

Recommended Additions to School Operating Models

Transition to flexible and remote
learning – Term 2, 2020

Transition to flexible and remote learning

To increase physical distancing across the population and slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), children in Victorian Catholic schools should move to remote and flexible learning and care at the commencement of Term 2.

This means that, from the start of Term 2, all students who can learn from home must learn at home.

The CECV recommends that schools incorporate the following advice into their operating models during this time.

1. All students should be learning from home, with exceptions allowed for students in the following categories

- Children who are not able to be supervised at home and on days when no other arrangements can be made. This includes children of parents who cannot work from home, and vulnerable children, such as:
 - children in out-of-home care
 - children deemed by Child Protection and/or Family Services to be at risk of harm
 - children identified by the school as vulnerable (including via referral from a family violence agency, homelessness or youth justice service, mental health or other health service, and children with a disability).
- For learning requirements that cannot be conducted from a distance, and considering the operational requirements set out below, small groups of VCE and VCAL students are permitted to attend school, with appropriate physical distancing and hygiene measures in place.

2. Onsite provision

- Schools are encouraged to make onsite provision available, but only for students in the categories listed above for the purpose of providing continuity of teaching, learning and support.
- When onsite learning is provided, hand sanitiser should be available at the entry points to classrooms and education will be provided on hand hygiene. Physical distancing should be implemented in classrooms to the extent feasible. Unwell students should be excluded from attending.
- The learning program delivered onsite should be the same as the learning program delivered to students undertaking remote learning. Students learning onsite should be supervised by an onsite teacher, but follow the teaching and learning program provided by their classroom teacher.
- Class sizes are recommended to be no more than a ratio of 1:10.
- Principals should plan for overall staffing on a minimum ratio of 1:8 to ensure staff are available to assist their colleagues with breaks, relief and other support where required. This staffing ratio can include the use of appropriate support staff.
- Principals should consult with their staff to identify those willing and able to work onsite, either on an ongoing or rostered basis.
- When determining the working arrangements that enable the transition to flexible and remote learning, the consultative arrangements in place at each school should be used to ensure staff are consulted on, and have input into, the ways that work may be organised and allocated.

- **Staff who are medically vulnerable or live with a medically vulnerable person should not work onsite.** Staff should seek their own medical advice to determine if they are medically vulnerable.
- Students attending onsite must be supervised at all times by staff with either current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration or a Working with Children Check. Education support staff can provide direct support to and supervision of students, provided they have access to support from a VIT-registered teacher.
- To ensure consistency with physical distancing measures, students and families should be instructed not to congregate at the school gate before or after school. They must maintain 1.5 metres distance from other people, as far as is practicable on entering and leaving the school grounds.

3. Staff access to school sites

Meetings involving school staff should be held remotely. Staff, including principals, teachers and support staff, are able to access school sites for professional purposes and should follow these guidelines:

- Sharing office space should be avoided.
- Hygiene supplies should be used and good handwashing and cough–sneeze hygiene practised.
- Unwell staff members must remain or return home.
- Windows should be open to promote airflow where possible.
- Physical distancing of at least 1.5 metres must be maintained.

4. Home provision

- Parents or carers are responsible for students' general safety at home or elsewhere.
- Principals and leadership teams should, with consultation, manage arrangements for teachers, education support staff and those working remotely.
- Staff hours of work at home should be consistent with the attendance arrangements already in place at each school and determined in accordance with the school's local arrangements.
- Schools should communicate these hours of work to parents/carers and indicate that teachers and support staff are not required and will not be available to students or parents/carers outside these hours.
- Students and parents/carers should be given clear information about how and when they will receive learning materials and feedback.
- Schools should create and communicate a schedule or calendar that shows what is expected of students in relation to the completion of learning tasks.

5. Home and onsite learning programs

- The learning program delivered onsite should be the same as the learning program delivered to students undertaking remote learning.
- The CECV recommends the following daily minimum guidelines for schools to follow:
 - For students in Prep to Year 2, schools should provide learning programs that include the following:
 - literacy activities that take a total of about 45–60 minutes
 - numeracy activities of around 30–45 minutes
 - additional learning areas, play-based learning and physical activity of about 30–45 minutes.

- For students in Years 3 to 6 and Years 7 to 10, schools should provide learning programs allocated as follows:
 - literacy: 45–60 minutes
 - numeracy: 30–45 minutes
 - physical activities: 30 minutes
 - additional curriculum areas: 90 minutes.
- For students in the senior secondary years, teachers should provide learning resources and tasks that enable students to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes defined in the relevant VCE study designs and VCAL strands.

6. Access to teaching and learning resources for students at home

- For students who do not have access to digital technologies at home, schools are encouraged to loan existing devices where available.
- Where additional devices are required, schools are encouraged to use a range of funding sources to purchase equipment that will then be loaned to students free of charge.
- The CECV is examining ways to provide network access for students who may not be able to connect at home.
- Schools are also able to provide hard copies of learning resources in the event of an internet outage or in cases where it is not possible for students to have any digital access.
- Schools should follow e-safety policies and procedures.