



What you need to know about our return to school in Term 4

At Bidwill Public School we are excited to welcome our students and staff back to face-to-face learning where we know the best learning happens. This is a short summary of what our parents and students can expect.



Key dates for our staged return

- **Monday 18th October, 2021** - all Preschool, Kindergarten, Year 1, K-6D and K-6J staff and students will return to school.
- **Monday 25th October, 2021** - all other staff and students will return to school.



Our school's COVID-safe operations

Our COVID-safe return to school plan is NSW Health approved and includes numerous effective practices to support the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. These practices include vaccinations, mask wearing, reduced mingling of student groups and staff, ventilation in classrooms and continued good hygiene and cleaning.



Keeping student groups together

As we return to school students will be kept in their cohorts to minimise opportunities for transmission of COVID-19 and to enable effective contact tracing and containment. This means minimising interaction between students on school grounds and keeping cohorts together where possible.

In Week 3, Preschool, Kindergarten, Year 1 and Support classes will be kept in their class cohorts where they will have separate lunch times.

In Week 4, all classes will adopt a stage cohort model where stages will have separate lunch times.

We have implemented staggered drop off and pick up times to reduce the interaction between students in different cohorts. Families with students in different stages can be dropped off and picked up together. We ask that families use the same gate consistently and adhere to the times below:

Week 3 drop off and pick up times

Cohort	Drop off time	Pick up time
Year 1 (inc. K-6D and K-6J)	8:30am – 8:45am	3:00pm
Kindergarten	8:45am – 9:00am	2:45pm
Preschool	9:15am – 9:30am	2:15pm – 2:30pm

Week 4 and onwards drop off and pick up times

Cohort	Drop off time	Pick up time
Stages 2 and 3	8:30am – 8:45am	3:00pm
Kindergarten and Stage 1	8:45am – 9:00am	2:45pm
Preschool	9:15am – 9:30am	2:15pm – 2:30pm



Mask wearing for students and staff

Masks are required to be worn on school site by staff indoors and outdoors and are strongly recommended for students indoors and outdoors unless exercising or eating.

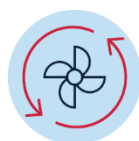
Parents and carers are encouraged to send their children to school with a suitable mask.



Vaccinations

All staff required on-site supporting the return to school will need to be fully vaccinated from 18th October. Then from 8th November, all staff, contractors, volunteers and students on student placement on a school site will need to be fully vaccinated. Staff working in our canteen and any essential visitors (e.g. therapists) are required to be fully vaccinated to be on-site.

NSW Health are urging all students aged 12 years and over to get vaccinated with the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible before returning to school. There is currently sufficient supply of the Moderna vaccine to community pharmacies and the Pfizer vaccine to General Practitioners.



Ventilation

Having open or well-ventilated spaces reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19 because infectious particles are more quickly diffused in the open air. The department will continue to work with NSW Health to provide us with advice and guidance on maintaining good ventilation in our school and we will make use of our outdoor spaces wherever practical.

A ventilation audit was conducted at Bidwill Public School and found that all classrooms have the required level of natural ventilation. Where possible, doors and windows will remain open and fans and air conditioning units will be used continuously.



School activities

During Term 4 many school-based activities will remain on hold until NSW Health advise otherwise. This includes large celebrations like assemblies, presentation days and graduations, arts and sports events.

Unfortunately both the Stage 2 and Stage 3 camps have been cancelled. Letters have been sent home to

all families regarding any payments made. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the office.

The 2022 School Leadership election has been postponed and will be held at the start of next year. More information on this will be communicated to Year 5 parents this term.

Additionally, all interschool sporting competitions are cancelled for 2021. Students can participate in sport at school as part of the PDHPE syllabus requirements.



Covid Communication

Families will be notified if a decision is made to close the school due to a confirmed case of COVID-19. During this time, we will continue to provide learning from home activities and will let you know when we can return to face-to-face learning.

We will continue to post regularly updates for our school community via our Facebook page and school website. Please download the School Safety App for any important updates.



Preschool

Our preschool will follow the same COVID-safe guidelines as our primary school including the requirement to be fully vaccinated to work on-site.

Preschool parents are the only parents permitted onto school grounds, as per department policy, and they must sign in using the QR system. Parents will sign their children in and out outside each classroom door and are not to enter classrooms; each child is to enter their room with the educator greeting at the door.

Preschool children are to arrive between 9:15am-9:30am and be collected between 2:15pm-2:30pm.



Orientation and transition to school

On-site orientations and transition programs are not currently allowed in person on school sites until we are advised differently by NSW Health.

- Our Kindergarten and Preschool orientation and transition programs will be available on our school website.
- Our Year 6-7 transition program will be facilitated by Stage 3 and high school staff using an online platform.

More information will be shared in the coming weeks regarding our virtual orientation programs.

All Bidwill Public School students are expected to be back at school for their staggered return dates. After this date we will only be supporting learning from home where this is required by NSW Health to do so.

Find updated information on the department's Advice for families page to support students who are anxious about the return to school – or get in touch with us directly.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/advice-for-families>