school cleaning program includes regular cleaning of high touch services, frequently used objects, and play equipment.</p>
Ventilation	<p>All schools have been assessed to increase fresh air circulation and this may involve changes to ventilation, modified HVAC system settings and maximising the use of outdoor learning spaces.</p>
Managing suspected cases	<p>We are prepared to respond to a positive COVID-19 case on campus, should the need arise. ACT Health will provide direction to the school and community, which may result in a full or partial school closure. A student who presents with symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated with suitable supervision, and parents will be required to collect their child. Symptomatic students will be required to wear a mask.</p>
Will schools have routine testing for COVID-19?	<p>Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should get tested immediately. ACT Health is not recommending routine COVID-19 testing of children, young people or staff using rapid antigen testing.</p>
Wellbeing supports	<p>Wellbeing and learning supports, such as face to face appointments with the school psychologist or access to a Learning Support Assistant, will recommence with the return to school.</p> <p>For parents and carers of students with a medical vulnerability: if you wish the school to make reasonable adjustments for the safe return of your child, you must consult a GP and provide medical advice to that effect. Where adjustments can't be made, the school will support your child to learn from home.</p>

To further support the ACT Health Guidelines our school is making the following adjustments.

<p>Drop off and pick up</p>	<p>Students will arrive at school as close to 8.30am as possible. All gates will be open for students to enter the school grounds. Students will be wearing masks and will socially distance in cohorts in the following areas and enter the building through the designated doors at the marked times:</p> <p>Year 9 / 10 – Lower playground area then move to their first lesson at 8.35am through the back two doors into the main building or directly to the gym or hall. Year 8 – Grassed area at the front of the gym adjacent to car park then move to their first lesson at 8.40am through main front office door or directly to the gym or hall. Year 7 – Grassed area at the front of the main building then move to their first lesson at 8.40am through the student entry door near Student Services or directly to the gym or hall.</p> <p>Students will leave the school via staggered dismissal at the end of the day. Students will not remain on school grounds but move off directly. Students catching buses will line up in cohort lines at the bus area to wait for their buses.</p> <p>There will be no vehicle access to the school grounds for drop-off or pick-ups. We encourage students to walk or ride to school where possible. To minimise congestion on Murraraji and Beetaloo streets, consider alternate areas for drop off/pick up where students can walk to meet vehicles (carparks at nearby playing grounds etc).</p>
<p>Hygiene routines</p>	<p>Students should use hand sanitiser before and after every class, before and after every break, and before and after every trip to the bathroom.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser is available in every classroom, meeting room, learning space and office in the school. As well as in high traffic areas of the building.</p> <p>Wipes will be made available in every classroom and learning area as well as office spaces. Wipes should be used after each lesson to wipe down desks.</p>
<p>Teaching and learning</p>	<p>We have made changes to our school timetable to allow for cohort separation and to minimise the movement of students across the school at the same time.</p> <p>We will have a 5-day static timetable with 3 x 90min lessons per day. The timetable will follow our 7 lines. Current teachers and class groups will remain the same.</p> <p>Year 7/8 and Year 9/10 will have different timetabled breaks within this structure.</p> <p>There will be no morning PCG - Daily attendance will be marked at the start of the first lesson each day. Daily announcements, year group notices or any other relevant communication will be provided at this time by the classroom teacher.</p> <p>Further timetable details will be provided in week 3.</p>

Break times	<p>Our timetable structure has been designed to separate cohorts across the day.</p> <p>Year 9/10 students will have two 45 min breaks and will have access to the lower playground area and the quad.</p> <p>Year 7/8 students will have three 30 min breaks and will have a daily rotation between two playground areas. Lower playground with courts and upper playground area with quad and grassed area near the gym.</p> <p>All students will be outside during breaks. There will be no access to the BLC and Canteen areas before school or during breaks.</p> <p>During Wet Weather, year groups will be split between the Hall and the Gym.</p> <p>Masks will be worn by students during break time except when eating. When eating students will need to be 1.5m apart.</p>
School canteens	<p>We will be operating the school canteen through a 'click and collect' model using Flexischools.</p> <p>There will be NO counter service for students or staff at any time.</p> <p>Further details will be provided to families in week 3.</p>

We will continue to review and adjust these measures based on the most up to date advice from ACT Health.

Remember, all adults and children aged 12 years and above are eligible for vaccination. If your child is eligible but not yet vaccinated, we encourage you to book them in by calling the COVID-19 vaccination line on 5124 7700 daily between 7am-7pm. Bookings can also be made with some [GP clinics and pharmacies](#).

We understand that there has been considerable change and uncertainty for our students during the pandemic, and as we transition back to school. I'd remind you that you and your child can book an appointment with our Telehealth Support Service on 02 6205 1559 between 9.00am and 4.30pm weekdays. With the return to school, your child will also be able to organise face to face sessions with the school psychologist.

For more information about the return to schools, I'd recommend visiting [the Education Directorate's website](#).

You can keep up to date with the latest health information, advice and resources on the [ACT's COVID-19 website](#).

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and understanding as we return to face-to-face schooling.

We look forward to seeing all our students back at school.

My regards,

Rebecca Pearce

Principal

Belconnen High School