

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.

<b>Commencing Monday</b> <b>25 October</b> <b>(Week 4)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chifley Kookaburras</li> <li>○ Torrens Kangaroos</li> </ul> </li> <li>• kindergarten</li> <li>• Years 1 and 2</li> <li>• Year 6</li> <li>• Out of school hours care (OSHC)</li> </ul>
<b>Commencing Thursday</b> <b>28 October</b> <b>(Week 4)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pearce Butterflies</li> <li>○ Torrens Koalas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Commencing Monday</b> <b>1 November</b> <b>(Week 5)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Years 3, 4 and 5</li> </ul>
<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.

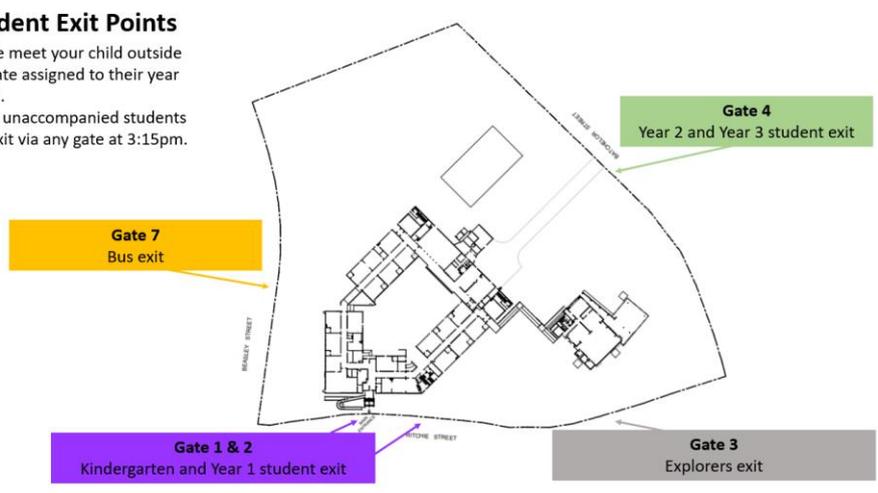
<b>Use of Check in CBR app</b>	All staff and visitors must check in using the 'Check in CBR' app. Parents and carers cannot enter school grounds except for an essential reason. Visitors must call to make an appointment, or in advance of attendance. All visitors must report to the front office.
<b>Student illness</b>	Staff and students who are unwell are not able to attend school. Students who present unwell will be required to go home.
<b>Hygiene</b>	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.

<b>Masks</b>	<p>Staff and visitors must wear a face mask on school grounds. 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>
<b>Physical Distancing</b>	<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 may adjust learning programs, break time areas, 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>
<b>Environmental cleaning</b>	<p>Our school cleaning program includes regular cleaning of high touch services, frequently used objects, and play equipment.</p>
<b>Ventilation</b>	<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>
<b>Managing suspected cases</b>	<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>
<b>Will schools have routine testing for COVID-19?</b>	<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>
<b>Wellbeing supports</b>	<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><b>Student Cohorts</b></p>	<p>Commencing as soon as students return to school, we have created two separate cohorts of students. These students will learn and play together in dedicated school spaces (regions). There will be minimal interaction between the two cohorts while they are at school, and we will be encouraging students to only socialise within their own grade level. The school’s internal corridor will not be used, with most student movement taking place outside.</p> <p>Working in cohorts means that in the unlikely event of a COVID-19 case in the school we can easily track student movements and contacts.</p> <p>School staff (teaching and support) will also be attached to a specific cohort to eliminate the crossover between the two groups.</p> <p><b>Preschool</b></p> <p>As each preschool class across our 3 preschool sites uses the space independently, each preschool class will be a separate cohort.</p> <p><b>K-3</b></p> <p>Students in years K-3 will share bathrooms, teaching spaces and will see the same teaching and support staff- throughout the week.</p> <p>Regions are outlined on the map below.</p> <p><b>4-6</b></p> <p>Students in years 4-6 will share bathrooms, teaching spaces and will see the same teaching and support staff- throughout the week.</p> <p>Regions are outlined on the map below.</p> <p><b>Explorers</b></p> <p>Explorers will continue to work in their classroom.</p> <p>They will continue their education-based inclusion programs. These will be determined on an individual basis according to the child’s individual learning program.</p> <p><b>Student Regions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before school</li> <li>• After school</li> <li>• Break times</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Drop off</b></p>	<p>Torrens Primary School is required to adhere to the ACT Health Guidelines and limit the number of adults accessing the school grounds. Parents or carers must not enter school sites or come onto school grounds to drop off or collect children. Each morning, staff will be available at the entry gates, to greet</p>

	<p>students and direct them to their play area. Please say goodbye to your children at the gate and allow them to go into the school on their own. Students will be supervised in their cohort region before school begins.</p> <p>It is really important that children are not at school too early each morning. Please try to arrive between 9-9:15am to ensure that children are properly supervised. If you need to drop your child/ren off earlier than 9:00am, please contact Torrens Before/After School Care to make arrangements.</p> <p>If your child is likely to experience difficulties in moving to their play area on their own, please contact their teacher so that we can make arrangements.</p> <p>When arriving at school alone, students are encouraged to enter a gate close to their cohort region. If accompanying younger siblings, they should drop them off in the junior region and move on to their own region immediately.</p> <p>For information about Before School Care, please see the item below.</p> <p><b>Preschool</b> Preschool parents are asked to follow the drop-off procedure outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents or carers must not enter the preschool grounds to drop off children.</li> <li>• Staff will meet children at the gate and escort them into the building.</li> <li>• The children will unpack their school bag later in the morning.</li> <li>• Leave the preschool site immediately after your child enters the preschool site.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pick up</b></p>	<p>After school, parents or carers must not enter the school site or come onto school grounds to collect children. Please do not arrive prior to 3:00pm and do not collect children prior to their dismissal as this will impact our cohort arrangements.</p> <p>Kindergarten and Year 1 students will be dismissed at 3:00pm at the front of the school. Kindergarten will be dismissed from Gate 2 and year 1 will be dismissed from Gate 1. Parents are asked to meet children outside these gates on Ritchie Street. Siblings from older grades will also be dismissed at this time to ensure they can meet their sibling/family outside the front gate.</p> <p>Year 2 and Year 3 students will be dismissed at 3:00pm via the back driveway. Parents are asked to meet children outside Gate 4 off Batchelor Street. Siblings from older grades will also be dismissed at this time to ensure they can meet their sibling/family outside the Batchelor Street gate.</p> <p>Students in the Explorers Class will be dismissed at 3:00pm via the OHSC gate (Gate 3) on Ritchie Street.</p> <p>Remaining students in years 4-6 will be dismissed at 3:15pm and need to exit the school grounds immediately via the most appropriate gate. If you need to meet your child in years 4-6, please arrange a location outside school grounds.</p>

	<p>Students should leave the school grounds immediately after school. Play areas are not available outside of school hours. Please make sure you have discussed this with your child/ren.</p> <p>Students catching school buses will be dismissed at 3:15pm. If your child/ren catch a bus after school, they will exit through gate 7 off Beasley Street and make their way to their regular bus stop.</p> <p>For information about After School Care, please see the item below.</p> <p><b>Preschool</b>  Preschool parents are asked to follow the pick-up procedure outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents or carers must not enter the preschool grounds to collect children.</li> <li>• Staff will meet parents at the gate to dismiss children.</li> <li>• Please leave the preschool site immediately after you meet your child at the preschool gate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Exit Points</b>  Please meet your child outside the gate assigned to their year group.  Note: unaccompanied students can exit via any gate at 3:15pm.</p> 
<p><b>Hygiene routines</b></p>	<p>As per ACT Health guidelines, students and staff will be explicitly taught and encouraged to thoroughly wash their hands on a regular basis, especially before and after break times.</p> <p>Handwashing posters are located in all bathroom areas. Students will also receive explicit teaching and regular reminders about good hygiene.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser will be available in all learning spaces, as well as the front office. Students and staff will be encouraged to use hand sanitiser regularly, especially on entry to the learning space.</p> <p>Students will be eating in their classrooms prior to the break. They will be given additional time to eat their recess and lunch and use the bathroom facilities.</p>
<p><b>Teaching and learning</b></p>	<p>Some changes to teaching and learning programs are necessary to ensure we meet ACT Health Guidelines. We are working hard to reduce further disruption to student learning. Students will continue their regular class program within their cohort, but there will be some changes to the school's specialist program. This will help us to limit the number of teachers that students interact with each day.</p>

	<p>In order to minimise the mixing of year levels in the school and limit the risk of Covid infection the following changes have been made to our timetable and programs.</p> <p>Each cohort will have dedicated specialist teachers allocated to provide classroom teachers with planning release and continue to give students a balanced curriculum. Unfortunately, this may mean that students will not have access to all specialist subjects for the rest of this term. However our teachers will ensure that children continue to have access to a wide range of curriculum areas. Where practical specialist lessons will take place in the students' usual classrooms rather than specialist spaces.</p> <p>The library will remain open for borrowing by specific classes, with additional quarantine of books and library resources in place between lessons.</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to health guidelines many of the school's clubs and extra-curricular programs will not be able to run in the same format. Where possible, we will provide an online alternative but unfortunately some programs may need to be cancelled. This also applies to assemblies and events. We will provide more information about these as the term progresses.</p> <p>We will ensure that students continue to receive the support they need to access the learning and maintain their wellbeing. This may mean that some staffing changes are necessary, but students will have access to the same support. Students that access allied health services while at school (e.g. occupational or speech therapy, vision support) will continue to have access to these services.</p>
<p><b>Break times</b></p>	<p>As the Torrens Primary School playground can be split into two different regions, the two student cohorts (K-3 and 4-6) can play in separate areas at the same time. As a result, break times will stay the same:</p> <p>Recess: 11-11.30am Lunch: 1-1.45pm</p> <p>Students will play in their designated region for the whole break time. Communal areas such as the courtyard and library will no longer be accessible during break times. Students will be encouraged to use the bathroom before the end of the break. Staff will ensure that students can move in and out of bathrooms and their classrooms without too much close interaction.</p> <p>Students will be required to follow the morning line up procedures and line up at their designated meeting points to ensure we maintain appropriate distancing and minimise large numbers of students in small areas such as doorways and corridors.</p>
<p><b>Before and After School Care</b></p>	<p>Torrens Outside School Hours Care (OHSC) will support the cohort arrangements in place at Torrens Primary School.</p> <p>All children attending Before School Care should enter via the OHSC gates off Ritchie Street. Please call when you arrive and an OHSC staff member will meet you to sign children in.</p>

	<p>The Torrens OHSC program will make arrangement to ensure that students from different cohorts do not interact closely while in Before and After School Care. The program for K-3 students will be run out of the new hall, and the program for 4-6 students will be run out of the old hall. OHSC staff have plans in place for moving students to those areas once they are signed in.</p> <p>In the mornings, students in K-3 will mainly use the indoor space, and students in years 4-6 will mainly use the undercover space. Breakfast will be served at 2 different stations.</p> <p>In the afternoons, K &amp; 1 students will enter OHSC via the front entrance to the New Hall, 2 &amp; 3 will enter through the gate to the garden (adjacent to the blue playground). Students in years 4-6 will meet staff at the Old Hall. Staff will check students in while outside, and entry to the OHSC rooms will be staggered to ensure students from different cohorts do not interact too closely.</p>
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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,

Mark Nicholson

Torrens Primary School