



# WYNDHAM COLLEGE

*"Working Together to Widen Horizons"*

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19 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the return to face-to-face learning begins this week, I would like to update you on key dates and important information about the return to school and COVID-safe plans onsite. Please read through the information below and contact the College if you have any questions.

## **1. Return to School Roadmap**

During Term 4, students will return to school in a staged approach, with no mingling or on-site activities.

At Wyndham College, students will return to face-to-face learning, with NSW Health-approved COVID-safe settings. Remembering the Year groups being referred to are those in which students have been enrolled during 2021, students return as follows -

- 18 October – Year 12 (Attendance for Year 12 students is optional. Please refer to point 6 below)
- 25 October – Year 11

The return to school roadmap is subject to change depending on advice from NSW Health. You can stay up to date with the most recent information on our Advice for Families page - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families>

## **2. Information about close contacts, self-isolating and COVID-19 cases at school**

The Department has updated its pages with detailed guidance for parents and carers about what will happen should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19 at school, where students are identified as a close or casual contact.

Wyndham College has a COVID-safe plan and we are taking precautions to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission on-site. This includes enhanced cleaning twice per day, in line with the latest advice from NSW Health and SafeWork Australia.

It is important to note that medical advice suggests transmission among children is lower and when they do catch COVID they generally only have mild symptoms.

### **2.1 Contact Tracing**

NSW Health will notify the school if there is a positive COVID-19 case who has been infectious while at school. The College will, in turn, notify parents and carers. Contact tracing will be undertaken as it is in all other venues. In relation to the operation of the school, the action we will take will depend on how many people the person had been in contact with. In some cases, this may mean the school may need to be made temporally non-operational – i.e. no staff on-site. Some staff and students may be asked to self-isolate as a precaution while contact tracing is completed.

## **2.2 Self-isolation**

NSW Health have made changes to self-isolation requirements for people who are identified as close contacts who are fully vaccinated.

- Close contacts, who are fully vaccinated, must self-isolate for 7 days (and limit their movements for the next 7 days).
- Close contacts, who are not vaccinated, must isolate for 14 days.
- Casual contacts need to be tested and self-isolate until they get a negative test result - even if they are vaccinated.

A reminder that to anyone, even with the mildest of COVID-19 symptoms **must** get tested immediately and self-isolate until they get a negative result - even if they are fully vaccinated. Please visit the COVID-19 response protocols page - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/response-protocol> - for factsheets on close and casual contacts, isolation guidelines for children and for answers to your questions.

## **3. Vaccination Requirements for Staff and Students**

From 18 October, all staff on-site at Wyndham College, and required to support the staged return of students are fully vaccinated. You can have confidence that we are handling the evidence requirements with the Department and anyone interacting directly with your child will be fully vaccinated. There may be some staff members, who are not yet fully vaccinated, or who have an approved medical exemption not to be vaccinated and undertaking a risk assessment. For these reasons some classes may be covered by another teacher. We appreciate your understanding and the need to ensure staff privacy is protected.

COVID-19 vaccination is the best protection against severe illness and also reduces the risk of spreading COVID-19 to others. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 now will help to protect both you, your family and our school community.

NSW Health are urging all students aged 12 and over to get vaccinated with the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible and before returning to school.

There is currently sufficient supply of the Moderna vaccine at community pharmacies and the Pfizer vaccine with General Practitioners. Bookings can be made via the Vaccine Clinic Finder External link - <https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/?lang=en> Depending on location, bookings are available within the next few days.

## **4. Updated Mask Requirements**

To reflect the changes in community settings, mask wearing requirements have been updated for schools.

When students and staff return to Wyndham College, masks are mandatory for all staff and students in all indoor settings.

## **5 Ventilation in Schools**

Ventilation is an important layer of support under COVID-safe operations, alongside vaccinations, mask wearing, reducing mingling across year groups and good cleaning and hygiene. The Department's ventilation recommendations have been informed by NSW Health advice, expert advice from the Doherty Institute and the World Health Organisation.

This advice tells us that maximising natural ventilation in our learning spaces is the most effective method for minimising the spread of COVID-19, as it is a very effective way to disperse particles in the air. This can be best achieved by opening doors and windows.

To maximise the College's readiness for the return of students and staff, the Department conducted a state-wide review of all windows, fans and ventilation systems to ensure schools can operate as intended.

The audit confirms the majority of spaces in schools can be adequately ventilated through natural and mechanically assisted ventilation. The Department are actioning and working with our local Asset Management Team to ensure classes can meet the ventilation requirements for the College. Any necessary repair works identified by the review, such as easing and adjusting windows to ensure they operate correctly, will be completed before the full return to face-to-face learning on 25 October.

#### **6. Higher School Certificate**

Year 12 students and those sitting HSC exams in schools will have access to the College up until their HSC exams. This time can be used for -

- essential curriculum revision and wellbeing support from appropriate staff
- participation in scheduled small group face-to-face learning with the class teacher to enable essential course completion and revision
- participation in organised peer study bubbles.
- HSC exams will proceed for all students from 9 November 2021 in a COVID-safe way, in line with NSW Health advice.

The Department's Stay Healthy HSC website - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/stay-healthy-HSC?q=> - has been used to keep students active and connected during the HSC with resources developed in partnership with ReachOut. Also provided are support resources for HSC students' parent and carers, which includes practical advice and information about mental health and wellbeing.

#### **7. Wellbeing Resources for Students and Families**

Wellbeing resources and useful tools for mental health and wellbeing for students and families can be found at - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/wellbeing-for-students-and-families.html> As you and your children prepare for the return to face-to-face learning or if you have any concerns about the return to school, please do not hesitate to reach out if needed.

Thank you again for your continued support during what has already been a fast-moving school term.

Karen Smith  
Principal

Classa Martinuzzi  
Deputy Principal

Brian Ewin  
Deputy Principal