

Management of COVID-19 cases

20 October 2021

To better support schools to manage COVID-19 cases, ISV have been working with the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Department of Health (DH) to revise how COVID-19 cases will be managed in schools.

The revised process is set out below.

1. Schools should email Non-GovCovidNotifications@education.vic.gov.au as soon as they become aware that a student, parent, contractor or other member of the school community has tested positive to COVID-19, but only where the case was onsite within 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms consistent with COVID-19. In addition to contacting Non-GovCovidNotifications@education.vic.gov.au, you may also wish to contact ISV for advice and guidance.
2. You will be provided with a spreadsheet and instructions to complete the identification of potential Primary close contacts (PCCs). Communication templates to contact potential PCCs will also be provided. The following message could be used:

“We have been advised that a confirmed COVID-19 case attended our school, and you have been identified as a potential primary close contact. You must get tested as soon as possible then stay at home and wait for contact from the Department of Health (DH), which may take a few days. DH will advise you on your quarantine requirements, testing and release dates (this may take some days). Families and households do not have to isolate.”
3. If you are unable to complete the contact identification and notification of potential PCCs within the day you may wish to close for a 24-hour period.
4. You should return the spreadsheet to:
Non-GovCovidNotifications@education.vic.gov.au who will record the spreadsheet and forward it to the relevant local public health unit of the Department of Health.
5. There is no need to do a deep clean. Your routine COVID clean is considered sufficient.
6. In primary schools, PCCs are likely to be limited to those in the same class as the confirmed COVID-19 case. However, this will depend on the level of compliance with face-mask requirements and how much classes might have mixed.

7. In secondary schools, where students may have mixed across different subjects on particular days, a whole year level cohort may be classified as PCCs. However, this will again depend on the level of face-mask compliance, the degree of mixing across classes and year levels, and the time spent together.
8. The Department of Health will send an SMS to the PCCs advising them of their quarantine, testing and release dates (this may take some days).
 - a. Primary school PCCs will be asked to isolate until they clear a Day 13 test.
 - b. Secondary school PCCs will be informed that if they are vaccinated, they should isolate for seven days and may be able to return to school after a negative Day 6 test, depending on local school arrangements.
 - c. If the PCCs are unvaccinated, they will be required to isolate for 14 days and can return to school after a Day 13 test. Students will need to show evidence of their test and vaccination status when they return to school.
9. Families/households of PCCs will no longer be required to limit their movements or stay at home.
10. If you have closed the school, once potential PCCs have been identified and contacted, schools should then use a specified communication template to notify all other students they should return to school the following day. The school can reopen the following day without requiring further notification.
11. Particular arrangements apply to Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) students for the purpose of attending examinations – the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) will provide information about this separately.

