

Post lockdown WA Public Schools Operating Guidelines: Perth and Peel regions

As at 26 April 2021

From 12.01am on Tuesday 26 April 2021 until 12:01am on Saturday 01 May 2021 all persons who live in the Perth and Peel regions are subject to certain restrictions and requirements as part of a post lockdown restriction period.

As of Tuesday, 27 April 2021, schools will be open for all students.

Masks are required to be worn by all staff at all schools and secondary school students, unless:

- the person has a physical, developmental or mental illness, injury, condition or disability which makes wearing a face covering unsuitable;
- the person is communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing and visibility of the mouth is essential for communication;
- engaged in strenuous or vigorous exercise;
- the person is consuming food, drink or medicine, provided that they are seated at the time.

Teaching staff are permitted to remove their mask while teaching to help with clear communication, and instruction.

Primary school students are not required to wear masks while attending school.

Schools should maintain cleaning regimes as per Phase 4 guidelines.

Schools should reinforce COVID-safe behaviours, including:

- Individuals should stay home when unwell;
- Promote and practice good personal hygiene;
- Ensure physical distance of 1.5 metres between adults, where practicable;
- As per the AHPPC guidelines, promote outdoor air ventilation, where possible.

Parents are allowed on school sites; provided they:

- wear a mask at all times;
- practice 1.5 metres between adults physical distancing, where practicable; and
- follow good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Travel between Perth and Peel regions and the rest of WA is permitted with the exception of some remote Aboriginal communities, but anyone who has been in Perth, Peel or Rottneest since Saturday 17 April must follow the mask restrictions.

FAQs

School activities

What activities can go ahead?

- Principals should undertake a risk assessment taking into consideration the Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions.
- Activities that could be postponed may include school photos and parent/teacher interviews.

Are parents/carers allowed on school sites for drop-off and pick up?

- Yes, providing they:
 - wear a mask at all times (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#));
 - practice 1.5 metres physical distancing between adults, where practicable; and
 - follow good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Are visitors, service providers and therapists allowed on school site?

- Yes, providing they:
 - sign in as part of [Visitors and Intruders on Public School Premises Policy](#);
 - wear a mask at all times (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#));
 - practice 1.5 metres physical distancing, where practicable; and
 - follow good hand and respiratory hygiene practices.

Are third-party providers able to use school facilities?

- Yes, provided they:
 - sign in as part of *Visitors and Intruders on Public School Premises Policy*;
 - wear a mask at all times (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#));
 - practice 1.5 metres physical distancing, where practicable;
 - follow good hand and respiratory hygiene practices;
 - undertake regular cleaning of these facilities;
 - adhere to venue capacity limits of 4 square metres and 20 people maximum;
 - adhere to applicable [interim restrictions](#) (eg. non-use of internal gyms) for Perth and Peel; and
 - develop and implement COVID-safe plans.

Are before and after school care (Out-of-School Hours Care) able to open on school sites?

- Yes.

Are schools required to use the **SafeWA** app?

- No, however, all visitors to school sites must sign in as per the *Visitors and Intruders on Public School Premises Policy*.
- Schools must be able to provide contact tracing information if requested by WA Health.
- If schools are considering implementing the **SafeWA** app, they are encouraged to consult with their school boards/councils and community prior to implementation.

Can camps proceed?

- Yes.
- Parents are not to attend school camps.

- Ensure external provider conditions are met.
- Each facility is required to undertake a facility-specific, systematic risk assessment, analysis and mitigation process to inform development of risk management plans, which include their planned response to scenarios such as single or multiple cases being identified amongst the boarders with multiple close contacts, to manage the risk posed by COVID-19.

Can school excursions go ahead?

- Yes, provided:
 - external provider conditions are met; and
 - staff must comply with *Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions*; and
 - secondary students and staff are required to wear masks, unless they are doing vigorous exercise/outdoor activity.

Can interschool activities go ahead?

- Yes, providing:
 - if held off a school site, external provider conditions are met;
 - if on a school site, refer to the *Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions* regarding gatherings;
 - secondary students and staff are required to wear masks, unless they are doing vigorous exercise/outdoor activity; and
 - spectators are not permitted to attend.

Can school balls proceed?

- No, school balls are not to proceed and should be rescheduled.

Are major sporting or music events permitted?

- Avoid or defer large school events with external adults until 1 May 2021.

Are swimming pools open and can swimming programs run?

- Yes, swimming pools can operate and Interim swimming programs can go ahead, subject to external provider conditions being met.
- Masks are not required to be worn by a person engaged in an activity involving swimming.
- Secondary school students and staff are required to wear masks (subject to exceptions in the *Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions*).

Can school canteens operate?

- Yes school canteens can open.
- Regular cleaning should be undertaken.
- Schools should review and update as needed their school risk assessment procedures to include COVID-safe principles.
- School canteens may continue to be an exception from the requirement for a COVID-safe plan.

Can assemblies be held?

- Yes, assemblies may go ahead when there are staff and students only.
- Secondary school students and all staff are required to wear masks (subject to exceptions in the *Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions*).

Are playgrounds open?

- Yes.

- Secondary school students must wear a mask while playing (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#)).
- Students should continue to practice good hand hygiene, with handwashing before and after play.

What restrictions will apply to School Bus Services operating in the Perth and Peel regions?

- All school bus drivers and bus aides will wear a mask.
- All secondary school students must wear a mask on the bus.
- For education support services, discretion will be applied where, for a medical or behavioural reason due to their disability, there may be an exemption from wearing a mask. If required, parents will need to discuss any matters relating to masks with their school bus operator.

Do school faults, maintenance and building upgrades will continue?

- Yes.
- Schools need to ensure that contractors have access to school sites to ensure these activities are undertaken.
- Contractors who come to site are expected to comply with the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#).
- Any concerns relating to maintenance or capital works should be directed to Steven.Parry@education.wa.edu.au, your facilities manager at Program Facilities Maintenance or your local Department of Finance contact.

Health and hygiene

Are secondary school students expected to bring their own mask?

- Yes. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for ensuring they have a mask.
- Schools will maintain additional supplies for those students who need them.
- If a regional school requires masks and cannot source them through the normal procurement process, they can contact their regional education office or email buying@education.wa.edu.au.

Does every secondary school student have to wear a mask?

- Yes, at all times, unless:
 - the person has a physical, developmental or mental illness, injury, condition or disability which makes wearing a face covering unsuitable;
 - the person is communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing and visibility of the mouth is essential for communication;
 - engaged in strenuous or vigorous exercise;
 - the person is consuming food, drink or medicine, provided that they are seated at the time.
- Exceptions are listed in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#).

What do we do if a secondary school student refuses to wear a mask?

- Schools are expected to take a positive and proactive approach in promoting the wearing of masks.
- Schools should discuss individual circumstances with families and students in regard to wearing masks.

What if a student's mask is dirty or lost?

- Schools have a supply of disposable and reusable masks should students need them.
- Schools should manage the distribution of masks to students in these circumstances.

Can a student travel to an affected area (Perth or Peel) to attend school?

- Yes.

Do secondary school students who reside in regions that don't require masks need to wear them if they attend a school in Perth or Peel?

- Yes (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#)).

Do secondary school students who reside in Perth or Peel need to wear masks if they attend a school in a region which does not require them?

- Yes, providing they have been in an affected area on or after Saturday 17 April (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#)).

Can primary school students wear a mask?

- Yes, however they are not required to wear them.

Are masks required to be used in the staffroom?

- Yes, unless the person is consuming food, drink or medicine, provided that they are seated at the time, (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#)).

Do Education Support Staff have to wear face shields or particular PPE?

- No, however, all staff are required to wear masks, (subject to exceptions in the [Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions](#)).
- If you are required to wear PPE as part of your business as usual, then continue as normal. There are no additional requirements.

Do physical education teachers need to wear a mask while teaching?

- No.

Are there guidelines for mask disposal?

- Guidelines can be found on the healthywa.wa.gov.au website.
- To safely remove any type of face mask; practise hand hygiene, remove the mask and then perform hand hygiene again.
- Single use masks must be placed into a rubbish bin at the point of removal.
- Fabric masks that are reusable, should be washed after every use, or when wet or visibly dirty.

How often should masks be changed?

- Reusable cloth masks should be changed at least daily.
- Disposable masks are single use and should be changed according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Masks should be replaced if they become damaged, wet or dirty.

Can medically vulnerable and/or immune-compromised students attend school?

- Yes. As per [AHPPC guidelines](#) (3 February 2021), with COVID-19 safe planning and procedures in place and health systems ready to quickly identify and respond to cases, schools remain safe places.

Teaching, learning and reporting arrangements

Can student work placements, simulated work placements and work experience proceed?

- Yes.
- Student work placements must adhere to **Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions**, including wearing a mask at work.

What attendance code do we use if a student does not attend school?

- Schools are open for learning and students are expected to attend.
- Schools should ascertain the reason for non-attendance.
- Usual attendance codes and procedures apply.

Workforce and leave

Can medically vulnerable and/or immune-compromised staff attend school?

- Yes. As per the AHPPC guidelines (3 February 2021), with COVID-19 safe planning and procedures in place and health systems ready to quickly identify and respond to cases, schools remain safe places.

What are the guidelines for staff who have medical grounds for not wearing a mask?

- Refer to the exceptions outlined in the **Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions**.

Can staff training or professional learning go ahead?

- Yes, providing participants and presenters follow external provider conditions and wear face masks, unless teaching (subject to exceptions in the **Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions**).

Can staff travel to an affected area (Perth or Peel) to work at a school?

- Yes.
- Regional travel restrictions have been removed but restrictions to some remote Aboriginal communities remain in place.

What leave does a staff member request if they are self-quarantining due to being at an exposure site?

- Staff should apply for COVID-19 leave.
- Staff should follow health advice regarding testing and self-quarantining requirements.

Do staff residing in regions that don't require masks need to wear them if they work at a school in affected areas (Perth or Peel)?

- Yes, (subject to exceptions in the **Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions**).

Do staff who reside in an affected area (Perth or Peel) need to wear masks if they work at a school in a region which does not require them?

- Yes, providing they have been in an affected area on or after Saturday 17 April 2021, (subject to exceptions in the **Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions**).

Residential and boarding facilities

Can students return to boarding and residential facilities?

- Yes.

Are boarding or residential students required to wear a mask?

- Secondary school students are required to wear masks while attending school, (subject to exceptions in the **Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions**).

- Boarding/residential students and staff who reside onsite are not required to wear a mask in the boarding or residential facility.
- If a staff member is onsite but does not live onsite, they will be required to wear a mask.

Do residential/boarding facilities need to maintain contact registers?

- Yes. Boarding schools or residential colleges are required to maintain contact registers for the Department of Health for COVID-19 contact tracing
- Usual practices for residents to sign in continue to apply.

What are the cleaning and hygiene requirements for residential and boarding facilities?

- As per [AHPPC advice](#), each facility is required to undertake a facility-specific, systematic risk assessment, analysis and mitigation process to inform development of risk management plans which include their planned response to scenarios such as single or multiple cases being identified amongst the boarders with multiple close contacts, to manage the risk posed by COVID-19.
- Good hygiene practices should be maintained.
- Cleaning requirements remain in place as per Phase 4 requirements.

For specific boarding and residential questions, please contact the COVID support team on Ph: 1800 882 345 or email CoronaVirusSupport@education.wa.edu.au.